

**Lincoln Board of Health**

**Virtual Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 15, 2023**

Members Presents: Frederick Mansfield, MD  
Steven Kanner, MD  
Patricia Miller, MD

Others Present: Melanie Dineen, Director, Concord Board of Health; Victoria Benalfew, Lincoln Board of Health Administrative Assistant, Jeff Miller, Lincoln resident, Mark Soukup, Lincoln resident and Marcie Black, Lincoln resident

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The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting is on April 12, 2023, at 7:30 p.m.

Tricia McGean RN began with a report on Covid. Within the last month there have been 16 cases in Lincoln. The Commons has not had any cases the last few weeks. The Healey-Driscoll administration announced the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency in Massachusetts as of May 11th this year to align with the end of the federal public health emergency, which gives us a 45-day notice. How this will affect open meeting law is unclear at the moment.

Turning our attention to mental health and working with the Great Meadows Regional Collaborative, Tricia McGean RN shared that they have had some meetings recently and they have come up with a continuum, especially at the regional public health level. Nurses and epidemiologists have come up with some wonderful initiatives, offering mental health, first aid, youth and adult mental health first aid, etc. They want to offer these services to the surrounding towns, teachers, residents, school, and town staff.

We are still getting tick borne illnesses with this mild winter and Trisha McGean reported seeing a handful of Lyme disease cases.

Regarding the radon test unit loan program, Dr. Mansfield spoke with Dan Pereira, assistant town administrator for Lincoln, to see when the program can begin. Mr. Pereira is looking for Town Counsel to write a waiver to protect the town. Dr. Kanner states he would like to get the program going, the test is pretty accurate for informational purposes and should be validated with one of the charcoal-based tests, at which point people can get a professional company involved. He goes on to say that there is nothing actionable from the results that will harm anyone in any fashion. In addition, he states that the test displays a simple disclaimer saying that this is a screening test; if results are abnormal they should be subsequently validated. Tricia McGean asked where they were on disclosing results. Dr. Mansfield read the DRAFT paperwork that he suggests we provide with the loan of the test units as follows below:

One of your Lincoln neighbors has generously provided several electronic Radon testing meters for Lincoln residents to borrow and use free of charge. Radon is a carcinogen and a known cause of lung cancer. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health lists Middlesex County as an area with a generally high concentration of uranium in the mineral soil and ledges. The radon gas concentration, however, is spotty from place to place, so that two houses which are close together may have very different radon exposures.

As a preventative measure, you can measure the radon concentration in your home. If it's above the public safe limit, you may consider remediation, which involves sealing any holes for leaks in your foundation, and placing a vent pipe through the basement floor with a fan that vents the gas from under your house to the outdoors. The cost of remediation is around \$1,000 to \$3,000. At present there's no legal requirement

for radon testing or remediation for existing structures. If you're interested in testing the radon concentration in your home, you may borrow one of these test units for 2 weeks, no charge.

The loan units may be obtained from Victoria, the Board of Health Administrative Assistant. Instructions for arranging the proper test conditions in your home and for placement of the units will be provided with the unit. The test equipment must be returned in 2 weeks from the day of the loan. Mr. Michael Feeney, director of the Indoor Air Quality program at DPH has advised us that if your test result is above the safe zone of 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) of air, you should have the test repeated using the inexpensive charcoal testing that's available at hardware stores or from the Mass DPH or by a licensed professional who's involved in radon testing and remediation. The retest should be done if you're considering remediation because the Board of Health cannot guarantee the accurate calibration of the lower test units.

Melanie Dineen asked Dr. Mansfield if he would like to include the information about the radon hotline and the resources that the state has on radon, which has links to the CDC. He agreed to amend the paperwork and get it to Victoria at the Lincoln Town Hall. Dr. Mansfield asked Victoria to follow up with Dan Pereira, which she agreed to do.

The second page of the document, the last paragraph as read by Dr Mansfield states: The Board of Health would like to build a database of test results to determine what the general level of radon exposure in the town is, and to see whether there are neighborhoods with particularly high exposures. We understand that you may not want your test results to be available in public records, so we will not record your name or address in the database, but we would appreciate you optionally providing your street name and whether or not the test result was above the EPA action level of 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) of air.

Dr. Kanner states that he would like to move forward with this. Dr. Mansfield stated that he sent the document that was read to Dan Pereira who is going to have the Town Counsel review it.

Dr. Mansfield invited Lincoln resident Kimberly Soukup to speak next. Her husband Mark Soukup of 6 Woodcock Lane, Lincoln introduced himself and Jeff Miller, another Lincoln resident. He began by saying he has a 9-month-old infant and has been doing a lot of reading on how to make sure she develops fully and is trying to keep toxins out of her intake. A couple of weeks ago, he found out that the water department in Lincoln is putting fluoride in the water, which he is very concerned about. He states that studies have proven that fluoride is a toxin & it is a poison even in low levels, causing significant loss of IQ among developing babies and infants as well as injuring elderly woman and causing a huge increase in hip fractures for them. He also states that we are putting ourselves and our children at great risk by adding fluoride to the water with no benefit at all. Mr. Soukup stated that when the United States started adding fluoride to its drinking water, cavities did go down; however European countries which did not add fluoride to their drinking water saw the exact same decrease in cavities. He attributes this to society getting better with brushing their teeth and dental hygiene. He states that fluoride gives us no benefits when it comes to cavities but brushing your teeth and topical treatment of fluoride on the exterior of the tooth, as well as minimal consumption of sugary foods or brushing one's teeth after eating sugary foods, are what helps prevent cavities. He reiterates that ingesting fluoride has no benefits to reducing cavities whatsoever, and rather produces the harms that he mentioned before. He proposed immediately ceasing adding fluoride to the drinking water in Lincoln.

Dr Mansfield stated that the water commission came to the Board of Health a month or two ago regarding this issue. They found that the American Dental Association & the American Academy of Pediatrics are in favor of fluoridation of the water because of the effect on tooth decay. The Board of Health has also spoken to David Urion, director of behavioral neurology clinics and programs at Children's Hospital of Boston, who provided them with studies regarding IQ changes related to fluoride. The places mentioned

in that data had concentrations of fluoride in the water that were two to three times the acceptable upper limit in Massachusetts. The data from the town website states that the highest level allowed in drinking water is 4 mg per liter, Lincoln has tested their water and they have been ranging from 0.13 to 1.06 mg per liter with the single highest test over the past year being 1.06 mg per liter. Dr. Mansfield states that Dr. Urion shared that there has been no evidence of any change in IQs in places where the level of fluoride added is less than 1.5 mg per liter. He offered to share the data. He asked for the data that the residents have that fluoridated populations and non-fluoridated populations show the same decrease in cavities, which the residents agreed to provide.

Marcie Black, another resident of Lincoln and Mark Soukup's wife spoke next. She suggested doing more research on whether or not fluoride helps with cavities, because the studies that show a positive result from using fluoride in the water were done before people were using toothpaste. She shared a review article of seven different studies that she stated was not as convincing as one would think regarding the positive effect of fluoride in the water. Mrs. Black says that there are mixed results, but they're showing a benefit for populations that do not have access to good dental care. Some recommend fluoride in water, but the results were mixed based on the community. She would like to see a deep dive into the benefits for a population like Lincoln. Dr. Kanner asked for the date for the review article, which was determined to be from 2002.

Dr. Kanner asked the couple if they were aware of a town meeting on fluoridation in the water that took place about 6 years ago, which included extensive reviews of the literature and went through all the issues, including the IQ deficiency, and the possibility of necrosis, osteoporosis, and osteosarcoma. He stated that he personally went through all those things along with others and there is no validity to the claim that adding fluoride at normal levels for the prevention of caries produces IQ loss. Marcie Black asked to see the summary, which she was told could be found online. Dr. Mansfield invited her to send the articles she's read to the Board, which she agreed to do.

Dr. Kanner reiterated that the conclusion has been that it is worthwhile for all populations to have the added fluoride in the water, because there are subgroups within each of the populations that don't brush their teeth, don't use fluoridated toothpaste, etc. There is no supportive evidence that there's any IQ loss related to the addition of fluoride. This has been validated repeatedly by studies. It was voted on at the Town meeting and residents resoundingly defeated the notion of possibly removing fluoride from the water, in order to protect children's teeth. He states he is open minded to new data.

Mark Soukup asks the BOH to come to a decision and states that they can turn off the fluoride if they decide to, without it going to the Town meeting. He references an article that he has dated March 27th, 2020, by Dr Paul Connett, Ph.D., Director of Fluoride Action Network, which states that as of 2020, there's been 72 fluoride IQ studies of which 64 found lower IQs among children with higher fluoride exposure and that there is now very strong evidence that fluoride damages both fetal and infant brains at the level used in artificially fluoridated areas.

Jeff Miller spoke next regarding a study found in the Harvard Public Health magazine showing a correlation from the 70s, when fluoridation was entered into communities in the United States, and descending pediatric cavity levels in other countries globally, which did not have the addition of fluoride into their water. He points out that for example countries in Europe in 1975 that were matching our trend of descending cavities without fluoridation in the water could be accounted for by changes in toothpaste and fluoride addition to mouth rinses. Dr. Mansfield asked for him to send along the study so that he could get in touch with the people at their dental school.

Jeff Miller stated that fluoride is not a safe substance, and there is no safety study that has been conducted by the EPA or the CDC. He offered to share data about a lawsuit, where it was admitted that there are no

safety studies for fluoride. Dr. Mansfield reiterated his desire to see the data and ask for the studies to be sent to the board. He will schedule a meeting to discuss the data once the Board has had time to review it. Jeff Miller asked how to get the documentation from the town meeting, and Dr. Kanner shared how to access the minutes. Dr. Kanner states that they would be happy to review the data, do further research and seek professional counsel from experts in the area but he feels it is unlikely that the information would be so compelling to support the notion of removing fluoride from the water.

Victoria Benalfew provided her email address so that the residents could share the data they had found. Mark Soukup states that he will be sending along a video regarding a major lawsuit against the federal government regarding fluoridation in the water, where the head of the EPA as well as the head of the National Health Association were asked under oath by the opposing side's attorney if they were aware of any studies that show a benefit of fluoride in the water to prevent cavities, and they stated that they were not and that they agree with the data supporting IQ loss from fluoridation. Dr. Mansfield thanked him for bringing this issue up and reminded him to send the data along for review.

Dr. Mansfield moves on to the noise issue from DeCordova. Melanie Dineen states that the DeCordova is going to meet with a mitigator to work on a plan for the noise levels, and then Pilar will share it with the Board of Health. Dr. Mansfield asked about Pierce House, Ms. Dineen stated that she spoke with Dan Pereira regarding this, and that they do have a mitigation plan in place. Mr. Pereira shared that the town conducted sound modeling a few summers back and there are protocols in place based on those test results. She will ask for the protocols to be shared, per Dr. Mansfield's request. Ms. Dineen also shared that deCordova has constructed a new venue for events at the top of the hill, potentially affecting how sound carries. Dr Mansfield would like to compare the Pierce House's protocols with deCordova, and whether it was based on decibel level or distance.

Melanie Dineen shares that the Lincoln Commons septic system is up and running, it has been since before Christmas and that the engineers were there today, doing the final surveying to start the as built. If anyone asks about the Certificate of Compliance, the holdup is that the septic system was designed without garbage grinders so the association must provide the engineering firm with proof that everyone's garbage disposals have been removed as a condition of the permit, which has to happen before a COC will be issued. The engineers also will not give the BOH an as built without it.

Gabby White, Mike Funaiole and Melanie Dineen have been doing some routine food inspections and there have not been too many septic fields being installed. Ms. Dineen has also had a couple of housing inspections on Wells Rd in Lincoln for section 8 housing, these are done prior to occupancy and a dumpster complaint that she's investigating. There was an inspection done on the Pierce house, and the recommendations that were made will be taken to the committee for the Pierce House by Dan Pereira. Ms. Dineen also sent out notices to the summer camps in Lincoln and will be meeting with the Recs Dept to discuss changes to make a better process for the recreation department and for the pool, as well as expectations for third-party summer camps and improve communications.

No bills were paid this month per Victoria Benalfew. April 22nd will be the first hazardous waste collection date. The review of the minutes will be postponed until the next meeting, which will be Wednesday April 12th, 2023, at 7:30pm.

Dr. Kanner moved to adjourn the meeting, Dr. Mansfield seconded. By roll call the members of the Board of Health voted: Dr. Mansfield- aye, Dr. Kanner- aye, Patricia Miller-aye.

*Submitted by Victoria Benalfew*