

Harvard Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Zoom Meeting
September 26, 2023
Approved: October 24, 2023

Board of Health Members present: Libby Levison; Chris Mitchell.

Others Attending: Alison Flynn, Board of Health Clerk; Jim Garreffi, Health Agent, Nashoba Associated Boards of Health; Rose Miranda, Town Clerk; Joan Eliyesil, The Harvard Press.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. Mitchell called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. as deputized Chair. Ms. Flynn provided remote meeting instructions. Ms. McCarthy was absent from the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Eliyesil asked for clarification of the recently added requirements for water quality testing at rental properties. The BOH Members advised that it was their intent to require rental properties to meet both local and state standards for water quality. The Members also advised that it was their intent to ensure rental properties are providing potable water, and while being remedied, they may be required to provide bottled water. The Members agreed that as the regulation states water quality results could be requested by the “occupant” this could be interpreted as a business owner or its employees in a rented property.

NEW BUSINESS

Meet & Greet with new Town Clerk, Rose Miranda

The Members introduced themselves to Ms. Miranda and welcomed her to the Town. Ms. Levison provided her with a brief overview of the BOH’s process for considering requests for rabies vaccination exemption; Ms. Flynn agreed to forward Ms. Miranda her e-mail to the prior clerk which outlined the process. Ms. Flynn also agreed to provide Ms. Miranda with a Burial Agent designation form if needed. The Members encouraged Ms. Miranda to reach out if she needs any assistance with BOH matters.

Consider submission of letter or ad in the October 20th edition of The Harvard Press

Ms. Levison agreed to work on a “Who You Gonna Call?” ad for the next meeting.

Recommend BOH Members to participate in the Transfer Station Committee

Mr. Mitchell suggested based on prior discussions that Ms. Flynn put forth himself and Ms. Levison as nominees.

Initial discussion regarding townwide mailing in support of mandatory recycling

Ms. Levison agreed to prepare a draft townwide mailing for review at the next BOH meeting for printing by November 15th, National Recycling Day. She indicated that she hopes to include the location of two new textile bins and/or the tip that cardboard soaked by rain is not recyclable.

Consider requesting stable permit insert in the tax bill and possible approval of insert text

The BOH Members considered a draft tax bill insert which was updated by Ms. Levison from prior years' versions. Ms. Levison will make additional revisions. Ms. Flynn advised she hoped to submit a draft to the Select Board's consideration on an October Agenda. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to accept the draft pending revisions and approve submittal to the Select Board. Ms. Levison asked that Ms. Flynn and Mr. Mitchell also proofread the revisions prior to submittal. Ms. Levison seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

Consider possible handouts and attendance for Fall Town Meeting

Mr. Mitchell advised that he will be traveling and unable to attend Fall Town Meeting. The Members agreed to prepare a one-page handout addressing the status of cleanup at the former Fort Devens.

Mr. Mitchell confirmed that he will be providing testimony at the Joint Committee hearing the following day regarding Private Wells water quality legislation.

Consider attendance at Local Boards of Health Informal Gathering at NABH (6:30pm) and Quarterly Executive Committee meeting (7pm) on 9/28/23

Mr. Mitchell noted that he has a conflict on 9/28/23. Ms. Levison stated that she is available and would like to attend the meetings.

Discuss how Board of Health can participate in turf playing fields discussion

Mr. Mitchell agreed that the BOH should be involved and agreed to act as liaison on this issue.

Consider sponsoring talk re negative impact of artificial light on climate

Ms. Levison indicated that she attended a fascinating talk given by a Pepperell-speaker which was hosted by her Garden Club which highlighted the negative impact of artificial light on plants. She indicated that she reached out to the Library and Ellen Leicher of the Harvard Climate Initiative Committee regarding co-hosting a talk with the same speaker. Mr. Mitchell indicated that his preference would be for another group to sponsor with support from the BOH. Ms. Levison indicated that will work to secure a co-sponsor and will ask the speaker if he can talk about artificial light's negative impacts to health.

Staying current with the activities of other Boards/Groups

Ms. Levison asked that the group consider how to best stay on top of the activities of other Boards/Groups. Ms. Flynn volunteered to subscribe to Agendas and Minutes of other Boards but would need to prioritize other tasks to do so. Mr. Mitchell asked that Ms. Flynn subscribe to Select Board Agendas, review and flag issues as her timing allows, or notify the BOH Members if she is unable to do so on a given week.

Consider rescheduling of October 10th BOH Meeting (C. Mitchell conflict)

Mr. Mitchell advised that he will be unable to make the meeting on October 10th due to a work conflict and suggested such conflicts may be more frequent in the near future. The Members agreed to meet for a brief meeting on October 3rd to finalize the budget and consider a few other

issues. The Members also agreed to discuss a winter meeting schedule on October 24th.

Clerk & Health Agent Update

- Ms. Flynn asked the BOH to consider the AlphaGraphics invoice for the townwide mailing on mosquitoes and ticks. Ms. Levison made a motion to approve the AlphaGraphics invoice for the mosquito and tick mailing in the amount of \$1,175.71; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.
- Ms. Flynn noted that she forwarded an e-mail from Irene Congdon regarding upcoming recycling webinars. The BOH Members agreed that she should attend the webinar regarding improving your website if she is available and interested.
- Mr. Garreffo indicated that he saw almost 60 inches on the secchi disc that morning. Ms. Levison noted that Mr. Sweet, of Aquatic Analytical, indicated that he would be increasing his rates in 2024. Ms. Flynn stated that Mr. Sweet advised that he'll need to provide her with new bottles with iodine prior to the summer and asked that she return the existing bottles to him. The BOH Members agreed that she can incur the shipping costs to do so at this time.
- Mr. Garreffo reported that he was contacted by Ms. Hurley, of the Harvard Press, who asked whether the Pond could be impacted by failing septic systems. He indicated that he reviewed past Title 5 Inspection Reports and did not identify many failures other than those on Four Acre Island over the past 20 years. He stated that he explained to her that every septic system adds nutrients to the ground which mix with groundwater and makes their way into the Pond, so all septic systems essentially have an impact. Ms. Levison asked Mr. Garreffo whether the BOH should be testing Pond water quality at the beaches used by cottage associations. Mr. Garreffo indicated he would need to know more about the beaches she is referencing to know whether they qualify as semi-public beaches and are therefore subject to the State's beach regulations and regular testing at their own expense. Mr. Garreffo indicated that the BOH could consider separately whether or not to assist with testing of any such beaches for algal blooms. Mr. Garreffo noted that there is one known failed system on Four Acre Island and one which was purchased without a Title 5 and presumed to be in failure. Mr. Garreffo indicated that there are likely still some cesspools out there; the basis of his research was review of Title 5 Inspection Reports which were filed.

PERMITS

Septic

Ms. Flynn and Mr. Garreffo reported that he issued the following permits since the last meeting:

- 38 Lovers Lane: An upgrade for which requests were granted at the September 12th meeting;
- 24 Bolton Road: A new system for which requests were approved at the September 12th meeting;
- 105 Slough Road: A single-component replacement of the distribution box; and
- 6 Myrick Lane: An upgrade for which requests were approved at the September 12th meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Arbovirus: Update from Weekly Reports

This item was taken out of order to include Mr. Garreffi. Mr. Garreffi reported that Central MA Mosquito Control Program sprayed the area of Bruce Street, the manufactured homes, and the mobile homes in Ayer. He said that at this point, we are seeing more positive sampling results from the south and with EEE. Ms. Levison noted that she read that four farm animals died of EEE in north central Maine last week.

(Mr. Garreffi exited the meeting at approximately 5:10pm)

Review draft FY25 budget request submission and consider scheduling additional budget meeting

The BOH Members reviewed and revised the line-item worksheet of the draft budget request.

Further discussion re scheduling EDS Trailer clean-out

The Members asked Ms. Flynn to reach out to the Fire Department and Ms. Natoli for additional dates of availability.

PFAS: Update, including but not limited to report from Devens Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting and participation in stakeholder interview (both 8/31/23)

Mr. Mitchell suggested this item be tabled for a meeting where Ms. McCarthy is present.

COVID-19: Update

Ms. Levison advised that she requested Ms. Flynn send out a News/Announcement regarding free COVID test kit availability from the federal government. She reported that cases are increasing and encouraged residents to consider masking and getting the COVID vaccine when eligible.

Update re installing the dial/algae sign on Pond Road

Mr. Mitchell suggested this item be tabled for a future meeting.

Update re installation of satellite phone bases at EDS and Public Safety Buildings

Ms. Levison suggested this item be tabled for a future meeting.

Continued discussion regarding placement of additional textile recycling bins on municipal property

Ms. Levison indicated that Ms. Sobalvarro expressed concern that the Hildreth House parking lot does not have enough visibility for the textile bins. Ms. Levison will send Mr. Kilhart a follow-up e-mail regarding his thoughts on location.

Action Items

Action Items were reviewed. Ms. Flynn will circulate a list of those items which are outstanding.

MINUTES

The Members reviewed the proposed revisions to the draft Minutes of September 12, 2023. Ms. Levison made a motion to approve the Minutes as amended; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

DISCUSS ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Items for the next agenda were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Levison made a motion to adjourn at 5:34 p.m.; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Flynn, Clerk

Documents Referenced:

- Posted Agenda
- Draft Minutes of 9/12/23
- Draft 2024 Stable permit insert and cost e-mail from 2021;
- My email re recycling mailer and proofs from April 2022, October 2022, 2021, 2019,
- Email from Julie re Transfer Station Committee and TSC Charge;
- Email from Libby re Dark Skies talk;
- Email from Jenna re Informal NABH Gathering;
- Budget email re COLA;
- AlphaGraphics Invoice No. 7726;
- Harvard Field Needs Assessment draft report; and
- LL notes re SB meeting on field needs assessment.
- Bare Hill Pond Monitoring Google Sheet