

**Town of Mansfield**  
**Board of Health**  
**May 20, 2021 Minutes**

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Mission Statement: The mission of the Mansfield Board of Health is to protect, preserve and improve the public health, environment and wellbeing of our citizens through the enforcement of federal, state and local statutes and regulations, education and promotion of sanitary living and working conditions, and protection of the environment from disease and pollution.

**Present:** Antonia Blinn; Chair, Kasia Frenette; Clerk, Michael Healey, Leah Gillespie, Graham Wilson, Amy Donovan-Palmer; Health Agent

**Guests:** John Fisher, DDS, Myron Allukian, Jr., DDS, MPH, Thomas Yeransian, Lisa Cannon, MD, Jackie Newcome, MD, Sandra Levine, Mary Beth McIntire

**I. Meeting Called to Order**

The meeting of the Board of Health (BOH) was called to order at 6:00pm by Chair Antonia Blinn.

**II. Community Water Fluoridation (CWF)**

Ms. Blinn opened the meeting with information regarding CWF

- This meeting is being held to educate the community on CWF and to hear from community members.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CWF is a safe and effective public health measure that offers protection of dental decay throughout a person's life span regardless of age, race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status
- According to CDC, CWF reduces dental decay by 25% over a person's lifetime
- Tooth decay is preventable and treatable
  - It remains the number one chronic disease in young children
- Many towns in MA and the United States, as well the MA Department of Public Health support CWF

**FLUORIDE INFORMATION**

- A natural mineral that exists naturally in public and private well water in concentrations too low to prevent dental decay.
- Many towns add fluoride to drinking water in safe measured concentrates.
- Adjusting the amount of fluoride to decrease dental decay is the process called fluoridation.
- CWF has been discussed by the Mansfield Board of Health (MBOH) in 1991, 1997, 2012 and today.
  - MBOH voted at these times. The MBOH endorsed and supported CWF.
- There is an article on the warrant for the Mansfield Town Meeting to be held on May 24, 2021 @ 5:30 pm @ the Mansfield XFINITY Center parking lot. Where community members will be able to vote on the following article.
- Article 33 states" Petition to request the town to discontinue adding sodium fluoride or any other fluoride chemicals to the public's water supply to protect vulnerable populations from over exposure to fluoride shown to cause neurotoxic harm in developing brains."

### III. Visitor Comments/Discussion of CWF

**Dr. John Fisher - Family Dentist in Salem, MA; Past Chairman and Active Member of Better Oral Health of MA Coalition; Former Member of MA Dental Society; Speaks about fluoride on behalf of MDPH**

According to Dr. Fisher:

- CWF has the greatest impact on the low socioeconomic population in our society.
- Fluoride:
  - Strengthens developing teeth making it more resistant to decay
  - Reduces decay of already erupted teeth
  - Decreases the ability of bacteria to produce acid
  - Is not a poison when used at proper levels
- He has seen this in 1974 before many surrounding communities were not using CWF and recently while volunteering at a mobile caravan providing children in fluoride and non-fluoridated communities.
- Misinformation is easy to introduce and hard to retract or counter. This was most blatantly seen in 1998 when Andrew Wakefield, in Great Britain, lost his medical license to practice when he published a fraudulent study in a prominent medical journal, The Lancet. He reported a link between autism and vaccines. This was misinformation and was proven false and has been redacted.
- There has been no current, credible, peer review scientific study that in any way shows that fluoride at the optimal level in community water supply is anything but safe and effective.
- All early studies that questioned fluoride have been refuted.
  - Including a study from February 1972 - March 1973 which followed a study group for 38 years. The population was evaluated at 7, 13 and 38 years of age with no IQ difference over time.
- Studies in Canada, Mexico, and China all stating low IQ due to fluoride exposure were found to be without basis.
  - Fluoride Action Network has tried to use these studies in an attempted lawsuit with the EPA and never won.
- In November 2016 a petition to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to discontinue CWF was denied.
- CWF is a public health issue and should not be a personal choice and should not supersede the public good.
- Additional examples of public health prevention include Iodine is added to salt, Vitamin D is added to milk

**For additional information refer to:**

- ILIKEMYTEETH.org - sponsored by American Academy of Pediatrics. Factual information about optimal levels or fluoridation.
- American Fluoride Society
- American Dental Society
- CDC
- EPA

Dr. Fisher closed with: There has been no current credible scientific evidence or peer reviewed studies that supports the negative health concerns of optimal levels of CWF.

## **Kurt Gaffney - Operations Manager of Mansfield Public Works-Water Division**

### **Explanation of How Fluoride is Handled in Mansfield's Water**

- Fluoride must comply with many regulations.
- How does fluoride get into Mansfield water?
  - There are 4 locations where fluoride is added
  - Fluoride comes in 50 pound bags from China
  - Fluoride is put into a slurry and added to water
  - 0.58 ppm average residual fluoride
  - Samples are picked up daily at each location for analysis
- Fluoride is easy to add and dilute into the system.
- To discontinue fluoride in water just have to turn off the system.
- Cost is about \$30,000 per year for fluoride and to maintain pumps.
- Alarms are in place if fluoride is higher than 2.0 levels. EPA and DPH would be notified and the system would be flushed. This has never happened. No issues or concerns.
- Fluoride bags from China need to meet standards.
- Fluoride has been in Mansfield Water since 1997.
  - It was voted to be added into water in 1991 but did not have funds until 1997.

### **Thomas Yeransian, Resident**

- Mr. Yeransian is a Chemical Engineer who has his own Environmental Consulting Firm
- Mr. Yeransian read several studies from medical doctors and medical researchers-not dentists who have convincing arguments that fluoride is a neurotoxin and has an impact on the medical health of humans.
- Mr. Yeransian believes that adding fluoride to water is an inefficient and costly way to distribute fluoride in our water.
  - Sealants and brushing teeth are just as effective
- 99% of fluoride in water is not used. Goes down the toilet or used to water plants.
- Fluoride is most effective topically
- Medical doctors state that Vitamin D and Vitamin C are good for you , why don't we add that to our water?
- As Americans, we should not be forced to have fluoride in our water.
- Mr. Yeransian does not trust chemicals from China.
- Mr. Yeransian does not eat or drink anything from China.
- Mr. Yeransian asked if the fluoride is tested from China? Kurt does not test it
- Per Dr. Fisher: fluoride from China is certified by American Water Works Association. And it is a better product than the fluoride from the United States.
- Per Dr. Fisher while he was volunteering at a mobile caravan in the community he saw people going hungry every day and not having their own toothbrush, many had to share.
  - Thomas claims we do not have the problem of poverty in Mansfield
- Mr. Yeransian does not want fluoride to be mandated in our town water.
- BOH should be aware of the risks of fluoride to the public of Mansfield
- Mr. Yeransian will share a list of over 3200 articles that support his stand.
- Email address - [health@mansfieldma.com](mailto:health@mansfieldma.com)

**Dr. Lisa Canon, Westwood Mansfield Pediatrics**

**Per Dr. Canon:**

- Tooth decay is the number one chronic childhood disease - more common than asthma
- Tooth decay is a disease and it does not go away
- Best approach is to prevent tooth decay before it happens
- In the past 5 years there have been a number of studies supporting this.
- Poor dental health causes missed school, lower grades
- Adults miss work bringing children to the dentist. It affects families both financially and economically
- It is best to use a multi layered approach
  1. Regular dentist visits
  2. Brush teeth regularly
  3. Fluoride in water prevents dental caries in children.
- Fluoride is not a toxin. It is the dose that makes it toxic and there are no findings that at a controlled level there are any problems.
- Every professional society supports CWF.
- As a doctor and a parent Dr. Canon is in support of water fluoridation in Mansfield. Without it there would be increased expenses for fluoride tablets as well as increased dental care.

**Dr. Robert Sibilia, Resident, Local Dentist**

- His two children have benefitted by having fluoride in Mansfield's water system
- Having CWF is an advantage to living in Mansfield
- If there was no fluoride in the water residents would need to take fluoride tablets/supplements
- It is possible that people would forget to take the supplement, forget to refill, take too much or too little. It would be more of a problem for people to be responsible for obtaining additives
- No issues with CWF in his practice.

**Dr. Jackie Newcome, Resident**

- Supports CWF, Dr. Newcome has seen no issues with CWF.
- There are no peer reviewed journal articles or scientific data to support that CWF is a danger.
- Dr. Newcome questioned why this is even an issue if there are no problems with CWF and there have been no issues maintaining proper levels of fluoride.
- There are more benefits to the community to have fluoride in Mansfield's water system than not.

**Marybeth McIntyre, Resident**

- Lives in Mansfield 30 years
- Registered Pharmacist
- Ms.McIntyre does not know why this is an issue now, when we are coming off a pandemic where many kids have not had dental visits or fluoride treatments in almost a year.
- Having no school for a year has limited some children to the school dental program.
- Dentists are backed up and it is hard to get appointments.
- There are bigger issues than fluoride.
- Additional expense to residents for fluoride additives if fluoride is removed from the water.
- Kids need this -it's not the time to remove

**Sandra Levine, Resident**

- Does not think or understand why fluoride has to be in the water now that it is accessible in toothpaste.
- Fluoride does not help bones
- Why is it being forced on us?

**MOTION**

- Motion made by Mr. Healey to continue to support community water fluoridation in the Mansfield Water System 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Frenette  
VOTE 5-0 passes

**X. Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn at 7:15pm made by Mr. Healey, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Frenette.  
VOTE 5-0 passes

*Sandra Frenette*

Clerk

*9/30/21*

Date