



CITY OF GARDNER
OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF HEALTH
95 PLEASANT ST, ROOM 29
GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS 01440



Members Present: Lauren Saunders – Health Director
Susan Avallone, RN - Member
Atty. Geoffrey Tobia – Member
Michele Parker, MD - Member

In Attendance: Kristian Whitsett, Jones Whitsett Architects, Inc.
Wayne Anderson, Gardner Public Schools Director of Facilities

Minutes for Board of Health meeting held on Monday, January 27, 2020

5:04 Meeting called to order.

5:05 Minutes from the December 9, 2019 meeting were reviewed, discussed, and approved.

5:08 Plumbing variance request: The Board reviewed the documents provided including a diagram of the planned bathrooms, plumbing fixture requirement calculations, a state plumbing code variance application, a letter from the city of Gardner Plumbing Inspector, and a letter from Jones Whitsett Architects, Inc.

Kristian Whitsett and Wayne Anderson joined the meeting. Kristian is an architect designing the proposed new elementary school. During the design process there has been discussion to designate multi-user restrooms as “Gender Neutral” in the new Gardner Elementary School. This would require a MA State plumbing variance to deviate from the gender separation requirements. State plumbing code currently allows for an individual separate gender neutral room with a toilet and sink. The proposed bathroom design for the new elementary school is to have large multi-user restrooms with partitions to enclose each individual toilet privately with multi-user hand washing stations in the common area of the room. Gender-neutral bathroom would allow for staff and faculty of either gender to monitor students. The bathrooms requiring a variance are specifically for grades 1-5. Pre-K, Kindergarten, and SPED classrooms will be provided with self-contained unisex restrooms within their classrooms, as permitted by code.

Kristian explained that part of the process for applying for a state plumbing code variance is to meet with the Board of Health at the city level prior to filing the variance request with the state. He also stated that there are currently 2 bills regarding gender-neutral bathrooms pending with the state legislature.

The Board appreciates the intent of inclusion and progressive design but recognizes that there are many other factors involved. The Board feels it is not within their scope of their authority to write a letter either in favor or against a gender neutral bathroom design as long as any design meets the state sanitation code. It is agreed that a signed copy of the minutes from this meeting will meet requirement needed to appear before the state plumbing board. Kristian was invited to return if an issue arises that needs this Boards attention. Kristian and Wayne exit the meeting.

5:50 Old Business:

Body Art Regulations: The Board has had the opportunity to review the most recent draft of revisions to the Body Piercing Regulations which will now be called Body Art Regulations and will encompass “Tattoo Artist”, “Body Piercing” and “Micropigmentation” licenses. The draft still needs more discussion about the requirements of each discipline’s apprenticeship and license. The Board agrees to discuss this matter in depth at the next meeting.

Licensing: All annual food, tobacco and other licenses have been renewed.

Tobacco: The Board was sent an email from Tobacco Control Alliance with the regulations and requirements for a smoking bar. There is a local business owner who had requested this information. This would be an “Adult-Only” smoking bar with alcohol and food. The surrounding communities have regulations that prevent this type of establishment but Gardner does not. The email also details the new fines for tobacco and vape violations.

6:00 New Business:

Gardner Public Access TV: Sue and Lauren have scheduled a taping for January 30, 2020. They will be doing a segment on the flu.

Housing: There has been an increased need for inspections of tenant apartments recently with pipes bursting and ceilings collapsing from the cold winter weather.

Curbside Trash: Lauren will be meeting with Public Safety Committee on Tuesday January 28, 2020 to continue discussing an increase in the cost of residential curbside trash and recycling pickup. The proposed increase is \$30 per year or \$7.50 per quarter. There have been significant increases to this cost due to changes in the recycling market.

5:41 Set next meeting for Monday February 24, 2020 at 5pm, adjourn.

Susan Avallone RN, Member

Atty. Geoffrey Tobia, Member

Michele C. Parker MD, Member

All conversations are documented on recording identified as B.O.H January 27, 2020.