

**MIDDLESEX BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 14, 2023**

Meeting called to order by Board President Ember with the following statement:

“This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Law in that the requirements of the Law have been met by the Annual Meeting Notice forwarded to the Courier News, Star Ledger and posted in the Municipal Building on December 9, 2022 with a subsequent notice dated February 10, 2023 and filed in accordance with the law.”

Roll Call

Steve Ember - President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Melissa Fedosh	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ken Griggs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thomas Harrity – Vice President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kevin Nelson	<input type="checkbox"/> - Absent
Robert Sherr	<input type="checkbox"/> - Absent
Laura Steinau	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Others in attendance:

Paras Dhingra, Public Health Inspector	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Councilman Quinn – Council Representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Les Jones, County Health Director/Health Officer
Patricia Clemente – REHS

Minutes: Approval of the August 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes;

President Ember made a motion to accept the August 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes, seconded by Vice President Harrity. All in favor.

Reports:

- A. **Monthly REHS Activities Report – July, August 2023** – Paras Dhingra presented the July and August reports. President Ember informed Mr. Paras that the Risk Levels need to be included in all the reports. All complaints have been abated. Mr. Paras informed the members that a fine was issued against Shear Madness Dog Grooming and a court date was set. The owner has one month to abate the problems. He also stated that no further complaints were received from the neighboring resident. Ms. Clemente discussed the inspection process. Risk 3 establishments receive priority inspections. There was discussion about response to a bee infestation. A question was raised about honeybees vs other bee species removals/extermination. Mr. Jones stated that he will be looking into the law about the removal of honeybees.

- B. **Monthly Environmental Statistics Report for May, June, July 2023; Monthly Environmental Summary Report for July, August 2023 TABLED** – Board Members agreed to table all reports until we receive a more comprehensive report. They requested that the reports include the time a call was placed and the time of the inspection. Board Member Fedosh questioned missing reports. President Ember made motion to table the reports seconded by Board Member Steinau. All in favor.

- C. **Registrar's Report - August 2023** – Board Secretary read the Registrar's Report for August 2023.

Seeing that there were no comments or questions Board Member Fedosh made a motion to accept the August 2023 Registrar's Report, second by Vice President Harrity and carried by the following roll call vote by members present. Ayes: Ember, Fedosh, Griggs, Harrity, Steinau. No: None Abstain: None

- D. **Board of Health Report – August 2023** – Board Secretary read the Board of Health Report for August 2023

Seeing that there were no comments or questions Board Member Fedosh made a motion to accept the August 2023 Board of Health Report, second by Vice President Harrity and carried by the following roll call vote by members present. Ayes: Ember, Fedosh, Griggs, Harrity, Steinau. No: None Abstain: None

- E. **Council Representative Report** – None

Correspondence: None

Unfinished Business:

- A. **Budget and Finance**

President Ember stated that he is working with Board Member Sherr regarding changes to the fees and the budget for next year.

- B. **Website**

See that Karen Rutkowski is no longer on the Board, President Ember stated that he will take care of the website matters.

- C. **NJ Local Board of Health Report**

President Ember stated that he attended the last meeting. He stated that there was discussion regarding home health care for clients under 21 with disabilities. He stated there was nothing new regarding Bill A4115/S2413 to provide \$10 million in annual funding for local public health programs. He mentioned that they have a new commissioner. He also mentioned that he is filling a vacancy as an Interim Executive Committee member.

- D. **Publicity**

President Ember stated that he would like to have blurb in the newsletter. Vice President Harrity stated we should include the rabies clinic in the newsletter. Board Members are to send him any information by Friday.

- E. **Straight Edge** – On going issues with Straight Edge were discussed during the public portion.

- F. **Rabies Clinic** - President Ember stated that a County representative available to help with the clinic.

- G. **Potential changes to Chapter 272 of the Code Book for Massage and Bodywork Therapy Establishments**

President Ember presented his recommendations to the Board for review. There was discussion about the proposed additional fingerprinting and the proposal that business owners should be a License Massage Therapist (LMT). After a consensus of the members present, the recommendations will be forwarded to the Mayor and Council for review. Council Representative

Quinn stated that he will be forwarding the recommendations to the Borough Attorney for review first.

New Business:

A. Planning for Next Year

President Ember stated that he wants to work on the following for next year:

- Budget
- Monthly progress reports
- What roles we plan on taking on. He urged the members to start thinking about what they want to do as a member of the board.
- Meeting location and dates

Meeting Opened To The Public: President Ember opened the meeting to the public; public recognized; public portion of meeting closed.

Mr. and Mrs. Valenti of Sherman Avenue – Ms. Valenti came to the meeting looking for updates on the continuing issues with Straight Edge. She stated that she was advised by Phil Makrelis, that the selling of Straight Edge property was a rumor. She wanted clarification. President Ember suggested that a meeting be set up with Mr. Makrelis. She also stated that they have called several times regarding the issues, but they have not gotten a response. Mr. Valenti stated that they have not received any updates from the County about their complaints. He also stated that he is still having issues breathing while outside.

The Valenti family and M. Sabik both stated that they have been unable to open their windows for many years due to the air quality in the area. They have been reaching out to the County for four (4) years. They stated that their complaints have been answered. Mr. Valenti stated, “that this board took the most interest in the matter” and thanked them for all they are doing to help.

Steve Sabik of Wilton Avenue – Stated that he has been complaining about the issues with Straight Edge for four (4) years. He stated that they are still mixing paint outside. He has lived in the area for 27 years. He stated that he cannot open his windows due to the smells and noise. He is concerned about the chemicals he and his neighbors have been exposed to for the past 4 years. Said no one knows what those chemicals are. He stated that the county came out and caught them in the act and nothing was done.

There was discussion about the difficulty of measuring and monitoring what’s in the air. Mr. Sabik also mentioned that the Middlesex County Environmental Health Division does not have the proper equipment to measure the chemicals that come out of their equipment.

He stated that he has sent videos and pictures to the DEP, EPA and town council and has not received a proper response. He further stated that he uses an app to submit complaints and they are unanswered. Speeding is still an issue.

Patricia Clemente, REHS suggested possibly organizing a task force with Board Members, Fire Dept., DEP, and Environmental personnel. She stated that she will discuss issues presented today with Mr. Les Jones.

Vice President Harrity advised the homeowners to continually contact the county with the issues they are experiencing.

President Ember stated that he will be thoroughly reviewing the agreement again between Straight Edge and the Borough. Members Harrity and Griggs agreed to participate in a sub-committee to investigate the issues. He would like to coordinate a volunteer task force with the board and the public. Council Representative Quinn stated that he will be contacting the Borough Attorney to see whether or not the law will permit the formation of the task force.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Board Secretary Carmen Modica read the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION #03-2023
EXECUTIVE SESSION**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 allows for a Public Body to go into closed session during a Public Meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Health of the Borough of Middlesex has deemed it necessary to go into closed session to discuss certain matters which are exempted from the Public which include County Contract; and

WHEREAS, the regular meeting of the Board of Health will reconvene.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Health of the Borough of Middlesex will go into closed session for the following reason listed below as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 and the minutes will be kept, and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the items no longer require confidentiality, the minutes can be made public.

President Ember made a motion to accept the Resolution #03-2023 to go into closed session, seconded by Vice President Harrity and carried by the following roll call vote by members present:

Roll Call	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Steve Ember	X			
Melissa Fedosh	X			
Ken Griggs	X			
Thomas Harrity	X			
Kevin Nelson				X
Robert Sherr				X
Laura Steinau	X			

Contract between the Middlesex Board of Health and Middlesex County.

Adjournment: Board Member Fedosh moved for adjournment seconded by Board Member Steinau, all in favor. Next meeting will be held October 12, 2023 at the Recreation Building.

Carmen Modica
Board Secretary