



**CITY OF BURLINGTON  
BOARD OF HEALTH**

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**BOARD OF HEALTH**

Alan R. Sousie, Chair • Fernand C. Crete • Ian C. Galbraith • Mary D. Hart • James Vos

**BOARD STAFF ASSISTANT**

Margaret Van Brunt

**HEALTH OFFICER**

Kathleen Butler

**BOARD OF HEALTH REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2009**

The meeting was commenced at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, January 5, 2009 in the Front Conference Room of 645 Pine Street. Present were Chair Sousie; Members Crete, Hart and Vos; and Staff Assistant Van Brunt. Also present: Kevin Hurley with Swab-VT, Burlington resident and Executive Producer of Polaris Mediaworks; Geoff Golder with Swab-VT; Tyler Brassard with Swab-VT; Jean Markey-Duncan, Burlington resident; Noah Pollach, Burlington resident; Heather Danis, Vermont Department of Health, Burlington D.O.; Deborah Loring, Burlington resident and chemist; and Donna Hayes, Burlington resident.

1. Confirmation of the Agenda

No changes to the agenda. Agenda accepted by consensus.

2. Acceptance of Minutes (5 minutes)

Chair Sousie asked Board members to review minutes from November 2008 meeting. Chair Sousie mentioned in reference to Item 3 in the November minutes that the Board had directed concerned citizens of Killarney Drive to contact the Burlington Police Department. Chair Sousie stated that the citizen did contact the Burlington Police Department and was informed that the BPD does not have jurisdiction over the issue of transient people camping near the Killarney Drive neighborhood unless the people cause a disturbance or threat. Chair Sousie also stated that the Board of Health does not have jurisdiction over the issue unless there is a health hazard. Chair Sousie requested that Staff Assistant Van Brunt research what body has jurisdiction over this issue, if any. Staff Assistant Van Brunt is to give this information to Member Crete. Member Crete suggested that if there is no particular body with jurisdiction, the Board should consider bringing the issue to the Elks Club on North Avenue, where the problem is occurring.

In reviewing the remainder of the November minutes, Member Vos suggested inclusion of a statement made by Chair Sousie requesting that the VT Department of Health provide *new* information on the fluoride issue if they intend to make a presentation to the Board.

3. Public Forum

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Chair Sousie stated for the record that Swab-VT had requested permission to record the Public Forum for their own purposes. Chair Sousie stated that he would grant them permission to do so if there was no objection from the Board or the public. Seeing no objection, recording was allowed of the Public Forum only. Chair Sousie opened the Public Forum.

Heather Danis with the VT Department of Health came forward and stated that the VT Department of Health would be happy to give a presentation on fluoride if the Board so desired. Ms. Danis stated she had passed on the information that the Board would like new information if a presentation is to be given. Chair Sousie clarified that it would be the VT Department of Health's choice whether to make a presentation to the Board or not. Chair Sousie also explained that if the VT Department of Health did wish to present, someone should contact Chair Sousie at least two weeks prior to the next meeting.

Geoff Golder, Burlington resident and associated with Swab-VT, came forward and stated that he wanted to urge the Board to take into account the fact that organizations have been wrong about fluoride in the past in their consideration of the water fluoridation issue.

Kevin Hurley, Burlington resident, associated with Swab-VT, and Executive Producer of Polaris Mediaworks, thanked the Board for allowing the presentation at November's meeting. Mr. Hurley addressed a statement he said was made by Dr. Bookwalter at the last meeting that action should not be taken out of fear and paranoia. Mr. Hurley stated he believes they are not acting out of fear and paranoia but that they are acting on precaution. Mr. Hurley mentioned that 48 communities in the country voted to remove fluoride from their water in this last election in November.

Jean Markey-Dunkin, Burlington resident, stated she came to the meeting in support of the hard work being put into the Pesticide Ordinance. Ms. Markey-Dunkin stated she had recently buried her father-in-law who had suffered from Parkinson's disease, explaining that recent studies have shown that if you have a predisposition to Parkinson's disease, exposure to pesticides increases the likelihood that you will develop the disease. Ms. Markey-Dunkin also stated that she does not know much about the fluoride debate but that her view is if you can get the same beneficial effects of fluoride by brushing your teeth, it should not be put in the water.

Deborah Loring, Burlington resident and chemist, stated she had spoken with her City Councilor in an attempt to find out who makes decisions about issues such as water fluoridation. Ms. Loring stated that her City Councilor brought this question to the City Attorney, who determined that the City Council would be responsible for decisions of this nature. Ms. Loring stated that she believes there is enough credible evidence that there should be a question in everyone's mind whether fluoride is safe. Ms. Loring presented the question of whether we should be putting fluoride in the water if we are at all unsure of its safety. Chair Sousie responded by encouraging Ms. Loring to continue giving information to the Board about the dangers of fluoride. Chair Sousie acknowledged that the City Council would make the decision but stated that the Council will be receptive to the Board of Health's opinion on the matter. Brief discussion followed regarding the question of whether to discontinue fluoridation of the water supply.

Seeing no other members of the public wishing to address the Board, Chair Sousie closed the Public Forum.

4. Discussion/Action: Youth Mentorship by Burlington Board of Health

Chair Sousie stated that the Legacy Project of Burlington is motivating commissions and boards in the city to include youth and presented the question to the Board of whether the Board would be interested in sponsoring a youth. Chair Sousie also stated that sponsoring a youth would require that a member of the Board be a mentor for the youth. Discussion followed. Chair Sousie asked Staff Assistant Van Brunt to ask the City Attorney about what voting powers the youth might have if sponsored by the Board, if any. Members Vos and Hart volunteered as mentors. Member Vos motioned to invite a youth to join the Board for an educational opportunity to learn about the workings of the Board of Health, to be mentored by both Member Vos and Member Hart. Motion seconded by Member Crete. Motion unanimously accepted.

5. Approval of BOH Semi-Annual Report to Mayor and City Council

Chair Sousie asked Board to review the Semi-Annual Report provided, explaining that it covers what the Board has done in the last six months and highlights the items Chair Sousie believes should be brought to the Council's attention. Member Vos motioned to accept the Semi-Annual Report. Member Hart seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Final Consideration of Pesticide Ordinance Revisions Draft

Chair Sousie requested that consideration of this item be postponed until the February meeting. Chair Sousie stated the draft was not yet ready for final consideration. All members accepted postponement of this item. Chair Sousie noted that the revision was essentially finished as far as the Board is concerned, but that they are waiting for Health Officer Butler to complete finishing touches on the introduction and on other matters regarding Code Enforcement issues. Chair Sousie also stated the he was not sure whether the Board would need to hold another Public Hearing about the revision before submitting, but that this question could be addressed at the February meeting.

7. Follow-up to City Fluoridation Presentation by Swab-VT

Chair Sousie brought to the attention of the Board a letter from a dentist in Oregon who heard of the Board through Swab-VT. Chair Sousie asked the Board to read through the letter, stating that the content was important as it included information new to the Board. Chair Sousie opened the floor to the Board for comments. Discussion followed regarding the letter, its content, and the question of whether to discontinue the fluoridation of water in Burlington. Following discussion, Member Vos presented a proposed resolution for the Board to consider and vote upon. Members Hart and Galbraith voted against passing the resolution while Members Vos and Crete voted for passing the resolution. Chair Sousie broke the tie of two votes for and two votes against with a vote for the passing of the resolution. With a total vote of three for and two against, the Board passed the resolution

recommending the discontinuation of the practice of water fluoridation in the City of Burlington. Resolution included as appendix.

## 8. Chairman's Report

### a. Grant Source Research

Chair Sousie provided a list of possible funding sources for the Board's consideration, stating that he would like the Board to submit applications to get funding for pamphlets for educating about pesticide issues. Chair Sousie noted that The Cove Point Foundation is particularly interested in chemical issues. Member Hart volunteered to put together a draft letter to ask for support for the Board's efforts to educate the public.

### b. School Inspection Audit Completed

Chair Sousie informed the Board that he attended an inspection at Hunt School and was completed satisfied with the inspection process used by the Burlington Schools Property Services Department. Chair Sousie stated he believes they are doing the best they can with the resources they have. Chair Sousie also noted that he had one concern about the noise level created by the fans in the wood working room, and that he had mentioned it to the inspector who stated the issue would be looked into. Chair Sousie stated intent to follow up on this issue.

## 9. Member Reports

Member Vos stated the December program on domestic abuse with Channel 17 was successful. Chair Sousie thanked Member Vos for the time he put into coordinating the program.

Member Galbraith stated a friend of his, retired physician Bud Shriner, indicated an interest in becoming a member of the Board of Health. Chair Sousie suggested that Member Galbraith direct Dr. Shriner to the City website for an application form. Member Galbraith also stated that he was attending a course on teaching others about weapons of mass destruction on January 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Member Galbraith stated there may still be openings if anyone was interested.

## 10. Staff Reports

There were no staff reports.

## 11. Adjournment

Member Vos motioned to adjourn. Motion seconded by Member Crete. Meeting adjourned.