The meeting of the Melrose Board of Health came to order at 8:05 pm on Thursday February 8, 2018 in the Lower Level Conference Room of Melrose City Hall. Present at the meeting were board members Maurine Garipay, Frank Brincheiro, and Joe DiPietro as well as staff Ruth Clay and Liz Parsons as well as Samantha Maynard, RN a graduate student at UMass.

Approval of minutes of January 18: Motion was made by DiPietro, seconded by Brincheiro to approve the minutes. Minutes were approved 3:0:0.

Letter to the Treasurer concerning the Alcohol Task Force: Liz Parsons gave an overview of the history and the work of the Treasurer’s Alcohol Task Force. After a letter writing campaign, seven public health people were appointed to the various subcommittees. Overall, she felt that the public health opinions were minimized and science was questioned. The letter is a response to the report of the Task Force which came out after Christmas. She then reviewed the proposed letter highlighting the positives and issues remaining. The Board agreed to have their name listed as one of the signing organizations on the letter.

Health Director’s Report:

* Clay noted that Karen Cronin and she gave a presentation that day to the Rotary about the seasonal flu and the INTERFACE program.
* Clay reviewed a current housing code issue at 2 Washington Street. She noted that the office had received complaints about a new “valet trash service” at the building whereby tenants put their trash in the hallway each night in a wastebasket provided by the company. When she and Coral Hope went to the building they were given a tour by the head of maintenance whereby they noted that the chutes in the trash rooms were locked and there were baskets in the hallways, some with trash and some empty. Clay told management to discontinue the process immediately as it was a violation of the terms of conditions of the Planning Board as well as a violation of the Housing Code. She followed up with a letter. The letter was returned this week marked “No such address” so Jen Keough and Coral Hope returned to the building with the letter. They were told by the manager that their lawyer said they could have the “valet trash” service and would not discuss it further. Clay reviewed the situation with staff from the State Health Department who confirmed that it is a violation of both 105CMR410.600(C ) and 105CMR410.601(B) and (F). Maynard noted that she lives in the building across the street that is managed by the same company and uses the same trash system. Clay asked if the Board was in agreement that the situation is a violation of the Housing Code and should be enforced. The Board agreed also said that management should cease the practice in all buildings in Melrose that they manage.
* Clay responded to e-mails from Board members concerning the re-opening of Feng Shui. Clay reminded the Board that the suspension letter, reiterated at the Board meeting, stated that the suspension was in effect until such time as they could show they could operate safely and that was verified by Health Department staff. She noted that the physical premises had been cleaned and a Chinese speaking consultant was hired. She spoke to the consultant on site and said to Alan Mark and the consultant that the consultant was to present at all times (including receiving deliveries and prepping). If and when the consultant noted that he felt that they could operate safely on their own they would be allowed to resume operations by themselves. At that time both the Health Director and Health Inspector would be making frequent visits to monitor the operation. If operations went back to violating critical parts of the Food Code they would have a revocation hearing. If at the time of the inspection there were immediate threats to the health and safety of the public the permit would be immediately suspended.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Meeting handouts:

Agenda
Draft minutes of February, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth L. Clay, MPH
Health Director