



**FITCHBURG CITY CLERK**

***May 22 2023 2:53 pm***

**City of Fitchburg  
Massachusetts 01420**

**CITY COUNCIL**

**Councillors at Large**

**Sally H. Cragin  
Marcus L. DiNatale  
Amy Green  
Samantha M. Squailia  
Anthony M. Zarrella**

**President**

**Anthony M. Zarrella**

**Vice President**

**Andrew J. Van Hazinga**

**Ward Councillors**

**Ward 1 – Bernard J. Schultz III  
Ward 2 – Paul R. Beauchemin  
Ward 3 – Andrew J. Couture  
Ward 4 – Andrew J. Van Hazinga  
Ward 5 – Marisa R. Fleming  
Ward 6 – Derrick J. Cruz**

**COUNCIL AS A WHOLE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Legislative Building, 700 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA**

**Wednesday, April 26, 2023**

A Meeting of the COUNCIL AS A WHOLE COMMITTEE was held on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, and called to order by Council President Zarrella at 6:35 PM in the Legislative Building, 700 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA. The meeting opened with a salute to the Flag led by President Zarrella. The Clerk called the roll and 10 Councilors were present. Councilor Schultz arrived at 7:57 PM, Councilor Green was absent.

The following matter was addressed:

**I. PETITIONS**

085-23. Councilor Marcus DiNatale, on behalf of multiple residents, to end the use of fluoride in Fitchburg's public water treatment.

**II. PUBLIC FORUM**

Dr. John Fisher, Salem Massachusetts supports community water fluoridation

Dr. Phyllis Mullenix, opposes community water fluoridation

Dr. Myron Allukian Jr. supports community water fluoridation

Mr. John Mueller opposes community water fluoridation

Dr. Joe Cronin, Lunenburg, supports community water fluoridation

Jacquelyn Wehtje, Fitchburg opposes community water fluoridation

Jean Rabe, Fitchburg, opposes community water fluoridation

Lorraine Rod, Lunenburg, opposes community water fluoridation

Phillip Valeri, Leominster, opposes community water fluoridation

Jessica Jacobson, Fitchburg opposes community water fluoridation

Dr. Brian McDowell, Leominster supports community water fluoridation

Dr. Mario Aboujaoude, Fitchburg supports community water fluoridation

Dr. John R. Bogdasarian, Fitchburg supports community water fluoridation

Jane Andrews, Fitchburg opposes community water fluoridation

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Councilor DiNatale shared this petition was filed based on the research he had complete which made him question if it is essential for Fitchburg to keep fluoridating the water. It is an optional practice to employ, not required. Not convinced that this is a public health necessity.

***Question and answer period ensued with various topics and points of information as follows:***

- In the right amounts, fluoride helps prevent dental decay.
- It is similar to adding vitamins to foods.
- Using fluoride in water to protect teeth reduces the need for costly dental procedures.
- Over 100 national and international health and other organizations recognize the benefits of added fluoride.
- Fluoride is found naturally everywhere, fluoride in the water is safe and effective in reducing cavities in children and adults.
- Fluoride is a neurotoxin which, in high doses, can be harmful.
- Excessive exposure can lead to tooth discoloration and bone problems.
- There is enough fluoride in the water already, without adding more.
- People have the right to choose whether or not they take medications.
- Different people need different amounts of substances such as fluoride.
- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) sets the optimal level of fluoride for preventing tooth decay at 0.7 ppm, or 0.7 milligrams (mg) in every liter of water.
- 62% of the state does not fluoride their water.

- Dr. Mullenix was asked about the legal issues involving fluoride accidents. She has worked on many cases with fluoride accidents and her concern was the toxicity of fluoride. A lot of overfeed situations that have been hidden, and the problem is ongoing.
- John Deline the Deputy Commissioner of Water Supply explained why some places do not have fluoride, which is common in smaller populations where the water comes from a well or where it is not feasible to do that. John Deline confirmed that they have tested for arsenic and there has been no detections at any level.
- Councilor Schultz asked Commissioner Deline of any incidents of where anyone involved in operations have gotten sick or if there had been any issues. To which Mr. Deline responded there was an incident in 2005, but no health impact to any of the employees. There are certain protocols and safety measures that the city has in place if any employees were to come in contact.
- Dr. Mullenix commented on the data and studies done on fluoride effecting IQ, to which some of those studies have been revoked, and were poorly done.

Councilor Cragin motion and seconded to move the question.

Motion and second to move the question by roll call vote 8 in favor and 2 opposed (DiNatale, Fleming). 10 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

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The Council as a Whole Committee voted leave to withdraw by roll call vote 7 in favor and 3 opposed (Couture, DiNatale, Fleming). 10 members present. Board consists of 11 members.  
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The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Joanna Bilotta-Simeone*

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Joanna Bilotta-Simeone, City Clerk