



TOWN COUNCIL – AGENDA REQUEST FORM

THIS FORM WILL BECOME PART OF THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION USED BY THE COUNCIL AND PUBLIC

Please submit Agenda Request Form, **including back up information**, 8 days prior to the requested meeting date. **Public Hearing requests must be submitted 20 days prior to requested meeting date to meet publication deadlines** (exceptions may be authorized by the Town Manager, Chairman/Vice Chair).

MEETING INFORMATION

Date Submitted: October 6, 2023
Submitted by: Health Officer Erin Olson
Department: Health
Speakers: Erin Olson

Date of Meeting: October 12, 2023
Time Required: 20 minutes
Background Info. Supplied: Yes: No:

CATEGORY OF BUSINESS (PLEASE PLACE AN "X" IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX)

Appointment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition/Resignation/Retirement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Hearing:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Old Business:	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Business:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consent Agenda:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonpublic:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>

TITLE OF ITEM

Health Officer Review and Update with Town Council

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM

The Town Council and Health Officer to meet the annual meeting and reporting requirement as well as review and complete the "Summary of Readiness to Address Local Public Health Threats" report for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), in accordance with RSA 128.

REFERENCE (IF KNOWN)

RSA:	128	Warrant Article:	_____
Charter Article:		Town Meeting:	_____
Other:		N/A	

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED (PLEASE PLACE AN "X" IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX)

Projector:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grant Requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easel:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joint Meeting:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Seating:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laptop:	<input type="checkbox"/>	None:	<input type="checkbox"/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:	<u>Erin Olson</u>	Address:	<u>432 DW Highway</u>
Phone Number:	<u>603-420-1730</u>	Email Address:	<u>eolson@merrimacknh.gov</u>

APPROVAL

Town Manager: Yes No: Chair/Vice Chair: Yes No:

Hold for Meeting Date: _____



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HEALTH DIVISION

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Merrimack Health Division

Memorandum

Date: October 4th, 2023
To: Town Council
From: Erin Olson, MBA, CP-FS, Health Officer
Subject: **Annual Merrimack Board of Health Meeting - Town Council**
Complete “Summary of Readiness to Address Local Public Health Threats” annual report for NH Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)

Purpose

To meet the annual meeting and reporting requirement as defined in *RSA 128 Town Health Officers. RSA 128:3 Secretary of Local Board*, states in part that “The local board of health for each town shall meet at least once every year, and as frequently as needed, to review the state of local public health issues and concerns and provide information, as requested, to the department of health and human services, on the readiness to address relevant public health threats at the local or regional levels.”

Items for Review

1. **Review and complete** “Summary of Readiness to Address Local Public Health Threats” report for DHHS
2. **Complete Section 4 of Readiness Report:** Define the top three public health or sanitation challenges facing your municipality.

Additional Information

The following information is provided to aid in your review and completion of the 2023 Merrimack Health Division readiness report, which is to be submitted to the NH Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS). Additional information and documents will be included in your packet for review.

Respectfully,

Erin E. Olson

Erin Olson, MBS, CP-FS
Health Officer



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HEALTH DIVISION

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Merrimack Health Division

Summary of Readiness to Address Local Public Health Threats

To be completed by Municipal Board of Health

Date of Report: October 4th, 2023

Municipality: Merrimack, New Hampshire Population Size: 28,000

Health Officer: (DHO) Erin Olson, MBA, CP-FS & (HO) Richard Jones

Section 1: The Local Health Officer

<p>Please select the health officer's position type:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Part time as Health Officer only</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time as Health Officer only</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Full time as municipal employee with multiple roles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>please explain</i> _____</p>	<p>How long has the health officer served in the health officer role?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Less than 3 years</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 to 9 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Greater than 9 years</p>
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Has the local health officer completed the required training course under RSA 128 on the state laws that provide their authority?

Yes No Scheduled for required training on this date: _____

Has the Health Officer completed any specialized Environmental Health training courses? Examples may include NEHA Environmental Health Specialist or sanitarian certificates.

Yes No Course Completed: *See Attached*

Has the Health Officer completed any advanced environmental health certifications?

REHS CEH Specialist Other relevant training: *See Attached*

Is appropriate PPE available to the Health Officer to perform inspections? Yes No

Are appropriate inspections tools available to the Health Officer? Yes No

Section 2: The Municipality

Does the municipality have a preparedness plan for public health threats? Yes No

If not, does the municipality have the knowledge and resources to write one? Yes No

Does the town engage with or attend meetings with its Regional Public Health Network Yes No

If so, which municipal position attends the meetings: Erin Olson – Health Officer

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HEALTH DIVISION

Section 3: Local Board of Health

Please list members of the local Board of Health (BOH) (RSA 128:3 "The health officer shall be the secretary and executive officer of, and, with the selectmen, shall constitute the local board of health")

Merrimack Town Council Members – Board of Health

- Chairman Finlay Rothhaus
- Vice Chair Nancy Harrington
- Councilor Andy Hunter
- Councilor Barbara Healey
- Councilor Andy Hunter
- Councilor Nancy Murphy
- Councilor Tom Koenig

How many meetings did the BOH have this past year? **One (1) Meeting – TBD**

Section 4: Narrative

Please describe any public health-related successes or progress from last year you would like to report:

*BOH input required

Please describe the top three public health or sanitation challenges facing your municipality:

1. **Water Quality and Drinking Water Contamination:** Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) contaminated drinking water is a top health concern in the Merrimack community. Challenges discussed by the BOH include community education on safe drinking water and available resources. Additionally, there is still not enough research to fully understand all sources of human exposure, and the health impacts that human exposure to PFAS has.
2. **Rental Housing Conditions:** As Merrimack continues to grow rapidly with construction of numerous large scale apartment complexes, so does the incidence of rental housing concerns – including unsanitary living conditions, hoarding, mold, bed bugs, and other nuisances. Challenges arise when responding to rental housing inquires or complaints due to minimal state rental housing regulations and no local rental housing ordinance. Staffing levels also become a barrier in responding to an increase of rental housing complaints.
3. **Public Health Emergency Preparedness:** As the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted, a community's ability to respond in an efficient manner to incidents in order to preserve health and wellbeing of the population during a disaster is vital. The town of Merrimack BOH has identified public health emergency preparedness (PHEP) as an ongoing public health challenge in the community.

*** The above 3 bullets are the top three public health/ sanitation issues noted by the BOH (Town Council). RSA 128 seeks input from the BOH on what issue are faced within the municipality.

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HEALTH DIVISION

Merrimack Health Division Activities 2019 to 2023

Health Division Activities – 2019 to 2023					
Inspection Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (10/4/2023)
Food Establishment Inspections	197	167	256	271	207
Food Establishment Licenses	140	143	134	145	105
Mobile/Temporary Food Inspections	38	18	45	99	89
Food Establishment Plan Reviews	16	7	10	14	8
Outdoor Dining Permits & Inspections	n/a	34	24	n/a	n/a
Public Bathing Area Inspections	30	21	24	29	22
Public Bathing Area Licenses Issued	22	22	22	23	23
School Inspections (Public and Private)	8	7	7	6	6
Childcare Inspections	5	9	13	7	12
Foster Care Inspections	5	15	9	6	5
General Inspection Services	46	54	60	69	41
Complaint Investigation Inspections	31	19	44	34	17
Septic: Test Pit & Bed Bottom Inspections	178	208	167	121	65
COVID-19 Compliance Checks	n/a	33	16	n/a	n/a
COVID-19 Inquires / Assistance	n/a	46	37	n/a	n/a
Grease Trap / FOG Inspections	n/a	n/a	n/a	33	39
Health Division Revenue – 2019 to 2023					
Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Food Establishment License Fees	\$23,600.00	\$22,675.00	\$23,725.00	\$24,170.00	
Pool and Spa Fees	\$1,875.00	\$1,925.00	\$1,975.00	\$1,875.00	
Test Pit	\$3,050.00	\$3,950.00	\$6,900.00	\$6,900.00	



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Merrimack Health Division

HEALTH DIVISION

October 5th, 2023

Merrimack Health Division Mission

To protect and improve the public health of the local community The Merrimack Health Division is committed to enabling all of the citizens of Merrimack and its surrounding areas, which we serve, to engage in healthful and preventive behaviors. We strive to achieve and sustain optimal levels of physical and environmental health. This is accomplished by highly motivated staff that maximize resources to provide ongoing education, development and coordination of health programs.

Health Division Staff

Building and Health Official ~ **Richard Jones**

- Registered as **Health Officer** for the Town of Merrimack by NH Health Officer Liaison Program

Health Officer ~ **Erin Olson, MBA, CP-FS**

- Registered as **Deputy Health Officer** for the Town of Merrimack by NH Health Officer Liaison Program

Merrimack Health Division History & Background

- Historically, the Health Officer Position has been a part-time (28 hours a week) position working under the Building & Health Division.
- In July 2020, the Health Officer position was voted on during the budget process to become a full time (40 hours a week) benefited position.

Health Division Town Code and State Health Officer Affiliation

NH Health Officer Liaison: State Appointment of Health Officers (RSA 128:1)

Town of Merrimack Chapter A198: Administrative Code A198-12 Fire and Rescue Department

- 1) The Building and Health Official, Health Officer and/or Deputy Health Officers as appointed pursuant to RSA 128:1 shall report to the Assistant Fire Chief - Support Services. The Fire Chief shall have direct supervisory authority over the Building and Health Official, Health Officer and/or Deputy Health Officers in consultation with the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Board of Health. **The Building and Health Official, Health Officer and/or Deputy Health Officers shall have the following functions:**
 - a. Investigate all health complaints that may be brought to his/her attention.
 - b. Act as Secretary and executive officer to the Board of Health, reporting to the Fire Chief, shall serve all notices and orders issued by the Board of Health and shall enforce all rules, regulations, and local ordinances affecting the health and comfort of the public.
 - c. Investigate and render assistance in reference to private water supply and septic tanks.
 - d. Investigate all communicable diseases or threats of communicable diseases.
 - e. Investigate all sanitary hazards, enforce all state and local sanitary laws and ordinances, and further, recommend testing of public swimming facilities for the determination of their suitability for that purpose.
 - f. Prepare and maintain all necessary records required by the laws of the State of New Hampshire or the Town ordinances.
 - g. Inspect all restaurants, cafes, other eating places and vendors of food as required by state regulations and/or Town ordinances.
 - h. Perform all other related functions as required by the state, federal and local law, and such other duties as assigned by the Fire Chief or designee.
 - i. Participate in the Regional Coordinating Committee (RCC) for health and emergency management planning and implementation of pandemic planning, emergency shelters, and evacuations

Appointment of Health Officers

- **Appointment of Health Officers (RSA 128:1)** The Board of Selectmen nominates a 'person' (not a group or entity), then the Commissioner of DHHS appoints the individual with a certificate and ID card
- **Term of Office (RSA 128:4)** The town health officer shall hold office for 3 years or until a successor is appointed. No limit on the number of terms a health officer may serve.
- **Deputy Health Officers (RSA 128:5b) and (RSA 128:6 a)** Health officers & BOS have the authority to nominate a deputy. Subject to the same approval process as the health officer.

Health Officer Laws and Regulations

- RSA 128: Town Health Officers
<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/NHTOC/NHTOC-X-128.htm>
- RSA 31:105: Powers and Duties of Towns - Indemnifications for Damages;
<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/III/31/31-105.htm>
- RSA 47:17 Power of City Councils -Bylaws and Ordinances
<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/III/47/47-17.htm>

Core Functions of the Health Officer (Erin Olson)

Childcare and Foster Care Program

Licensed Childcare Facilities in Merrimack: 29

- The Health Officer works in conjunction with the NHDHHS Child Care Licensing Unit (CCLU) to license all childcare facilities and foster care facilities in the town of Merrimack.
- The Health Officer conducts inspections of all childcare facilities within the town – in addition to responding to any complaints or service requests in these childcare facilities.
- Throughout the pandemic, the Health Officer worked with all childcare facilities to ensure that COVID-19 protocols and guidelines were strictly adhered to.
- **Child Care Rules:** PART He-C 4002 NH Child Care Program Licensing Rules

Communicable or Infectious Disease

- The Health Officer supports the Infectious Disease Control Program of the NH DHHS, this vital public health role with the provision of current information about the occurrence, transmission, and prevention of communicable diseases in their towns
- The Health Officer may assist the DPHS Infectious Disease Control Program with the control of an identified illness in their community. (i.e. posting signs regarding swimming in a contaminated public beach.)
- Under **RSA 141-C:5**, assist with the commissioner of DHHS, when requested to do so, in the establishment and enforcement of isolation and quarantine in their respective cities and towns.
- **Title X Public Health Chapter 141-C Communicable Disease:** 141-C:5 Duties of Health Officers

Housing

- Health Officer enforces minimum housing standards specific to rental housing – including responding to complaints and service requests. Investigations are conducted when complaints or service requests are filed with the Health Division; hoarding, elder neglect or abuse (liaison to Elder Protective Services), bed bugs, asbestos, Radon, and mold/moisture.
- **Housing Regulations:** Chapter 48-A: Housing Standards

Emergency Management

- The Merrimack Health Officer serves as a partner to the *Greater Nashua Public Health Network (GNPHN)* and the *Regional Public Health Emergency Preparedness Management team*. During the Pandemic, the PHEP met weekly to check-in on community needs, including vaccine and test site planning, inventory on community PPE supplies, and staffing resources.
- **Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition (PHEP):** brings regional partners together to be better prepared to respond to large-scale public health emergencies within our community. The focus is to coordinate with key stakeholders to develop comprehensive community preparedness and response plans to be able to effectively mitigate and respond to the impacts of a large-scale public health emergency.

- The Health Officer coordinates with key stakeholders to develop comprehensive community preparedness and response plans to be able to effectively mitigate and respond to the impacts of a large-scale public health emergency
- The Health Officer attends and represents the Town of Merrimack at monthly workgroup sessions for the newly established Regional Health Equity Workgroup.

Public Health Nuisances

- The Health Officer investigates all personal observations, State orders, and complaints from the public about incidents of environmental pollution; maintains liaison with State, federal, and other appropriate officials
- Health Officers can conduct sanitary investigations into complaints and nuisances that may endanger public health – this includes; odors, noise, trash/garbage, pests, standing water/surface water, improper disposal of waste, and unsanitary living conditions.
- Public Health Nuisance Guidance Document
- **Water Quality (Drinking Water): Role of the Health Officer**

Public Bathing Area Program

Licensed Public Bathing Areas in Merrimack: 23

- The Health Officer licenses and inspects all public and semi-public swimming pools in town.
- Health Officer licenses and inspects all public beaches in town – in addition to monitoring water quality standards in conjunction with the NH DES.
- **Public Bathing Area Regulations: Chapter Env-Wq 1100 Public Bathing Places**
- NH DES Public Pool and Spa Program
- **Public Beach Inspection Program: Role of the Health Officer**

Septic Systems

- Organizes, witnesses, and inspects test pits and percolation tests pertaining to foodservice and individual septic systems; inspects the required phases of new septic system installations, all septic system alterations, removals, and replacements; investigates reports of all faulty septic systems and institutes corrective measures
- Health Officer conducts all test pit field inspections (new and failed systems)
- Health Officer conducts all bed bottom field inspections prior to septic system installation
- Grease trap inspections in conjunction with Merrimack Wastewater – FOG BMP software
- **Septic System Regulations: Chapter Env-Wq 1000 Subdivisions; Individual Sewage Disposal Systems**

School Health and Sanitation Inspections

- Health Officer conducts inspections of all private and public schools as required by the NHDOE.
- **School Health Inspections: Role of the Health Officer**

Food Protection Program

Licensed Food Establishments in Merrimack: 140

- Merrimack is one (1) of fifteen (15) self-inspecting communities in the State of NH.
- **Background:** In the State of NH, there are only 15 “Self-Inspecting” communities. Self-inspecting communities are responsible for all inspections related to retail food. Each other Town and City in NH are inspected by the NH Food Protection Program.
- The Health Officer licenses and inspects all food establishments in the town of Merrimack. Food inspection and licensing includes but is not limited to; full service restaurant’s, concession stands, school cafeterias, retail food stores, gas stations, homestead food operations (residential kitchens), mobile food trucks, temporary food events, and outdoor dining areas.
- The Health Officer reviews site plans for new food establishments or establishments undergoing renovations, conducting pre-operational and closing inspections.
- Plan review applications are also reviewed for establishments undergoing renovations, and change of ownership.
- Health Officer responds and investigates all possible foodborne illness outbreaks and food recalls.
- **Retail Food Regulations: Chapter He-P 2300 Sanitary Production and Distribution of Food**

Erin Olson, MBA, CP-FS – Health Officer

Training and Credentials – As of October 4th, 2023

Food Safety Training & Credentials

- Certified Professional in Food Safety (CP-FS), ID:15412, *National Environmental Health Association, NEHA*
- FDA Managing Retail Food Safety (FD215), *Association of Food and Drug Officials, AFDO*
- FDA Plan Review for Food Establishments (FD207), *Association of Food and Drug Officials, AFDO*
- FDA Risked Based Inspection Methods (FD218), *Association of Food and Drug Officials, AFDO*
- FDA Food Code (FD112), *Food and Drug Administration AFDO*
- ServSafe Manager Certification, *National Restaurant Association*
- ServSafe Allergens Certification, *National Restaurant Association*
- Food Establishment Plan Review Two-Day Course, *MoJin Solutions*

Other Specialized Environmental & Public Health Training & Certifications

- Fire Inspector I, National Fire Protection Association, (completion in November 2023)
- Introduction to the Duties and Authority of the Local Health Officer, *NH DHHS Health Officer Liaison Unit*
- Hydric Soils of New England, (PDT-SoilSc-04), *University of New Hampshire*
- Soil Genesis & Classification, (PDT-SoilSc-09), *University of New Hampshire*
- EPA/HUD RRP Certified Renovator (Lead Safe) ID: R-I-18692-20-00183
- Certified Pool Operator (CPO) #592397, *Pool Operation Management*
- MA PHIT Housing Inspector, *Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)*
- Hazardous Materials for First Responders, Awareness Level, *MEMA*
- Stop the Bleed, *American College of Surgeons*
- Heartsaver Bloodborne Pathogens, *American Heart Association*
- Youth Mental Health First Aid Certification, *Mental Health First Aid USA*
- CPR Training/Heimlich Maneuver training (AED), *American Heart Association*
- FEMA, Emergency Management Institute
 - ICS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System
 - ICS-200: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action incidents
 - ICS-700b: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System
 - Fundamentals of Emergency Management IS-00230.d
- Local Public Health Institute of Massachusetts Certificates, Boston University School of Public Health
 - Public Health Core Training Certificate
 - Public Health Law and Legal Issues in Massachusetts
 - Food Protection Programs for Regulators
 - Housing Programs for Regulators

Richard Jones – Building and Health Official

Training and Credentials – As of October 4th, 2023

Specialized Environmental & Public Health Training & Certifications

- Introduction to the Duties and Authority of the Local Health Officer, *NH DHHS Health Officer Liaison Unit*
- ServSafe Manager Certification, *National Restaurant Association*