

April 1, 2010

Final Report of the Lyme Disease Committee (LDC) to the Dover Board of Health (BOH)

Partly prompted by the fact that approximately 1/3 of respondents of a town-wide general survey administered by the BOH during the summer of 2008 admitted to having had Lyme Disease (LD), the BOH decided to create a LDC with the overall mission to research LD incidence and potential consequences for the town of Dover.

The LDC was started on May 21, 2009 with the following members:

Barbara Roth-Schechter, Chair
Marlayne Brace
William Herd
Tim Holiner
Steve Kruskall
Matthew Schmid
Paul Tedesco

The following mission statement for the LDC was agreed upon:

It is the mission of the LDC to assess the impact of the Lyme Disease problem on Dover residents and its environment and to recommend remedies for its management to the Board of Health with the expectation that town government will act expeditiously on these recommendations.

Meetings were held regularly on a schedule of approximately two meetings per month.

The LDC focused on education and research of all aspects of LD.

- The LDC initiated distribution of educational material in the schools, public spaces like parks and playgrounds, and many public locations throughout the town.
- The LDC provided extensive self-educational material at Town Hall, the BOH office and the Public Library.
- The LDC created and provided a web link to the doverma.org site.
- The LDC researched and discussed private property management against tick infection.
- The LDC researched and discussed management of personal protection against tick bites.
- The LDC researched and analyzed state- and nation-wide incidence of LD.
- The LDC researched, analyzed, and correlated abundance of deer, deer ticks and incidence of LD in Dover.

The LDC organized a town-wide LD forum

The purpose of the forum was to share and discuss with Dover residents all the information the LDC had accumulated. The Forum took place on Nov 17 in TH and was

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attended by approximately 85 residents. It was recorded by the local television channel and was distributed for at least one month after Nov 17.

The LDC conducted another town-wide LD survey in Dover on Nov 18, 2009.

The survey was distributed to all Dover households and asked the following questions:

1. Has any member of your household, **while a Dover resident**, been diagnosed with Lyme disease

- In the past 10 year Yes No
- In the past 12 months Yes No

2. Did any member of your household attend in person or view on cable TV our town's recent "**Forum on Lyme Disease**" Yes No

3. The Board of Health's Lyme Disease Committee has identified the tick-carrying **deer herd** in Dover as the **primary carrier of Lyme Disease**, a significant danger to residents. Would you be in favor of **progressively** reducing the deer herd to a less threatening size by means of a **highly controlled hunt on carefully selected town properties?** Yes No

The final results of the survey were as follows based on data received by Dec 18, 2009:

Total number mailed 2100
Total number returned 641 (appr. 31%)

Number voted in favor of controlled hunt 561 (appr. 88%)
Number voted against controlled hunt 77 (appr. 12%) [actually 73, but also included were these answers: 1 "not sure", 1 "maybe", 2 "need more info"]

Please note: The totals do not necessarily add up as a significant number of individuals did not answer all questions, just left them blank (thus, no reliable percentages can be calculated).

Of those who voted in favor of a regulated deer hunt:

Had LD over last 10 years: 211
Did not 300

Had LD during last 12 Mo 147
Did not 341

Attended LDF 54
Did not 423

Of those who voted against a regulated deer hunt:

Had LD over last 10 years:	30
Did not	32
Had LD during last 12 Mo	19
Did not	44
Attended LDF	3
Did not	44

Based on its extensive research and data analyses, the Lyme Disease Committee concluded that:

The incidence of LD poses a health threat to the residents of Dover.

In order to manage this health threat, the LDC recommended a three-pronged approach to the BOH:

1. Continuous Education of adults and school children about the means of personal protection from tick bites;
2. Continuous education of residents and organizations about the means to create tick-safe zones on private and recreational properties in Dover;
3. Responsible management of the deer population via progressive reduction of deer density by allowing strictly regulated and monitored deer hunting on carefully selected open town land and spaces. Furthermore, the BOH should encourage private property owners to participate in this effort to enhance its effectiveness.