

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2022
ZOOM Meeting

Ronald Etskovitz, Chair
Diane Mortensen, Vice Chair
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Clerk
John Byrnes, Member
Bernadette Lunkuse, Member

Members Present Via Zoom Meeting:

Ron Etskovitz, Diane Mortensen, Bernadette Lunkuse Jay Byrnes, Barbra Sekesogundu Simon

Others Present:

Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director
Laura Clifford, BOH Admin. Assistant
Dan McIntyre, McIntyre Engineering Septic Services

Call Meeting to Order, 6:06 P.M.

Mr. Etskovitz called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

Citizens' Participation

None

Septic System Replacement, Variance Request, 224 Oregon Road, 6:05 PM

Dan McIntyre, Engineer for the homeowner, explained that the owners are in the process of selling their home, and had a failed Title 5 of their septic system. Mr. McIntyre shared the plan on the screen and showed the location of the system, as well as of the leaching field and the wetlands. This will also be heard at the May 9, 2022 Conservation Commission meeting. The groundwater table is quite high, they have proposed an Alternative Technology approved by DEP, with a 2-foot offset to groundwater, opposed to a four-foot offset. Mr. McIntyre noted they will need a new tank and distribution tank, and is a pretty straightforward system. The water table in the front yard was even higher. The local upgrade is for the 2-foot offset, and for a waiver for one percolation test rather than the required two, a waiver to be designed for a garbage grinder; and a waiver for a bed configuration.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to grant a variance from Ashland Board of Health regulations 303-7 to allow the subsurface sewage disposal system located at 224 Oregon Road to be designed utilizing one percolation test versus the required two percolation tests. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to grant a variance from Ashland Board of Health Regulations Section 303-11 to allow the subsurface sewage disposal system at 224 Oregon Road to be designed without a garbage disposal with the conditions that no garbage disposal be installed within the house and a deed recording be placed on the property stating no garbage disposal shall be installed in the house while the subsurface sewage disposal system is in use. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to grant a variance from Ashland Board of Health Regulations Section 303-11(d) to allow for the installation of a leaching bed at 224 Oregon Road. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Motion: I make a motion to grant a variance from 310 CMR 15.405(1)(h) to allow a reduction of the required groundwater separation from four (4') feet, to two (2') feet for 224 Oregon Road, this and all variances are conditional to Conservation Commission approval. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

The Deed Recording will be prepared for the owner.

Mary Mortensen Annual Public Health Award, Discuss Nominees

Ms. Mortensen noted that this is an annual recognition by the Board of Health in honor of Mary Mortensen, to either a group or an individual. During the Board's last discussion, Ms. Mortensen had suggested Police and Fire as the Award recipients; school nurses were also nominated. The Board agreed that both groups have been instrumental during the COVID-19 pandemic; Ms. Lunkuse suggested that the Police and Fire Departments, as well as the School and Community Nurses, have been part of our 'Emergency Response Team'. Ms. Sekesogundu-Simon suggested including volunteers as part of the 'Team'. Board Members agreed this is a great way to recognize all who have helped the Town through the pandemic.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to nominate the Ashland COVID-19 Response Team for the annual Mary Mortensen Public Health Award for 2022. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Heat Stress, Discussion

Mr. Etskovitz noted that the Board received the information sent pertaining to Heat Stress; it included staying out of the heat, staying well-hydrated, setting up cooling stations, and checking on elderly or high risk areas. Mr. Etskovitz inquired if there is any types of cooling stations in Ashland. Mr. Gupta noted that if there is a heat wave, they will set up cooling stations at the Community Center and the Library. Mr. Gupta noted we will also put information out on social media, and put information out at the Farmers Market. Mr. Gupta stated that the Health Fair coming up is focused on mental health. Ms. Mortensen noted that, as an emergency response plan, the Fire Chief will reach out to the Health Director, and the Community Center Director and the Town Manager to set up a plan, and will open the Community Center.

Consent Agenda:

- a. **Review and Approve Board of Health Meeting Minutes: April 5, 2022**
- b. **Review Year-to-Date Budget Reports, FY2022**

Motion: Ms. Lunkuse made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion is approved.

Member, John Byrnes' agenda

- a. **Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic**
No update at the moment.

Health Director's Agenda

- a. **COVID-19, Update**

Mr. Gupta noted that we are seeing an uptick in the numbers, we did see quite a few, we saw around 30 cases last week. We have a vaccine booster clinic coming up on May 13, 2022.

b. Childhood Vaccine Program, Update

Mr. Gupta noted the Childhood Vaccine Program is doing very well, so far we have vaccinated 21 Ashland school children who will now be able to attend school. There are ten families waiting for their turn.

c. Shared Services Grant, Update

Mr. Gupta reported that the Metrowest Health Foundation has asked the state to hire a housing specialist, to help with housing and hoarding cases. The other ask was to pay for transportation to regional vaccine clinics. The epidemiologists are working on creating communicable disease reports for the past five years, including the trends.

d. GreenUp Ashland, May 7, 2022

Mr. Gupta noted he attended a GreenUp Ashland meeting earlier today, there are 100 participants signed up so far. Last year there were 145 participants. Mr. Gupta explained the Adopt-a-Street Program.

e. Mental Health Workshop/Fair, May 11, 2022, Ashland Community Center

Mr. Gupta discussed the Mental Health Fair which is from 5:00 – 7:00 PM on Wednesday, May 11, 2022.

f. Housing Issues

Mr. Gupta noted there was a nuisance complaint on Union Street where some septage was discovered; we are working with DPW to determine the source.

Mr. Gupta noted that he received a pest control report from Sunnyside Café, and there is a drastic difference in how the reports are written and what they are doing for pest control. There are other complaints in the neighborhood, and they are working on this.

Discuss Agenda Topics for Future Meetings:

- Mary Mortensen Public Health Award Presentation – Mr. Etskovitz asked if Ms. Mortensen could come back for this, and be the Guest Speaker/Presenter.

Mr. Etskovitz thanked Ms. Mortensen on behalf of the Town and the Board. Mr. Etskovitz noted that Ms. Mortensen is a terrific asset to the Town and she will certainly be missed as a Board Member; he also recognized Ms. Mortensen's work on the vaccine program, and the Animal Regulations. Mr. Etskovitz noted she has a good pulse on the Town and has put a lot of time and effort into her position as a Board Member. Ms. Mortensen is available if anyone has questions, and plans to volunteer in other ways.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Sekesogundu-Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 5/3/2022 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. YTD Budget Report, YTD Revolving Fund Budget Report
2. April 5, 2022 Draft Meeting Minutes
3. 224 Oregon Road, Septic Design Plan and Variance Request Letter
4. A recording of the meeting is available at WACATV.com