

## **September 9, 2025 BOH draft minutes**

### **Spreadsheet Review and Distribution**

The meeting began with Celia, Jennifer, Jane and Bianca participating with Deputy Health Officer Rob Strassenburgh staffing the meeting.

### **Board of Health Meeting Updates**

The Board of Health meeting began with Celia calling the session to order at 5:41 pm and discussing the agenda, which included reviewing draft minutes from the previous month, public input, and a planned presentation on cooling centers. Due to the absence of the scheduled presenter, the board decided to table the cooling centers discussion for a future meeting where Sarah Russell and the Mayor's special assistant on homelessness would speak. The agenda was approved with a motion to table item four, and the board reviewed the August meeting minutes, noting some minor corrections to the attendees' names and the need to add the year to the date. Amended agenda approve by Jane, seconded by Jenny- Unanimous in favor.

### **Correcting Meeting Minutes Clarifications**

The group discussed corrections to meeting minutes, focusing on clarifying the reasons for the pain study's exemption from informed consent and the recipients of the 500 survey responses. They identified that community members, rather than participants, were likely the survey recipients, and agreed to seek clarification on these points. The team also noted that the last paragraph of the minutes contained a misspelling of "LITE-S" and discussed the need to document their changes to the minutes.

### **Board Minutes Approval Review**

The board reviewed and approved changes to the draft meeting minutes, including correcting the spelling of Bianca's name and clarifying that the 2022 Board of Health recommendations were treated as mandates rather than guidance. They agreed to simplify the draft minutes section to reflect that the board viewed, amended, and approved the minutes. Celia will make the necessary changes to the actual minutes document and send them back to Bill for final approval.

### **Public Forum Substance Abuse Discussion**

The group discussed the status of a public forum and reviewed a document containing questions about substance abuse and safe syringe disposal. Celia shared that she needed help answering these questions and mentioned that Jennifer had made some changes. Jennifer provided an update on a recent subcommittee meeting she attended, where she learned about an Age Strong Burlington report and Teresa Vezina's work on setting up a supervised consumption site. The group agreed to submit answers to the questions and follow up with Evan and Ali Schachter for further guidance on next steps.

### **Public Outreach and Funding Discussion**

The group discussed a document containing questions about public outreach and chair report activities. Celia explained that she would email the document to Bianca, Jane, and Jennifer, who needed to request access. They reviewed the questions, focusing on those from the initial

meeting versus follow-up emails. Jennifer mentioned that Councilor Litwin had already reached out to the Vermont Department of Health for data and funding information after the August 20th CDNR meeting. Bianka advised against spending too much time on funding recommendations due to uncertainty about state funding, suggesting the city council or Department of Health should seek additional information instead. The group agreed to format the document to clearly distinguish between meeting and email questions.

### **Needle Litter and Public Health**

The group discussed public health risks associated with needle litter, with Celia noting that while needle stick injuries are relatively rare, they should be tracked more comprehensively. Bianka suggested conducting additional research on needle stick injury rates among waste workers and called for more data collection in the Burlington community, while Jane emphasized that the report clearly distinguishes between needle exchanges and safe syringe programs. The team agreed to highlight the need for better data collection methods, particularly through public health departments, and to clarify that SSPs provide important public health services by encouraging safe needle disposal.

### **Service Provider Accountability Discussion**

The group discussed editing and formatting issues in a document, particularly regarding a section about service provider accountability. They agreed that the question of how service providers are established and regulated is complex and varies by location, with Jennifer noting that the CDC provides guidance and works with state health departments. The discussion concluded with an agreement to focus on broader community issues rather than specific service providers, with Jennifer offering to research requirements for becoming an SSP in Vermont.

### **Community Syringe Disposal Programs**

The group discussed syringe disposal programs and community cleanup efforts. They learned that three SSPs in Burlington already receive funding for sharps containers and gloves, and Jennifer mentioned that the city is already providing some disposal containers. Bianka and Jennifer shared information about Boston's mobile collection program, which evolved into a cleanup district that hired people to help clean the streets. The group also discussed existing volunteer cleanup efforts, including those organized by the Peace and Justice Center and VHR. They agreed to look into the history of successful city-sponsored cleanup programs and to follow up on redemption programs from parks, though they were unclear about what this referred to.

### **Councilor Questions and Project Planning**

The group discussed follow-up actions regarding Councilor Kane's questions about syringe disposal, agreeing to draft an email to clarify which questions remain relevant and need further research. They decided to reach out to Councilor Litwin and President Travers to inquire about next steps following Jenny's attendance at the Cdnr meeting. The team also reviewed meeting minutes and discussed the need to identify new community projects to focus on, with Jane offering to share resources for street safety initiatives through the Front Porch Forum. The meeting adjourned without objection at 7:12 pm.