

A Message from Dave Bindelglass...

Good morning Easton! There will be an agenda item for the upcoming January 16th Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss joining the Westport-Weston Health District. As some of you may know, Polly Edwards has served this town (ever so well) for many years. She plans to retire this year from Easton's Health Department. The goal of the Health Department is to promote health and well-being, prevent disease, and ensure a clean and safe environment for all Easton residents.

Filling her role of Health Officer would cost Easton significantly more for a number of reasons. The Westport-Weston district has recently proposed a plan for Easton that would be revenue neutral to our current expenditure. Polly would be the first one to say that there are many more services and resources (many of which she wishes she could have provided to our citizens) which could be provided given the resources of the joint Health District vs. the current Health Department. Besides added services, there would be more back up for staff working in Easton.

Polly has discussed this option and possibility with Val Buckley of the Senior Center. None of the Senior Center programs would be superseded or cancelled. In fact, the Health District would provide a myriad of services to our seniors which are not currently available. This would include programs that are provided for free or significantly less than when these services are provided from outside vendors.

Right now, the plan is to keep our Health Department office in Easton, with its same hours and utilizing remaining staff. However, the office of the Health District in Westport (which is approximately 7 miles from town hall) would be open for support of our citizens on a Monday through Friday basis and from 8am - 4:30pm. It should be noted that both Polly Edwards and our Director of Public Health, Dr. Chris Michos, strongly support this proposal.

If the Board of Selectmen approves this on 1/16, we will set up a public meeting for information and discussion, and this will have to be approved at an upcoming Town Meeting. To further review our recent BOS meeting agendas or minutes, you can visit the town website (<https://www.eastonct.gov/board-of-selectmen>) as well.

I welcome your feedback, and invite you to a public "brown bag lunch" on January 28th from Noon until 1:30pm at Easton Town Hall, conference room A. There will be another opportunity to visit with me informally on January 30th at 7:30pm (for those who need after work hours) at Easton Town Hall, conference room A. If you cannot make either of those times, please feel free to reach out to my administrative assistant, Janet Haller, to schedule some time with me in the future at jhaller@eastonct.gov or 203-268-6291.