

City of Newton



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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Public Health
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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

June 17, 2009

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM. Present were: Linda Katz, Drs. Steve Colchamiro and David Schein, Joe Frassica, candidate for council membership, Linda Walsh, RN, Director of Health Services, and Bob DeLuca, Senior Environmental Health Specialist. Ms. Walsh presided.

The minutes of the March 18, 2009, meeting were approved as presented.

Mr. DeLuca gave a report of the status of environmental conditions of the Newton Public School buildings. He noted that he responds to environmental emergencies in Newton's schools. He also sits on working groups for school construction in order to identify and prevent potential environmental problems. Bob consults to the Newton Public Schools' Operations Division and the city's Department of Public Buildings in indoor air quality issues. He noted that the city hired an HVAC engineer who has made a substantial impact on reducing indoor air quality complaints.

Mr. DeLuca also discussed his role with the installation of synthetic turf at South High School. He noted that there are concerns about the surface temperature of the fields in hot weather. The city is drilling groundwater wells to be used for temperature control.

Ms. Walsh gave an update on how the H1N1 (swine) influenza outbreak impacted Newton. The school nurses are tracking influenza like illness (ILI) in children absent from school. If a child has ILI, s/he is excluded from school for at least seven days, as is prescribed by CDC and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The department staff will be planning this summer to prepare for H1N1 re-occurrence when school re-opens in September. Much of the department's preparations will be guided by the recommendations of CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Dr. Colchamiro inquired about the heating problems at Underwood School this past winter. Mr. DeLuca reported that Underwood has two boilers and that one was taken off-line and had to be replaced. The process was time consuming, but ultimately completed by the end of winter. It is anticipated that both boilers should be operational in coming years. Mr. Frassica inquired if the department had considered producing a weekly or monthly cable tv program on NewTV. The Department Updates were presented and are attached to these minutes.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

J. David Naparstek

Commissioner of Health and Human Services