

Board of Health Opening Remarks

2019 FinCom Budget Presentation

The budget presented to you tonight is a level funded budget, including the .77% adjustment for FY'20, with the following exceptions:

1. A contractual clerical union step increase for office personnel.
2. A market rate salary increase to the Sanitarian position attributed to a market rate survey of the position with other similar based communities.
3. The \$1500 addition shown under Salaries Temp Tech/Prof Staff was approved for the Animal Inspector in this current fiscal year FY'19. The monies were originally placed under Salaries Tech & Professional; it has been removed from that line item and placed within the line it belongs.

The Health Department can be viewed to operate in three (3) categories: Environmental Program, Clinical Program and most recently the Substance Prevention & Outreach Program.

The Environmental Program consists of 3 inspectional staff members and the Public Health Director that conduct a variety of inspections, plans reviews, correspondence, and training services. There has been a steady increase in the number of licensed and proposed food service operations, as well as, other program related demands over the past several years. The staff provided 1190 inspections on 419 full service and temporary food operations in 2018. The staff provided an additional 3779 inspections, plan reviews, consultations and investigations relevant to environmental sanitation for a yearly total of 4969 services provided. This reflects a relatively high volume of output by the staff and the state mandate for food service inspections was met for second consecutive year.

Additionally, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health adopted substantial revisions to the camp and Food Codes this past year. Both codes are enforced at the local level and required some changes to our policies and procedures. In an effort to assist the food operations in this community grasp the changes, this department offered two (2) training sessions in November and will offer additional trainings early in this upcoming year.

A relatively unknown part of the Environmental Program is the involvement of the Health Department in many phases of construction projects, large and small. This department reviews and corresponds on every Zoning Board case, pertinent Planning Board cases, subdivisions, reviews every building application, **performs soil evaluations for septic systems, groundwater determination, site drainage, aquifer protection and infiltration** to enforce and comply with state and local requirements. Construction projects continue at a torrid pace in this community and there are no signs of a slow in the near future.

The Clinical Program is headed by the Public Nurse and includes immunizations, various clinics, (i.e. flu, shingles, blood pressure, etc.,) Home visits, communicable disease investigations, health assessments and referrals.

In 2018 there were 288 confirmed communicable disease reports in Natick. Of those reported, the three most prevalent were: 115 Lyme Disease/10 Other Tick-borne = 125; 147 Influenza and 26 Hep C. There were a total of 1560 doses of flu vaccine administered during our annual town and school based clinics; an additional 57 Pediatric and 217 Adult various vaccines administered; of those 217 adult doses 180 consisted of the highly sought after Shingles vaccine.

The Public Nurse conducted 94 home visits, reported 553 office visits for services resulting in 75 referrals to private physicians and state agencies.

The Substance Prevention and Outreach Program was placed within the Health Department on July 1st. This past year, Health Resources in Action (HRiA) consultants were contracted in to complete a rapid strategic plan process to guide the Substance Prevention Program's future efforts as requested by the FinCom. The plan identified four areas of priority, as well as, funding and sustainability recommendations. In late August, the Town was notified that we were successful in our application for a five year Drug Free Community Grant totaling \$625,000. The funds will be utilized to integrate the efforts of Natick Together Youth, Opioid Task Force; expand the collaboration between town depts., schools, town officials, community organizations and community members, as well as, implement the priorities and resources outlined into the Prevention and Outreach Program.

The MetroWest Opioid Addiction Prevention Coalition (MOAPC) consisting of Natick, Ashland, Framingham and Hudson became the first public health departments in the state to offer free training and dispensing of Narcan in their communities. The program began on March 1, 2018, to date Natick has trained and supplied Narcan to 60 individuals, provided 9 group trainings to 112 attendees of various town depts., local businesses and community organizations supplying an additional 22 Narcan kits to groups base locations. The Narcan was purchased through a generous grant from the MetroWest Health Foundation.

The use of the two kiosks in the community has steadily increased in the past several years. There was a total of 1152 quart containers purchased for disposal of used sharps/syringe kiosk in the Town Hall and 24 boxes totaling 840 lbs (300 lbs more than 2017) were filled and properly disposed of unwanted medications in the kiosk located in the Police Department lobby this past year. The pharmaceutical kiosk is a joint venture between the Police and Health Department.

The 2018 annual receipts received by the department totaled \$244,684 which is a direct reflection on the workload and services provided by the department. \$205,693 was deposited into the general fund (\$25,000 over previous year) the remaining \$38,991 was deposited into designated Board of Health Revolving or Gift Accounts: Immunization revolving \$22,991; Tobacco Revolving \$5,000, Prevention & Outreach Gift Acct \$1,000 and Health & Wellness Gift Fund \$10,000.

What has been presented is a brief overview of some of the services and resources provided by the Department. I would like to state that when I became Director 10 years ago, I could never have forecast or guessed the Board of Health would become involved or ultimately responsible for what has come to the forefront over those 10 years. The demands and workload on the department has expanded vastly and beyond anything I could have imagined. We continue to explore creative means to provide the community with services and resources it deserves while maintaining fiscal responsibility. That is evident in our foresight to seek grants and implement revolving fund accounts that defray costs for those services at little to no cost to the citizens of this Town.

Thank you