

MONTAGUE BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
Wednesday, January 28, 2026 – 5:00 PM
Town Hall – Second Floor Meeting Room and ZOOM

Meeting Minutes

Present: Melanie Ames-Zamojski, Rachel Stoler and Michael Nelson

Staff: Ashley Gough, Health Director and Geneva Bickford, Administrative Assistant

Other: Ken Elstein (In Person), Meghan Van Note (Zoom), Erin Leigh Hoffman (Zoom), Marianne Mulherin (Zoom), Peter Brennan (Zoom), Hayley Hodges (Zoom) and Tim Delouchery (Zoom)

***Melanie Ames-Zamojski opened the meeting at 5:02 PM**

***Michael Nelson attended the meeting via Zoom and then entered the meeting in person at 5:40 pm, Roll Call Votes were taken while Nelson was attending via Zoom**

Minutes:

- The Board of Health (“BOH”) Members reviewed and approved the December 11, 2025 minutes.

*Rachel Stoler **Motioned** to accept the December 11, 2025 Minutes. Seconded by Michael Nelson. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Director’s Report:

- Board to Review the Director’s December 2025 Report.
 - The board reviewed a report submitted by Megan Tudryn (“Tudryn”), Coordinator for the Valley Health Regional Collaborative (“VHRC”), which outlined all the work that was completed on behalf of the Town of Montague while there was a Health Director transition.
 - Ames-Zamojski thanked the collaborative for all their help during the transition and will send a thank you letter.
 - VHRC handled several matters for the Montague Board of Health some of which included the following:
 - Housing Inspections for 453 Millers Falls Rd, heating issue and request from housing court to reinspect; 28.5 Eleventh St, owner requested an inspection and condemnation of the property due no water, blocked egress, doors not working property and broken windows; 6 Morris Ave, minor violations such as bucket holding up pipe under sink, fruit flies in kitchen and surface peeling in the bathroom; 48 Randall Rd – Failure to remove snow, snow cleared and case closed; 21 Franklin St, overdue lead abatement, criminal complaint filed in Franklin County District Court on 1/12/26 and hearing scheduled for 3/6/26.
 - MRVP Inspections for 25 Eleventh St, lead abatement certificate was received and Certificate of Compliance was issued.
 - Food Inspections for Nouria Energy, Montague Retreat Center, Ja’Duke Theater, Lady Killigrew, First Congregational Church, Whistle Stop Café, Family Dollar, Subway, Turners Falls Rod & Gun Club, Upper Bend Café and Walgreens.
 - Complaint investigation at the Finder’s Free Store, complaint of outdated food. Complaint was unfounded and nothing in the food code precludes giving away expired commercially packaged foods.
 - Unanticipated Discussion: Sinkhole at 42 Canal Rd has been filled in by Berkshire Gas due to the proximity of their gas lines on the property. The property owner was reissued the original Order to Correct but argued the property lines and refused to assist and closing up the sinkhole.

*Rachel Stoler **Motioned** to accept the report submitted by Megan Tudryn of the Valley Health Regional Collaborative and authorize Melanie Ames-Zamojski to send a Letter of Thanks to the Valley Health Regional Collaborative. Seconded by Michael Nelson. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Nurse Report:

- Board to Review the Nurse’s December 2025 Report.
 - The board unanimously voted to accept the December 2025 Nurse’s Report as written.

*Rachel Stoler **Motioned** to accept the Nurse’s Report. Seconded by Michael Nelson. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Animal/Barn Inspector Report:

- Board to Review the Animal/Barn Inspector’s December 2025 Report.
 - The board unanimously voted to accept the December 2025 Animal/Barn Inspector’s Report as written.

*Rachel Stoler **Motioned** to accept the Animal/Barn Inspector’s Report. Seconded by Rachel Stoler. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Discussion: El Sotano Request to Waive Late Fee’s and Apply for Annual Mobile Food License after the expiration date – Votes may be taken:

- Board to discuss request of David King (“King”), owner of El Sotano Food Truck, to waive the late fee associated with his annual mobile food truck license and request to apply for his annual mobile food license after the expiration date of December 31, 2025.
 - The board discussed King’s request and decided to eliminate the late fees associated with renewing a mobile food license. The board considered changing the renewal deadline but after further discussion it was decided the late fee would be waived for all mobile food licenses and they will be able to apply at any time during the year.

*Michael Nelson **Motioned** to eliminate late fees for all Mobile Food Licenses. Seconded by Rachel Stoler. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Discussion: Marianne’s Bakery Waiver of Residential Kitch Fee Request – Votes may be taken:

- Board to continue discussion of waiving the residential kitchen fee associated with Marianne’s Bakery due to her only selling her products at the Montague Farmer’s Market.
 - The board and Marianne Smith-Mulherin (“Smith-Mulherin”) discussed her request to waive the residential kitchen fee. After much discussion and consideration, the board agreed to reduce the residential kitchen fee to \$100 annually and keep the late fee of \$110.00 applicable if renewed after December 31. Smith-Mulherin will pay the \$100 annual fee for her Residential Kitchen and the \$110 late fee was already waived.

*Michael Nelson made a **Friendly Amendment** to set a second inspection fee of \$75 for any inspections or planning meetings that go above and beyond the initial planning meeting and regularly required biannual inspections. Seconded by Rachel Stoler. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Discussion: Board to consider reducing the Residential Kitchen Fee – Votes may be taken:

- Board to discuss possibly reducing the Residential Kitchen Fee currently set at \$180 annually.

- The board discussed the residential kitchen fees and ultimately decided to reduce the fee to \$100 annually, keep the late fee of \$110 applicable for those who do NOT renew by December 31.
- The board further discussed and implemented a \$75 inspection fee for any inspections that go above and beyond the initial planning meeting and the required biannual inspections.
- The board also discussed the reimbursement of those residential kitchens that did renew before the expiration date and Bickford will process reimbursements to the Residential Kitchens that renewed on time.
- The board will review and discuss the residential kitchen fee again in October when reviewing all fees for the new year.

*Michael Nelson **Motioned** to set the Residential Kitchen fee for review and required biannual inspections to \$100 annually, not including any follow up inspections for non-compliance and the late fee of \$110 is still applicable if renewed after December 31 and the board of health will reimburse the residential kitchen establishments who renewed on time \$80. Seconded by Rachel Stoler. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

*Michael Nelson made a **Friendly Amendment** to set a second inspection fee of \$75 for any inspections or planning meetings that go above and beyond the initial planning meeting and regularly required biannual inspections. Seconded by Rachel Stoler. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Discussion: Board to consider rejoining the Pioneer Valley Tobacco Coalition – Votes may be taken:

- Board to discuss rejoining the Pioneer Valley Tobacco Coalition.
 - A tobacco complaint came in from Peter King with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”) on January 6, 2026. That complaint was forwarded to VHRC for review. It was determined that Montague was not a member of the Pioneer Valley Tobacco Coalition until 2020. Gough spoke with the coalition about rejoining and there would be not cost associated to rejoin the coalition.
 - The town would need to establish a policy, get insurance and establish a training program. Gough suggests the board rejoin the coalition as of right now there is nothing the board of health can do with this complaint.

*Michael Nelson **Motioned** to rejoin the Pioneer Valley Tobacco Coalition. Seconded by Rachel Stoler. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Appointment: Board to appoint Ashley Gough, Director of Public Health, as Montague’s representative for the Valley Health Regional Collaborative (“VHRC”) – Votes may be taken:

- Board to appoint Ashley Gough as Montague’s Board of Health representative to the VHRC.

*Rachel Stoler **Motioned** to appoint Ashely Gough, Director of Public Health, as Montague’s representative to the Valley Health Regional Collaborative. Seconded by Michael Nelson. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Presentation: Nicotine Free Generation – Votes may be taken:

- Heather Wood from Hampshire Franklin Tobacco-Free Community Partnership and Ken Elstein from the Belchertown Board of Health to present for the Nicotine Free Generation.
 - Heather Wood was not able to make the meeting but Ken Elstein (“Elstein”) was present and presented the board with two handouts which are added to the meeting materials.

- The board listened to and discussed with Elstein the Nicotine-Free Generation and their hope to prevent sales to anyone born after the designated birth date chosen, meaning anyone born before a certain date would still be able to purchase tobacco products while those born after a certain date chosen would not be allowed and would essentially phase out sales over time.
- Nelson is not in favor of moving forward with this. Nelson appreciates the thought but feels that it has an adult target and is not comfortable telling adults what they can and can not purchase. Ames-Zamojski is on the fence as well, she feels there is a lot to consider but is also concerned with regulating for those over the age of 21.
- The board will continue discussion of this topic again at their February meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 6:35 PM

*Michael Nelson **Motioned** to adjourn the Board of Health Meeting. Seconded by Rachel Stoler. **Motion passes.***

Stoler – aye, Nelson – aye, and Ames-Zamojski – aye

Approved by: *Rachel Stoler*

Date: *3/25/26*

Documents:

- 12/11/25 Minutes;
- VHRC Activities Report;
- December Nurse Report;
- December Animal/Barn Inspector Report;
- David King Fee Waiver Request;
- Marianne Smith-Mulherin Fee Waiver/Reduction Request;
- MA Dept of Public Health Tobacco Cessation & Prevention Program Complaint;
- Montague BOH Regulations Restricting Sale of Tobacco Products;
- MAHB Minimum Required Penalties for Violation of Tobacco Sales;
- Memorandum of Understanding between MHAB & the Town of Montague;
- PVTC Information Sheet;
- Nicotine Free Generation Overview Document.