

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Introduction

The Board of Health is responsible for the promotion and protection of public health. This is done through education and enforcement of environmental, public, medical and mental health laws and regulations and emergency preparedness planning. The Board of Health provides enforcement of the State Sanitary Code under the Department of Public Health and the State Environmental Code under the Department of Environmental Protection.

The State Sanitary Code includes permitting, regulating and inspecting housing, food sales and service, pools, camps, lead, asbestos and lead abatement, surveillance and reporting of communicable disease and animal health.

The State Environmental Code includes permitting and regulating wells, septic systems, ground water and air protection. The Board is committed to providing the highest protection of the public health possible with available resources.

Public Health

Under the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Department of Homeland Security and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) all Local Boards of Health have been called upon to prepare their communities for all natural and manmade disasters using a regional model for emergency preparedness.

The Town of Weston is one of 34 communities assigned to Emergency Preparedness Region 4A by the MDPH. Emergency Preparedness planning has been mandated by the Department of Homeland Security, the Center for Disease Control, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. National standards for Public Health Emergency Preparedness have been established. Aggressive training programs have been designed and implemented and benchmarks set by these organizations. The Board of Health has invested many man hours over the past six years in planning and training to properly prepare and implement an emergency plan for the community.

The BOH is in the process of updating an Emergency Dispensing (EDS) Site Plan and Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Arrangements are being made to enter into Mutual Aid Agreements with all communities in Region 4A. Planning with local Hospitals on emergency preparedness continues as part of the deliverable requirement for the CDC Public Health Grant, administered through the MDPH.

One of the most critical Public Health assets in an emergency is sufficient staff to deliver critical services. The Region 4A coalition created the Massachusetts Region 4A Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to provide for this critical need. This year the Weston Branch of the MA Region 4A MRC adopted the name Weston Emergency Response Corps (WERC). At the present time WERC is 59 members strong and is part of the MA Region 4A MRC of 34 Communities. The Weston MRC reports to the Weston Board of Health, but exists as a part of a network of local, regional, and national organizations dedicated to rapid, safe, and effective crisis response.

In 2008 WERC staffed two flu clinics in November providing over 400 doses of vaccine to Weston residents. In December several counties experienced a devastating ice storm. Power to more than one million residents homes was lost for more than two weeks. Several communities opened shelters and required the assistance of many of the state MRC's. The MA Region 4A MRC responded staffing over 369 shifts providing medical and sheltering support to several shelters in Central Massachusetts, WERC provided staffing for nine shifts.

The Board of Health extends a thank you to the members of WERC who assisted in the 2008 deployments by volunteering their time and expertise in support of Public Health in Weston and the Commonwealth.

Ruddy Ruggles, Chair; Sandra Ashley, Secretary; Diana Chaplin, PR; Will Cochran, M.D. David Kominz, M.D.; Paula Giamo, P.N.P; Ross Giamo; Al Newstadt; Pamela Swain; Sharon Arroyo, R.N.; Dorothea Thomas; Marilyn Savage; Beth Keane; John Droney; Laura Bookman; Ellie Pendergast; Sharon Bonica; Carl Benedict; Christine Conran

The BOH is responsible for ensuring that the health and welfare of farm animals owned by the citizens of Weston meets the standards of care required by law. Eighteen Livestock Permits were issued with 192 animals noted during inspections of all permitted properties.

The Animal inspector also quarantined 9 dogs during the year for animal bites.

Mental Health

The BOH provides mental health services to Weston's citizens through contracts with Human Relations Service in Wellesley, the Multi-Service Center in Newton and the Charles River Workshop in Needham.

Environmental Health

All residential properties in Weston are served by individual septic systems. Title 5 of the State Environmental Code is a set of regulations established by the State Department of Environmental Protection that sets standards for the design and construction of septic systems. The BOH is responsible for the enforcement of this Code and invests approximately 80% of its staff time in the area of environmental health enforcing Title 5 of the State Environmental Code.

Enforcement of Title 5 consists of the witnessing of percolation and deep test holes, review of septic system plans, and inspection of the installation of new septic systems and wells. Title 5 Inspections of existing septic systems and renovation projects require research of existing files to establish abutting lot and site conditions. Renovation projects are all reviewed to ensure that the proposed work is in compliance with Title 5 of the State Environmental Code.

There are several large complexes that require sewerage treatment plants. These complexes have ground water discharge permits issued through the Department of Environmental Protection. Reports are forwarded to the BOH and are reviewed to establish that the treatment plants are operating within the parameters of the permit.

Detail of Regular Services Provided by the BOH

Activity	Total 2008	Total 2007	Total 2006
Septic System Permits	85	87	130
Septic System Plan Reviews	270	247	201
Septic System Inspections/ meetings	340	487	430
Title V Inspection Reports/Reviews	172	143	258
Soil/Percolation Tests Witnessed	480	478	492
Septic System Installer's Licenses	44	51	52
Septic System Pumper/Hauler Permits	30	28	45
Renovation/ Addition Permits	159	155	187
Renovation/ Addition Permit Review/Meetings	310	345	285
Environmental Investigations	75	48	25
Well Permits/Review/Inspection	8	5	18
Communicable Disease Investigations	88	68	54
Emergency Preparedness Meetings	66	129	114
Community Health and Wellness Meetings/Trainings	29	96	102
Food Service Permits	5	65	54
Food Service Inspections	106	127	104
Demolition Inspections	37	*	*
Demolition Permits	35	*	*
Renovation Inspections	68	*	*
Camp Permits	17	15	13
Camp Inspections	38	44	36
Commercial/Residential Pool, Hot Tub, Beach Permits	14	25	25
Commercial/Residential Pool, Hot Tub, Beach Inspections	29	42	39
Environmental Housing Complaint Investigations/Meetings	38	17	23
Administration Meetings	102	47	32
Administrative Training Meetings	28	42	39
Burial Permits	60	103	76
Port-a-John Permits	55	81	97
Livestock Permit	18	5	*
Phone Calls	5884	7373	6627
Research	2768	3234	3164
Dumpster Permit	29	44	48
Pumping Reports (septic systems)	1316+	*	*
Total Revenue for Calendar Year 2008	\$136,679	\$165,191	\$171,602

*Totals unavailable

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON AGING

The Weston Council on Aging (COA) advocates for the Town's Seniors, those sixty years of age and older, and seeks to enrich the quality of their lives by recognizing and providing for their needs, by offering helpful resources, by presenting appropriate programs, by assisting residents who are caring for elders living in Weston and elsewhere and by enhancing a sense of community. The COA annual report for 2008 will reflect progress towards achieving this mission.

Overview

The Council on Aging staff is comprised of three full-time positions, a part-time nurse, a part-time volunteer coordinator and a part-time bus driver. The staff includes Eileen Bogle as Director and Candace Steingisser as Social Outreach Worker with Sandra Coburn and Frances Kelly sharing the Administrative Assistant position. Leila Hewitt works as the Volunteer Coordinator, a position funded for a second year, in part by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Theresa Levinson works as the part-time nurse, a position that is also funded by multiple resources including the Town and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Jane Brown of the Board of Health collaborated with Theresa for six months from January to June of 2008. The newest staff member is Friend Ship Bus I and II driver William Bonaparte whose arrival in July coincided with the delivery of the new twelve passenger vehicle.

More than two hundred volunteers support the Council on Aging, reflecting an eight percent increase from 2007. Volunteer positions include Front Desk volunteers, Home Delivered Meal drivers, Blood Pressure-Keep Well Clinic volunteers, Friendly Visitors, FISH (Friends in Service Helping) callers and drivers, Newsletter volunteers, office support, trip volunteers, intergenerational school volunteers, dining program helpers, tutors, class instructors, discussion group leaders and fitness class instructors. The important contributions of volunteers is most notable in programs managed by COA staff and coordinated by volunteers such as FISH transportation, health benefits (SHINE) counseling, Rotary Fix-It, the Senior Work program and income tax preparation. In Fiscal Year 2008, more than 10,867 volunteer hours were documented, an increase of 28% from 2007.

The Council on Aging Board is dedicated to the achievement of its mission. One of the



Board's many accomplishments in 2008 was the careful crafting of a revised mission statement to reflect community needs and the changing role of the Council. In addition, a transportation survey was developed by the Board's Community Connection Committee that was mailed to Weston residents sixty years of age and older. The thirty-four percent response rate provided helpful data to analyze current and future transportation needs. Two results of the analysis were the inclusion of the FISH program

into the Council on Aging family of programs and the re-establishment of a Transportation Committee. Another issue that surfaced was the importance of raising the visibility of COA

resources within the Weston community. In response, a series of articles is being developed for release in 2009 that will feature the many positive programs for seniors living in Weston.

We are grateful for the support of the Friends of the Council on Aging whose commitment to the needs of Weston is exemplary. Their generosity makes possible emergency financial assistance to residents as well as support for the mailing of the monthly newsletter, and the delivery of COA services and programs. In 2008, the Friends successfully raised funds to support the purchase costs of a greatly appreciated and needed Friend Ship Bus II.

Information, Referral and Outreach.

The many telephone calls and drop-in visits we receive daily are indicative of the great need for information, referrals and social service outreach. Through these contacts with both the social worker and nurse, residents have access to a wide network of services: homecare, health care, nutritional advice, health insurance concerns, health screenings and strategies for remaining independent in one's home. Contact with Candace, the COA licensed independent clinical social worker, can be the first step in the process of assisting seniors and helping families to assess needs and locate services. In FY 2008 more than 890 residents and their families benefited from her knowledge and expertise. This reflects a 19% increase. Also in 2008, a graduate level social work student was placed at the COA and benefited from Candace's skills and guidance.

In FY 2008, the COA started to more closely track the numbers of people under 60 years of age who request information about aging parents. This underscores the extent to which the Council on Aging responds to the whole community. A presentation in conjunction with the Weston Community Children's Association provided a first time look at our aging parents and was another example of the organization's creativity and responsiveness to community needs. Similar presentations are planned for 2009.

Outreach to support caregivers is clearly another important goal. The COA volunteer support group specialists, Shirley Earle and Emily Hutcheson, facilitate two support groups each month for caregivers of those with Alzheimer's and related dementia.

Health insurance and financial planning continue as concerns. To address these concerns and questions about health plans, Weston's SHINE counselor, Gwen Bronson, is present at the COA each week to provide assistance. As in past years, the COA hosted several information sessions on health plan options and in 2008 initiated lectures on financial matters.

Now in its fourth year, monthly outreach meetings of COA staff with the Police and Fire Departments, the managers of Brook School Apartments and Merriam Village serve to identify older residents "at risk" and discuss emergency preparedness for Weston seniors. Through June 2008, this collaborative has completed 577 surveys to assess risk in the event of a local or regional emergency. The COA is appreciative of the town's GIS Coordinator for his continued assistance in organizing the survey data.

Intergenerational Programs

Led by members of the COA Intergenerational Committee, these shared programs engage students in grades 1-12. Enthusiastic volunteers return each year to the first grade reading programs at both elementary schools and engage in lively discussions with third graders' oral history project. Project Linus knitters teach fourth and fifth grade promising knitters. The Weston Middle School welcomes seniors back to the classrooms in May.

At the Weston High School, the Intergenerational Club hosted carwashes, monthly baking and games' afternoons. Weston seniors were also entertained by the talented musical groups from the high school. Graduating senior student Keith Weisberg remains committed to the

community services supplemental snow shoveling for seniors. This program has continued through the winter of 2009.

Soups On! is now in its third year. Started as a Girl Scout community service project, seniors enjoyed delicious soup, breads, desserts and lively conversations in the Gathering Room. The chefs of Norumbega Point contribute their time and talent to this popular program each month.

The collaboration with the Scouts and shared programs with other organizations such as the Country Garden Club of Weston, the Weston Community Children's Association and the Weston Community League contribute to positive and engaging COA community connections.

Health, Nutrition and Wellness

COA nurse, Theresa Levinson, oversees the many aspects of the health and wellness programs. In 2008, the COA expanded the health-related articles in the newsletter and increased the scope of the Health Education Lecture series. Theresa coordinated twenty four lectures on topics as diverse as cardiac issues, Lyme disease and medical care in Nepal. Vision and bone density screenings continue to be popular events. Highlighting other innovations this past year are programs to address results from the transportation survey. Noting an increased interest in driving instruction, Theresa instituted the COA "Better Driving" Campaign which includes class instruction as well as hands-on experience.

Other wellness programs include the medical equipment loan closet, the food pantry and Land's Sake donations of produce. Utilization of the medical loan equipment experienced a 28 % increase in 2008. Linking the connection to Lands Sake Farm produce donations, the COA coordinated a dynamic series of cooking demonstrations focusing on locally grown produce and easy to prepare meals.

The COA addresses the importance of good nutrition in several additional ways: a Springwell dining site at Brook School Apartments every Monday, a Friday lunch at the COA sponsored by Food Services of Weston Public Schools and a daily home delivery of meals. Through the efforts of wonderful and dedicated volunteers, 1,850 meals were delivered to seniors' homes in 2008. The meal delivery is further enhanced by the community groups who provide festive holiday decorations, narcissus bulbs and delicious baked goods. The COA food pantry, generously supported by many donors, is available to Weston residents throughout the year.

Fitness

The COA fitness programs continue to gain in popularity as participation levels increased 10% in one year. Classes targeting improvements in balance and endurance, as well as strength training and aerobics are appreciated by the hundreds of Weston residents who attend our various classes. Continued funding from Springwell and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, supports the Functional Fitness, yoga and tai chi classes. One of the significant changes in 2008 is the increased involvement of the COA nurse with the fitness programs, especially her commitment to the overwhelming success of Functional Fitness. The COA walking group, now in its third year, includes walks twice a week in the fall and spring using local trails as well as to Castle Island and the Arnold Arboretum. A weekly indoor winter walking series is planned for 2009.

Education

The COA planned and coordinated a wide array of exciting instructional classes, programs and lectures. The monthly calendar presents a wide variety of educational opportunities including bridge lessons, computer and cell phone tutoring, art appreciation and instruction, classes on digital photography, energy conservation and Spanish lessons. The Short Story group

shared dozens of stories and many memories. Now in its seventh year, as a knitting group the Project Linus knitters have donated 1,146 afghans to area hospitals; and this year for the first time, also donated hand-knit hats and scarves to area shelters and contributed nearly 100 dolls to the Uganda Kasiisi project. Participation in these programs increased by 56% from last year.

Transportation

The COA transportation survey highlighted the importance of transportation resources for Weston residents. FISH (Friends in Service Helping) continues to be an important program. Through the dedicated efforts of program coordinator Cindy Mosher and our committed drivers and callers, the program provided 758 one-way trips for 68 Weston seniors, a 13 % increase. Friend Ship Buses I and II offered weekly shopping trips as well as transportation to Boston for symphony and theater events. Trip destinations to places of interest included the World War II museum, the Massachusetts State House, WBGH, Nantucket, the Pawtucket Red Sox and Tanglewood. As with so many of the COA programs, participation increased in this case by 28%.

Appreciation

The dedicated and generous efforts of the many individuals and community groups make it possible for the Weston Council on Aging to better respond to the needs and interests of Weston seniors. The COA aims in 2009 to make significant strides towards fulfilling its mission.

REPORT OF THE EAST MIDDLESEX MOSQUITO CONTROL PROJECT

The East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project conducts a program in Weston consisting of mosquito surveillance, larval and adult mosquito control, ditch maintenance and public education.

Frequent rains from late June through early August and again during September produced three major broods of floodwater mosquitoes. As a result of the rains, mosquitoes were collected in above average numbers from July through the early fall. Despite high risk factors for West Nile Virus, there were no human cases in Massachusetts. The risk of EEE remained low throughout the season.

Mosquitoes were monitored in Weston using population data from 10 trap collections. Each week from July through September, selected mosquito collections from the Project area were submitted to the Mass. Dept. of Public Health to be tested for West Nile Virus and EEE.

The larval mosquito control program relies on the larvicides *Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis* (Bti), *Bacillus sphaericus* and methoprene, which are classified by the EPA as relatively non-toxic. An April helicopter application of Bti controlled mosquito larvae at 311 wetland acres. Field crews using portable sprayers applied Bti in the spring and the summer to 22 wetland acres when high densities of mosquito larvae were found breeding in stagnant water. Project personnel applied packets of *Bacillus sphaericus* and methoprene to control *Culex* mosquito larvae at 980 roadside catchbasins.

To control adult mosquitoes, crews were assigned to apply Sumithrin twice over a total of 1,341 acres using truck mounted aerosol sprayers when survey traps indicated high populations of mosquitoes. Advance notification of the spray program was done through notices in the Weston Town Crier and via a recorded telephone message at 781- 893-5759.

An excavator was used to maintain 182 feet of ditch by Colchester Rd.

The Project's public education program is designed to develop awareness within the public and the private sectors as to their roles in mosquito control. The Project serves as a resource to

residents, municipal officials and the local media on mosquitoes and mosquito borne diseases. A web page www.town.sudbury.ma.us/services/health/emmcpc provides residents with information on mosquitoes, control programs and related topics.

REPORT OF THE ELDERLY HOUSING COMMITTEE

Brook School Apartments rentals continue at full capacity, with a substantial waiting list of prospective renters. As of the end of December 2008, there are 105 people waiting for the subsidized apartments (representing a three to four year waiting list) and 30 people waiting for market value apartments. The need for affordable housing for the elderly and disabled remains greater than the available supply.

The exterior and interior of the apartments have been improved in a number of ways. We have new awnings at the entryways and new outdoor furniture. We have begun to repaint the interior hallways and upgraded a common area kitchen. Along with the Country Garden Club our landscapers have been maintaining the beautiful flowerpots and the grounds beautifully.

REPORT OF THE HOUSING NEEDS COMMITTEE

Housing Needs Committee Members: Linda Abegglen, Bill Donnelly, Joan Parrish, Sarah Like Rhatigan, Tom Timko and Peter Yozell

The Housing Needs Committee reviews proposals for affordable housing presented to Weston. The Housing Needs Committee meets with developers and neighbors, and provides input to the Selectmen.

In June 2008, the Housing Needs Committee met with the Weston Affordable Housing Foundation, Inc. (WAHFI), regarding the 1.84 acre parcel at 23 Pine Street. WAHFI stated that the property was donated to them.

The existing structure is uninhabitable. WAHFI presented a proposal to reconstruct the dwelling at 23 Pine Street to create two townhouses with the façade of a single family dwelling. They intend to seek funding for the reconstruction. Following the public meeting, WAHFI stated its intention to continue to work on the proposal with the abutters.

Following the presentation by Donna Jacobs of the Metrowest Growth Management Committee on "Weston Affordable Housing: Present and Future", dated January 21, 2008, the Selectmen determined they would create a Housing Partnership. This strengthened Housing Partnership replaces the Housing Needs Committee.

The new Housing Partnership will be comprised of a cross-section of Weston residents, tasked with finding creative and appropriate solutions to preserve and increase Weston's supply of affordable housing, including:

- Review of affordable housing stock
- Planning to implement housing goals
- Identifying opportunities for affordable housing
- Planning for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund

The Housing Partnership, as appointed by the Selectmen, will begin meeting in 2009.