



City of Westfield, Massachusetts
Health Department

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Board of Health Special Meeting
Room 315
January 21, 2026

FEB 18 2026

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Present: Stanley Strzempko, M.D., Chair, Carrie Hildreth-Fiordalice, Nitin Bhatnagar, M.D.

Staff: Debra Mulvenna, Health Director
Hunter Pelkey, Substance Use Outreach Coordinator
Cheryl McMordie, Secretary

CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chair Strzempko opened the meeting at 6:08 p.m. Minutes from the December 10, 2025, meeting were reviewed and accepted. A motion was made by Dr. Strzempko and seconded to approve the December 10, 2025, meeting minutes as submitted.

The vote was as follows:

Strzempko	-	Yes
Hildreth-Fiordalice	-	Yes
Bhatnagar	-	(Absent for vote)

All in favor, the motion was declared passed.

Monthly bills for the Health Department and Transfer Station were reviewed and signed.

Dr. Bhatnagar joined the meeting at 6:12 pm.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Mr. Ron Roux, 79 Woodsong Rd., addressed the Board with his concerns regarding noise pollution that would occur if the proposed data center were to be approved.

Jessica Britton, 36 Casimir St., stated that her son had developed several medical issues over time, as well as suffered severe reactions to the flu vaccine. She stated that she, as well, had adverse effects from the flu vaccine. She studied homeopathy remedies and found that by using diet, vitamins and stopping vaccinations, she was able to correct her son's deficiencies and he is now well. She would like to see parents given other options to improve their child's health rather than flu shots and vaccines.

SUBSTANCE USE OUTREACH COORDINATOR:

Update on Westfield Overdose Data: Outreach Coordinator Hunter Pelkey presented the Board with data provided to him by the police department of total and fatal overdoses over the last two years, as well as identifying the areas in the city where overdoses are occurring. This information has been shared

with partners and organizations to help establish high risk areas. These figures contain overdoses occurring at Westfield residences only where the police have been involved. They do not include hospitals, residents overdosing outside the city, or those where Narcan may have been used by a bystander.

Update on Naloxone Distribution: Mr. Pelkey noted that he mapped out locations where Naloxone can be obtained in the city. He has applied to the state and will be receiving free Naloxone. Currently, there are two outdoor boxes. He reached out the Park & Rec and received approval from them, as well as the Mayor, to install additional boxes: one at the Riverwalk; one at Chapman Park: two on the bike trail; one at Hampden Ponds Park; and one at the Dog Bark Park. He sourced several boxes from Tapestry and DART free of charge. The Opioid Settlement Fund may be used for the remaining two boxes. Mr. Pelkey will be responsible for keeping the boxes filled, however, two of the partners will provide assistance. Once the boxes have been set up, the sites could be shared by various organizations, and a press release should be generated. The topic of Kratom arose. Mr. Pelkey gave a brief history and description of Kratom as well as its effects. He stated that he would like to add this to a future agenda.

Community Collaboration: Mr. Pelkey stated that he met with the Community Benefits Advisory Board who are seeking additional partners. Mr. Pelkey advocated for school counselors and the Peer Recovery Center. He also spoke with DART who conducts a series at local libraries once a month where clinics and recovery coaches can act as a resource for people looking for assistance with harm reduction, substance use related issues, etc. He is working to include the Westfield Athenaeum in this. Organizations such as Tapestry, Recovery Center, the Methadone Clinic, and Noble could share resources. Data was collected from 10th grade students regarding substance use and what questions to add to the survey before administering it to 8th graders.

Ms. Fiordalice stated that data shows the vape detectors at the high school go off on average between 4-15 times per day. She has investigated resources for kids wanting to quit and has a meeting scheduled to discuss referrals with Family Resource Center who offer early intervention for substance use.

Mr. Pelkey stated that he is still working with the Peer Recovery Center. Their membership has increased. Individuals from the shelter visit regularly for assistance.

Mr. Pelkey also noted that Narcan can be obtained at the library, however, it is kept behind the counter and must be requested. He believes it should be in a box and will have that conversation with them. He also stated that the library could possibly be used as a site for future Naloxone training.

Treatment options have improved, however, transportation to these programs continues to be challenging. Mr. Pelkey will be looking into ways to correct this problem.

PUBLIC HEALTH:

Proposed Data Center Discussion: Because no movement on this proposed project has occurred in many years, there is nothing to challenge at this point. Dr. Strzempko gave a brief history of this project. It was noted that Servistar Realities, LLC, the developer, has been dissolved. Ms. Mulvenna stated that she and the Board can take concerns under advisement and, should this go before City Council again, she will step in as there are concrete public health threats with regard to noise and water pollution.

Shared Services Status Update: Director Mulvenna stated that the shared services agreement is ongoing and remains positive.

Discussion Regarding Flu, Respiratory Illnesses and Immunization Schedules: Director Mulvenna stated that the flu virus is raging and the Health Dept. is watching and waiting for guidance. She stated that she must follow state recommendations and guidance when it comes to vaccinations, isolation, quarantines, etc. Recommended vaccinations have decreased, the outcome of which remains to be seen. Whether or not residents feel that vaccinations are necessary, Ms. Mulvenna stated that she must follow the laws of the state regarding them. Dr. Bhatnagar stated that he has researched immunizations and vaccines and the data is mixed. He stated that it is also important to get your immunity strong with holistic methods. A discussion ensued regarding the benefits and drawbacks of immunizations. All agreed that living a healthy lifestyle was essential to remaining healthy.

TRANSFER STATION:

Transfer Station Draft Regulations: A copy of the proposed draft regulations was distributed to the board members. Ms. Mulvenna stated that they were approved by the Law Dept. with two suggestions which will be incorporated into them. A hearing will be scheduled next month regarding enacting these regulations and a draft of the regulations will be posted on the city's website.

Price Comparisons for Pay-As-You-Throw Program: Office Manager Cheryl McMordie provided the Board with a listing of prices which surrounding communities are charging for their pay-as-you-throw bags. Potential pricing and bag colors were discussed. Sample bags were also provided. A public hearing will be scheduled next month for community input on implementing the usage of pay-as-you-throw bags at the Transfer Station.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Carrie Hildreth-Fiordalice and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

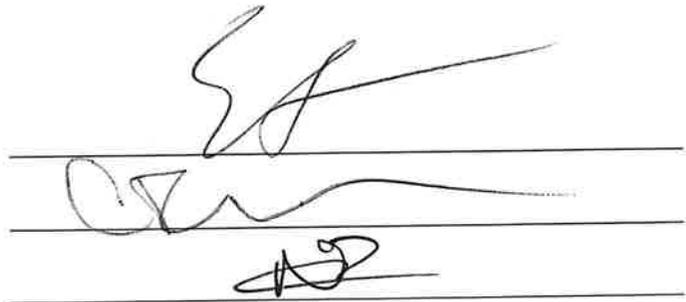
The vote was as follows:

Strzempko	-	Yes
Hildreth-Fiordalice	-	Yes
Bhatnagar	-	Yes

All in favor, the Motion was declared passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Minutes approved by:



/cam

Next meeting date: February 11, 2026