

## **Burlington Board of Health Draft Minutes for August**

Board Chair Celia Bird called the meeting to order at 5:38 pm.

Attending: Celia Bird, Jane Seymour, Bianca Bianka Çimrin, Jenny Tomczak, Jennifer Monroe Zakaras

Summary of meeting:

The Board of Health meeting covered several key topics including a new research study comparing pain treatment methods in emergency medical services and discussions about cooling center strategies during heat emergencies. The board reviewed their budget allocation and approved draft minutes from a previous meeting, while also addressing public communications protocols and scheduling their next meeting. They concluded by discussing community cleanup efforts, syringe disposal programs, and the need for better data collection and coordination among various groups involved in public health initiatives.

### **Agenda**

Jenny made a motion to amend the agenda swap items 5 and 6 on the agenda. Bianca seconded. Unanimous in favor.

Jenny made a motion to adopt the amended agenda. Bianca seconded. Unanimous in favor.

### **Introductions**

Staff and Board members introduced themselves individually to welcome our newest board member Jennifer Monroe Zakaras.

### **Ketamine-Fentanyl Pain Study Discussion**

Alex Nauman introduced himself as a research coordinator with UVM and a paramedic in Chittenden County. He was joined by Dr. Dan Wolfson, who's the statewide EMS Medical Director, and also joining us are, Deputy Chief Ruggles of the Burlington Fire Department, and Karen Vastine from the UVM Medical Center.

The main discussion centered on a new research study, PAIN, (Prehospital Analgesia Intervention Trial) comparing ketamine and fentanyl for pain treatment in emergency medical services. The study, funded by the Department of Defense, operates under an exemption from informed consent due to the urgency of the situation. Participants were informed about the study's goals, consent process, and community consultation efforts, with over 500 survey responses received, mostly positive. The study aims to enroll 550 patients nationwide and will continue for about two years, focusing on adults over 18, excluding pregnant women and women under 50.

BOH members asked questions about the study and procedures being followed in the field.

Dr. Wolfson said that working with the Lights organization out of Pittsburgh is just invaluable, because there's an incredible amount of support and guidance behind how we're doing this, so that we do everything right. He noted that the study is an EFIC study, Exemption from Informed Consent.

### **Cooling Center Strategy Review**

The meeting focused on the city's cooling center strategy during heat emergencies. Bill explained that while the 2022 Board of Health recommendations were treated as guidance rather than mandates by City Council, recent heat emergency responses have been adjusted to better align with available resources and actual usage patterns. The group discussed the need for better data collection on heat emergency incidents and cooling center usage, with Bill suggesting that the Fire Department could provide historical weather data and emergency response records. The conversation ended with a motion by Bianca to invite Sarah Russell from CEDO, the Fire Chief, and Parks Department representatives to the next meeting to discuss cooling centers and develop better data collection methods for future heat waves. Second by Jenny. Vote was unanimous.

### **Draft Minutes from June 2025 meeting**

The board approved draft minutes from June 24th, with Bill noting he used a modified AI version with his own edits for better readability. The board asked for additional corrections to the draft minutes: Adding Celia's comment on the agenda, who seconded the motion and the vote result,

Adding that there was no one present for public forum,

Stating that AAP stands for the American Academy of Pediatrics,

Change Gun Safety to Violence Prevention training with the King Street Center. Celia add the statement that we were working with the leadership at the King Street Center to continue the work that began last year in June.

Jenny made a motion to approve the draft minutes as edited by board comments. Seconded by Bianca. Unanimous vote in favor.

### **Safe Syringe Disposal (City Council Presentation Follow-Up)**

The group discussed their 2025 presentation to City Council and the follow-up questions that were raised. They agreed to review the meeting recording and their written report to ensure all questions were properly addressed. Celia mentioned receiving an email from a counselor with additional questions that he would share with the team for review. The group also discussed a potential opportunity to join a special subcommittee to further discuss next steps, though Bill noted he had not heard back about this yet.

Jennifer said that she really likes the grassroots piece, the community coming together, and dispelling the boogeyman associated with the syringe litter and the perception many people have that syringe debris is literally everywhere. The volunteers involved are making a difference and the downtown is a safe place overall.

Celia noted that we will continue our outreach work. She will share the emailed questions she received from City Council and will coordinate with Jennifer to create a Google Doc with the emailed questions about the syringe disposal report and share it back with the full board.

## **Chair Report**

Celia discussed the fiscal year budget for the BOH. She wanted to clarify the end of year budget approvals and confirmation that the board had done what was needed to wrap up their expenses at the end of June 2025. Bill agree that they had met the budget obligations and would update the board fully at their September meeting.

## **Public Communications and Budget Updates**

The board discussed public communications protocols, with an agreement to share emails about city questions and let each other know how to respond if constituents reach out with comments or questions. They decided to send out announcements about mosquito and tick prevention from the Vermont Department of Health. Jane offered to handle sending out these announcements, and Bill agreed to share the State of VT Mosquito notice as a Front Porch Forum. The board also briefly touched on budget matters, with Bill confirming that the BOH funds had been replenished with the start of the fiscal year on July 1st.

Jenny motioned to extend the meeting past the two hours to complete the last item. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bianca. Unanimous in favor.

Jane asked the board discussed finding a time that was closer to 6:30. The board settled on 6 pm being the meeting time for the next meeting. The consensus was that Tuesday September 9<sup>th</sup> would be the next meeting date.

Jenny made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Bianca. Unanimous in favor.