

**Board of Health Meeting  
August 4, 2005**

**PRESENT:** David Osler, M.D., Chairman  
Babette Mello, Board Member  
Cecilia Sosa-Patterson, Board Member  
Noreen Burke, Director

Dr. Osler called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

**Accept Minutes:**

The minutes for May 5, 2005 were not voted on because Ms. Patterson was not present at the June 2, 2005 meeting and she would like some time to review and or revise them. Ms. Patterson agreed to review them and send a communication with suggested changes. Ms. Mello made a motion to accept the June 2, 2005 minutes of the meeting. Dr. Osler seconded the motion. Minutes accepted 2 to 0.

**Update on Various Hiring Process:**

**Administrative Assistant:** The hiring process for the Administrative Assistant Unit A position is going slowly. Rita VanSteensburg is assisting at the Health Department with billing, budget and payroll tasks. Her new position is being approved at the Police Department. Rita is still being paid from the Health Department budget and it our hope to get reimbursed once her new position at police is approved. We have been reimbursed for all overtime costs. A number of Unit B employees and one Unit A employee have applied for this position. Larry Murphy, the Personnel Director, has been relocated to another Department so the interviews have been put on hold. Ms. Burke is anticipating filling the job by the end of September.

**School Nursing:** Christine Henebury, the School Nurse Leader, has started interviewing for one full time school nurse. Ms. Henebury has been filling in as a substitute within the school system, and she needs to be functioning at a higher level. She has interviewed three candidates and has two more scheduled. She is hopeful that the position will be filled by early September.

**Community Health Agenda:** Interviews are soon to start for Ms. Burke's old position at the Cambridge Health Alliance. One of the key ways that the Cambridge Health Alliance provides support to the Health Department is the funding of the Community Health Agenda position. Ms. Burke will be interviewing with Linda Cundiff.

**Public Health Nurse:** Liz Quaratiello, the Public Health Nurse, has expressed in interest in job sharing. Ms. Burke explained that Ms. Quaratiello is a valuable asset to the Health Department and would like to explore this option. The Personnel Department does not have much information on job sharing, so Ms. Burke will do some research.

**Cimex Update:**

Ms. Burke passed out the cimex brochures to the Board Members, along with a "Wish List" concerning recommendations that came out of the Cimex workgroup meetings. The brochures are being distributed throughout the City, i.e. churches, the Somerville Housing Authority, second hand furniture stores, etc. and come in several different languages. They are also being posted on the City's Website. The purpose of the

brochures is to educate the citizens of Somerville. Ms. Burke would like the Board Members to become familiar with the brochure so in the future the Health Department could offer to do mini presentations on bed bug facts and help.

Ms. Patterson had several suggestions. To avoid that cimex contaminate the Health Department building Ms. Patterson asked the following questions. Do the inspectors have any type of gear they wear to protect them from the bed bugs? what kind of follow-up is performed after the initial inspection?, and is there any financial or other kind of assistance for tenants/landlords? Ms. Burke explained that no special gear is worn and once the extermination is performed it is up to the landlord to follow through. The brochure explains the proper procedures to follow for landlords and tenants. It is a lengthy process to rid any apartment of bed bugs. As far as financial assistance, Ms. Burke is unaware, at this time, of any. Other kinds of support include the availability of the inspectors to offer technical assistance to homeowners on choosing a competent exterminator.

Dr. Osler stated that the Board should not loose site of the "Wish List". There are some good recommendations made. Ms. Burke agreed, but the Health Department does not have the resources or the staff, and will continue to put their best foot forward. Ms. Patterson continues to hear reports that cimex is an issue.

#### **Hypodermic Needles:**

Ms. Burke informed the Board that in response to Alderman Provost, the protocol for the Safe Disposal of Needles was posted on the City's Website and each Board member was given a copy.

#### **Women's Commission Survey:**

Ms. Burke stated that Sonja Darai, Director of the Somerville Women's Commission, performed a survey based on women's needs in Somerville concerning issues around transportation and jobs. The final report is not ready, but it will be posted on the City's Website and copies will be given to the Board upon completion.

#### **Emergency Preparedness:**

Ms. Burke presented the Board with an update on Emergency Preparedness submitted by Liz Quaratiello. The report reviews emergency dispensing sites for the City, and details activities of the Health Department's participation in "Operation Atlas".

#### **Health Inspectors & ISD:**

An e-mail was presented to the Board concerning the Home Rule petition that granted the City authority to place the health inspectors under the authority of ISD. The sunset date expires on September 1, 2005 and the Board of Alderman requested that this date be removed and that the inspectors remain under the Inspectional Services Department. Ms. Burke explained that the inspectors are still in the Health Office and are still committed to the Health Department. Although they are supervised by George Landers, Superintendent for the Inspectional Services Department, communications between the inspectors and Ms. Burke continue on a daily basis and we work collaboratively as a team. The Board is responsible for making policies, not for the day-to-day activity of the inspectors. There has been positive support and feedback from the Mayor's Neighborhood Impact Team.

Ms. Patterson inquired about the Draft of the Memorandum of Understanding. It has been over a year and no draft has been presented. Ms. Burke stated that it is still in the

works in conjunction with the city law department. Because Ms. Burke has had minimum administrative support this summer this was not yet addressed.

**Rodent Control:**

The Health Department had a wonderful Tufts University student who did a lot of research and made a presentation to the Mayor concerning rodent control in the City of Somerville. Unfortunately, the Health Department does not have the resources or the staff at this time. We are hoping to get another student in the fall to continue research on rodents in the City. A power point presentation was sent to all the Board members.

**Submetering:**

A new water law went into effect in Massachusetts allowing landlords to bill tenants for water. The Health Department had its first request to submeter and the required forms were given to the landlord. The Board was given information on this law.

**Grants Update:**

**The Somerville Immigrant Services Provider Group** recently received an Environmental Justice Grant with Tufts University. It is a needs assessment around the occupational hazards that immigrants face in various occupations. The Health Department is a partner and the program is something the Board can really support.

**The Suicide Task Force** just submitted a proposal to the Health Foundation to do some work with baseball coaches to support young people who are struggling with emotional issues. It is a collaboration with the Health Department, Leni Gross-Young, Youth Trauma Network Manager, Vicki Wairi, Community Organizer for the Somerville Cares About Prevention Program, and Adina Davidson from the Family Center. There is a very strong sports connection around the over dose and suicide victims. There needs to be more tools for prevention and this grant will fund those tools.

**The Somerville Cares About Prevention** is waiting to hear on their 5-year funding. The SAMHSA Grant will be heard on September 1, 2005. This supports two health department staff and the Health Department's prevention efforts. It uses a curriculum called "Guiding Good Choices", and it is about working with children to teach good resistance and refusal skills.

Ms. Burke passed out an update on the Tobacco Control Department that details when the grant is due and how well the program is operating under Cesar's leadership. Ms. Patterson reported that she has visited Good Times Emporium several times and she can still smell the smoke there. To the best of the Health Departments knowledge there have been no recent issues at Good Times. Cesar continues to be vigilant about the outdoor structure there.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

***The next meeting will take place on September 15, 2005 @ 5:00 PM*** at the Somerville Health Department, Conference Room located at 50 Evergreen Avenue.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Pickett  
Administrative Assistant

