

Office of the
Board of Health
City Hall
166 Boulder Drive - Suite 108
Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420
978-829-1870

An organizational meeting was held on February 2, 2017 at 5:00 pm.

Present were: Ian Murray, Chairman; John Bogdasarian, M.D. Member, Stephen Curry, Director; Darrin Plante, ABS Gas & Go; Judie O'Donnell, RN Wachusett Medical Reserve Corp.

ABS Gas & Go – Darrin Plante: Mr. Plante is here to express his opinion and ideas for the BOH to consider in regards to the current Tobacco Flavor Ban. Mr. Plante stated a few years ago when the current single sale cigar price of \$2.50 and multiple pack for \$5.00 was implemented the idea was to try and reduce sales to minors and young adults. Mr. Plante stated this was pushing sales to other cities and towns causing a hardship on small businesses and feels the current Tobacco Flavor Ban will do the same and force people to go elsewhere not only to purchase cigarettes, cigars and now flavor tobacco but also other items purchased at these businesses such as milk, bread, gum, gas etc. Mr. Plante is not against the flavor ban however he believes there are other options available to act on to try and have the same affect and not risk losing all the other sales that are his concerns as well. One of his ideas is to postpone the current Tobacco Flavor ban to six months and implement the We Card ID program that would be mandatory for all tobacco agents that sell tobacco and see how effective this program could be. The way this program works is as follows;

The We Card ID Check-Up Training Service is designed to help ensure that your employees comply with state laws. This service allows you to make the most of your continuing investment in We Card training.

Minimum initial order: 3 months, 1 check-up per month, Total Price = **\$72.00** per location.
Recommended plan: 6 months, 2 check-ups per month (1 tobacco, 1 alcohol), Total Price = **\$288** per location. 1 check-up = \$24 per location

Step 1: One of our check-up agents, aged 21-25, enters your store unannounced and attempts to purchase tobacco products.

Step 2: If the clerk asks the check-up agent for ID the agent presents the clerk with a green card. If the clerk neglects to ask for ID, the agent presents the clerk with a red card. This way the clerk knows immediately how they performed. If your store(s) use an age-verification device, our agents monitor the use of the device as well.

Step 3: The agent then asks for the employee's name and leaves the store to file a report with We Card.

Step 4: Your report is emailed to you and archived in the secure are of the We Card website where you (and only you) can view the results.

The We Card ID Check-Up training service is priced at cost making this service perfect for retailers of any size whether you have one location or multiple stores across a wide area. As part of the comprehensive We Card training program, the We Card service is a proven, effective way to improve compliance and reduce risk of fines and other penalties. After 12 months of routine, bi-monthly checks, retailers in the program improve their compliance rates.

As state agencies continue to enforce age sensitive product sales, tobacco compliance checks are likely to become more common. This makes reliable, effective training tools, such as WE Card ID Check-Ups even more important. Preventing underage tobacco sales is part of your responsibility as a retailer.

Mr. Plante stated there are other options out there that can satisfy everyone. Mr. Curry asked for clarification regarding the pricing of this program and what would be the cost for the City of Fitchburg. Mr. Plante stated there will be no cost to the city and this would be up to the retail store to be enrolled in this program and would have to report to the city if they are enrolled and want to continue to sell flavor tobacco products. Ian Murray suggested putting this on the agenda for the March meeting when Sandra Knipe is here and also asking Tobacco Control as well to further discuss this program.

Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps – Judie O’Donnell, RN MPH: Ms. O’Donnell is here to talk about the Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps program. Their mission is to be dedicated to establish teams of local medical and public health professionals and lay volunteers to contribute their skills and expertise throughout the year as well as during times of community need. There goals are to use planning processes, developed policies and procedures, and training with response partners to;

- Recruit, enroll and maintain a corps of healthcare and non-healthcare volunteers sufficient to respond to a public health emergency related to natural or manmade disasters or emerging diseases in north Worcester County.
- Develop and maintain a framework to match volunteer’s skills with the community needs, including medial surge capacity.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to assist with non-emergency public health functions/initiatives, such as health education, vaccination clinics and public awareness campaigns.
- Deliver comprehensive training opportunities

Ms. O’Donnell is seeking information from the Board of Health regarding public health concerns that could be addressed sooner than later.

Fee Schedule Discussion: Mr. Curry stated the health department has several dozen permits that get issued with fees associated with each permit. Many fees haven’t been changed since 1991 and it is time to do a review of all the fees. Mr. Curry will break down the fee schedule for discussions so that it is not an overwhelming project for the board.

Massachusetts Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative Grant Discussion: Mr. Curry stated this grant involves four towns from the Montachusett Public Health Network (Fitchburg, Leominster, Gardner and Athol) we currently sub-contract with LUK, Inc.

Presently there is no coordinator and we are not happy with the services provided. Our contract did expire July 1, 2016. I plan to renew the contract for six months and send out requests for proposals to see what else is out there for services to meet the delivery requirements of the grant. We will not need the request if LUK hires a coordinator and meets the delivery requirements.

Minutes of the January Meeting: Dr. Bogdasarian made a motion to approve the January 5, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Ian Murray. All were in favor. Motion carries.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2017.

Ian Murray made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Dr. Bogdasarian.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.