

Harvard Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Zoom Meeting
February 14, 2022
Approved: March 28, 2022

Board of Health Members present: Libby Levison, Chair; Sharon McCarthy, Christopher Mitchell.

Others Attending: Alison Flynn, Board of Health (BOH) Administrative Assistant; Ira Grossman, Health Agent, Nashoba Associated Boards of Health; Joan Eliyesil, The Harvard Press; David Kilkenny; Mark O'Hagan, Craftsman Village Harvard; Abby Besse and Suzie Allen, School Committee; Danyel Johnson.

Ms. Levison called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm. Ms. Flynn read aloud the remote meeting preamble. Ms. Levison explained that the BOH is working to stay on schedule.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Prepare comments for State guideline for required multi-family district in MBTA communities and the adjacent communities

Ms. Levison explained that she received clarification from Mr. Ryan that Harvard is included because it borders the Ayer and its MBTA station. Further, she indicated, he explained Harvard created a multifamily district, but it was never mapped. Mr. Grossman advised that the guidelines are not required minimums but target goals, and that Towns should try to create districts within the confines. Mr. Grossman further stated that because Harvard does not have sewer and public water other than in the center, he does not expect the multi-family district will ever get to the density that the State is looking for. He indicated that the density model of 15 units per acre is impossible with well and septic requirements, and that the soils in Harvard limit the areas where you can install a Title 5 compliant system. He also stated that developments would not be able to put in a Public Water Supply because you need 10,000 square feet of land for every 1 bedroom.

Ms. Levison asked the BOH Members to consider where there would be increased demand on the Board of Health if more multi-family units were developed. The Members agreed that the volume of waste water and water supply review would increase. Mr. Grossman and Ms. McCarthy agreed to advise the Land Use Boards that the BOH supports making multi-family housing available as long as the developments are consistent with well and septic requirements.

Consider designating a BOH point-person for questions/input for the Hazard Mitigation Plan

Ms. Levison questioned why the Hazard Mitigation Plan does not include a member from the Council-on-Aging and the Board of Health, and why there are no females sitting on the Board. Ms. McCarthy suggested this be brought up at a Land Use Boards Meeting. Ms. McCarthy nominated Ms. Levison to represent the BOH as point-person; Ms. Levison declined due to her busy schedule. Mr. Mitchell volunteered to act as point-person; Ms. Levison agreed to be his back-up.

Discuss any potential HBOH impact with proposed increased housing cap at Devens

Ms. Levison noted that they are considering increasing the housing cap at Devens, and asked whether this could have future impacts on the Harvard BOH. Mr. Grossman noted that Devens is in both Worcester and Middlesex Counties. The BOH Members agreed that outside the increase on the NABH assessment, increasing the housing cap would not have much of an impact on the Harvard BOH.

Consider preparation of IDs for BOH Members

Mr. Mitchell suggested the BOH prepare name tags, like those used by the Ambulance Service, for events such as vaccination clinics or other public events. Ms. McCarthy agreed. Mr. Mitchell indicated that Mike, of the Ambulance Service, would assist in preparing the IDs and the BOH could have license on the design. Mr. Mitchell suggested that the BOH would be responsible for replenishing the supplies used, and suggested it would be less than \$20. Ms. McCarthy made a motion to get the proposed ID for the BOH with the Town Seal. Ms. Levison suggested that the first names are listed in large font, with a smaller font for last names. Ms. Flynn will e-mail Mr. Mitchell the Town Seal. Mr. Mitchell indicated that Ms. Flynn and the Members will need to visit Public Safety to have photos taken; Mr. Grossman has an ID already from the NABH. Ms. Levison seconded the motion. All were in favor by roll call vote.

Consider feasibility of 2022 MDPH Summer Local Health Internship Program

Ms. Levison stated that applying for an intern is longer an option. She explained that she contacted DPH with questions, but did not hear back before the meeting and the application is due before the BOH next meets.

COVID-19: Discuss current status, test availability, and benchmarks to remove mask mandate

Ms. Levison reminded the group that the current mask mandate is in effect through March 14th unless the BOH removes it before then. She indicated that she updated the case counts as reported by the State, and Ms. Flynn screen-shared this data. Ms. Levison indicated that she hasn't received this week's report from NABH. She explained that the data shows on January 13th Harvard's data 121 cases, on January 20th Harvard data listed 118 cases, and on last Thursday Harvard's data was down to 31 cases. Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Mitchell suggested the BOH wait another two weeks before considering lifting the mandate. Ms. McCarthy also stated that she does not think the BOH should tie the mandate to a positivity rate because so many residents work outside Harvard. Mr. Grossman stated that some Towns are waiting until after February vacation. Ms. McCarthy suggested that the BOH might wait to see the data from the Schools' testing after vacation week. Ms. Eliyesil added, through the Zoom "chat" feature, that the State report is always dated 5 days after the data; Ms. Levison agreed. The Members agreed to revisit the issue at the next meeting.

Ms. Besse stated that the Schools' mask mandate would be discussed at the School Committee meeting that night. Ms. McCarthy advised that the School Committee should look for a downward or upward trend versus a positivity rate. Ms. Allen added that she spoke with a State Epidemiologist at DPH who gave her the same advice, and suggested the School Committee consider the aggregate while being as local to the Schools' data as possible.

Ms. Levison reported that she has not heard anything further from the Town regarding whether there are home test kits to distribute.

Discuss any questions from recent DPH COVID-19 Conference Call reports

None.

Clerk and Health Agent Update

- Ms. Flynn did not have any updates.
- Mr. Grossman reported that he spoke with the property owner for 94 Ayer Road who recognizes what he needs to do to locate the well for decommissioning, and plans to do so in the spring.

OLD BUSINESS

Craftsman Village Harvard: Continued discussion re application for use of irrigation well

Mr. Grossman stated that Craftsman Village Harvard (CVH) provided a graph showing conductivity between the PWS and the irrigation well, as well as a statement from DEP. He advised that the BOH is in the position to approve, condition, or deny the application for use of the proposed irrigation well. Mr. O'Hagan stated that DEP and CVH's consultant stated that they do not feel there would be an impact on the Public Water Supply (PWS) wells. Mr. O'Hagan further indicated that the irrigation company estimated the planned use would equate to about 3,300 square feet of irrigated space, and watering three times per week would equate to approximately 5400 gallons per week for 3-4 months per year. Mr. Mitchell recommended that the BOH approve the use of the well for irrigation but include a requirement for testing so if some contaminant is drawing into the irrigation well we are of it before it impacts the PWS. Ms. Levison suggested that the irrigation well be tested at the beginning of the summer and then again partway through; Mr. Mitchell agreed that seasonality to the testing makes sense. Mr. Grossman suggested it would be appropriate to require testing for arsenic, organic pesticides, and PFAS. Mr. O'Hagan noted that PFAS sampling is expensive from an operations perspective. He noted that the PWS will be tested for PFAS regularly, and treated for arsenic and manganese, and wondered what the benefit would be to testing irrigation well. Mr. Mitchell explained that they are requesting additional testing because you do not typically have another extraction site within a Zone 1 and to add another stress to the aquifer could draw in contaminants which affect the PWC. He further explained that it would be important to know if the well is being impacted by the contaminants to give us a view of what might be coming to the PWS. Mr. O'Hagan confirmed that there have been no areas designated for resident gardens. Mr. Mitchell noted that the residents will not be able to draw from the irrigation well. Mr. O'Hagan agreed to provide a proposed sampling schedule to the BOH for consideration. Mr. Mitchell suggested the sampling begin after the well has already been pumping for a while. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the use of the irrigation well at Craftsman Village Harvard pending approval of a mutually agreeable sample monitoring program; Ms. McCarthy seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

Mr. O'Hagan advised that the engineer expected to have the as-built for the septic system completed in the next 1-2 days and would be ready for an inspection shortly.

Approve revisions to Bare Hill Pond Town Beach Algal Bloom Procedures

This discussion was tabled for a future meeting.

Update regarding request for additional hours for BOH Administrative Assistant

Ms. Levison explained that she drafted a letter to revise the budget request, and intends to check how Minuteman Senior Services is assessed. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. McCarthy expressed support for Ms. Levison's draft letter. The Members reviewed and revised the letter and agreed it should be sent to the Finance Committee (FinCom) with copies to Mr. Bragan, Ms. Sobalvarro, Ms. Doucet, and Mr. Ryan. Ms. Levison also reported that she saw online that several Massachusetts Towns offer benefits to employees with greater than 20 hours per week. Ms. Flynn reported there are currently four Mass. Municipal Association job advertisements for part-time, benefitted administrative positions in other MA Towns, and noted that the Stow BOH offered a 25 hour/week, benefitted administrative assistant position last summer. Ms. Flynn also reported that the recent FinCom discussion regarding a possible new COA employee included a comment that offering a 25 hour/week position instead of a 40 hour/week position saves the Town in salary. Ms. Levison stated that she wrote Cheryl Sbarra for her input. Ms. Levison will finalize the memo and send it out.

PFAS update, including but not limited to continued discussion re MassDEP Private Well PFAS testing program, and report from RAB Meeting of 2/10/22

Mr. Grossman advised that that he has not received a response regarding water quality requirements from the property owners sharing a well on Ayer Road. The Board Members asked that Mr. Grossman send a firm reminder letter to the owner responsible for the well.

Mr. Mitchell reported that Bob Simeone has retired after 17 years working on the Devens RAB. He indicated that Tom Lineer, who heads the BRAC Program in Washington, has taken responsibility for a number of locations, including Devens. Mr. Mitchell indicated that most of the meeting was spent introducing the RAB group and their roles, and very little time was spent presenting the results. Mr. Mitchell indicated that he'd like to push for more presentation of data at the meetings; Ms. Levison agreed. Ms. Levison noted that Mr. Simeone was very supportive, and she was sad to see him go. Mr. Mitchell expressed faith in the process and the EPA, Army, and Army Corps of Engineers, to do the right thing. Mr. Mitchell indicated that he is hopeful that they will make progress in the Spring. Ms. Levison also stated that she has faith, but would like to see more information shared. Mr. Mitchell stated that he will share his thoughts with Mr. Lineer that there are avenues that allow sharing of data which is not yet finalized. Ms. Levison asked that Mr. Mitchell reiterate to Arcadis her prior comment that the newspaper of note for Harvard should be The Harvard Press; Mr. Mitchell agreed to do so.

Ms. Levison noted that Senator Eldridge and Representative Sena have put forth *An Act to Provide Quality Drinking Water in MA* which asks DEP to develop drinking water standards for private wells. Ms. Levison volunteered to write a letter thanking Senator Eldridge and Representative Sena, and will draft a Consider This column for BOH Member review. Ms. Levison noted that the *Act* is missing the need to make resources available to help homeowners pay for remediation and stated that she thinks there could be a big equity issue to address.

Continued preparation of a town-wide mailing in support of the hauler regulation

Draft language for the draft town-wide mailing was reviewed and revised. Ms. Levison will ask the student volunteer, Lena Aloise, if she is interested in preparing graphics.

Review Action Items

Action items were not reviewed.

PERMITS

Waste Hauler: EL Harvey

Ms. Levison asked the BOH Members to review the commercial generator exemption forms provided, and asked whether the four residential units at 11 Fairbank meets the definition of a commercial generator. Mr. Grossman stated that he does not believe it should be considered commercial. Ms. Flynn advised that last year the BOH allowed 11 Fairbank to self-haul recyclables to the Transfer Station. The Members asked Ms. Flynn to write the property owner of 11 Fairbank to confirm they are recycling. The remaining commercial exemption forms were reviewed without a need for further clarification. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the permit; Ms. McCarthy seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

MINUTES

The BOH Members reviewed and revised the draft minutes of 12/27/21. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the Minutes of 12/27/22 as amended; Ms. Levison seconded; Ms. McCarthy abstained. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Levison were in favor by roll call vote.

The BOH Members reviewed and revised the draft Minutes of 2/7/22. Mr. Mitchell made the motion to approve the Minutes of the Retreat of 2/7/22 as amended; Ms. McCarthy seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

The BOH Members discussed items for the next agenda.

ADJOURNMENT- Ms. McCarthy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:57 p.m.; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Flynn, Clerk

Documents Referenced:

- Agenda
- Posted agenda
- Draft guidelines for MBTA/adjacent communities
- Draft ID for the BOH
- Draft letter requesting revision to the budget submission
- DEP letters to Craftsman Village of 3/28/19 & 4/9/19
- DEP email re Craftsman Village of 1/26/22
- Craftsman Village chart re water levels at irrigation well
- DPH call notes of 1/25 and 2/1
- Draft minutes of 12/27/21 and 2/7/22

- Waste hauler application package from EL Harvey
- Draft townwide mailing in support of the hauler regulation