

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2021
ZOOM Meeting

Ronald Etskovitz, Chair
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Clerk
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

Diane Mortensen, Vice Chair
John Byrnes, Member
Bernadette Lunkuse, Member

Members Present Via Zoom Meeting:

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

Others Present:

Rajit Gupta, Health Agent Director
Laura Clifford, BOH Admin. Assistant
Sergeant Ed Burman, Ashland P.D.
Tom Ryder, Ashland Health Agent
Mark Dassoni, Resident
KG Narayana, Former BOH Member
Eric Dickinson, Engineer, Civilized Solutions
Dan McIntyre, Engineer, McIntyre Engineering & Septic Services
Richard Hoffman, 36 Larcridge Lane
Robert Hall, 36 Larcridge Lane

Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 P.M.

Mr. Etskovitz called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Citizens' Participation

Mark Dassoni, resident, welcomed new Board Member, Jay Byrnes, to the Board of Health. Mr. Dassoni thanked Sergeant Burman for his continued work on COVID.

KG Narayana welcomed Jay Byrnes to the Board of Health. Mr. Narayana discussed the Town of Concord's online permitting system. Ms. Mortensen noted that the Town is looking at a Capital Project in which all the Town departments would be on the same permitting system, but it will take time.

Introduction of new Board of Health Member, John "Jay" Byrnes

Mr. Etskovitz announced that the Board of Health is happy to welcome a new Board of Health Member, Jay Byrnes; Mr. Etskovitz thanked Mr. Byrnes for his time and effort, and for volunteering. Mr. Etskovitz also recognized Decisions at Every Turn and their great contributions to the Town.

COVID-19 Update

Sergeant Ed Burman discussed the latest COVID number, he noted that after a week of declining numbers, he has seen a bump. There are four new cases, all have mild symptoms. People who are vaccinated have a 94% rate of protection, and typically have milder symptoms. If anyone is looking to get the vaccine; they may call the COVID hotline at 508-532-7900.

Sgt. Burman noted that he and Mr. Gupta were dealing with a daycare in Town which is not currently requiring masks to be worn. They spoke to the Director of the daycare and highly recommended the children wear masks indoors.

In the Fall, schools may go back to requiring masks. Sgt. Burman noted that Massachusetts reported 771 new COVID cases yesterday; the State is supposed to be testing for the variant, but he has not heard from the State on the new cases. Mr. Etskovitz noted that as more people are being vaccinated, we are seeing the decrease of hospitalizations and fatalities. Mr. Gupta noted that the CDC reported today that 99.5% of deaths are coming from unvaccinated individuals.

Septic Waiver request, 579 Chestnut Street, 6:10 P.M.

Eric Dickinson, Engineer for the project, shared the plan on the screen and gave a historical background of the stone mansion, built in 1925. Mr. Dickinson noted that the home currently has a failed septic system. There was high groundwater and soil test came back as sandy loam. The design was created using the Eljen system, making the leaching field smaller, requiring less trees to be cut down. Mr. Dickinson noted they are requesting the following waivers from the Ashland Board of Health Regulations:

- Section 303-11: Leaching Area; provisions for a garbage disposal unit included in all calculations, whether or not such a garbage disposal unit is actually installed. A design to satisfy a 50% increase in size is not feasible due to the abundance of trees. A garbage grinder is prohibited by the design.
- Section 303-14: Distance between trenches and pits; there shall be a minimum distance of 10 feet (wall to wall) between trenches. Eljen GSF B43 Modules in a trench configuration have been approved by the MA DEP to be spaced six (6) feet from wall to wall.

And the following waivers from Title 5 Local Upgrade Approval:

- Section 310 CMR 15.284; to allow the (SAS) soil absorption system to be installed 2-feet above the seasonal high groundwater for soils with percolation rates greater than 2-mpi using an Eljen GSF system. Per DEP's "Remedial Use Approval"; last revised: September 19, 2018. DEP approval is not required.
- Section 310 CMR 15.405 (110); to allow a reduction of the requirement of a twelve (12) inch separation between the inlet and outlet tees to high groundwater, provided that all boots or pipe joints area sealed with hydraulic cement or installed with watertight sleeves and the tank is proven watertight.
- 3.) Section 310 CMR 15.405(i); to allow the SAS to be designed on the basis of a sieve analysis versus a percolation test due to the presence of groundwater during the soil evaluation.

Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to why a System needs to be designed larger for a garbage grinder; Mr. Dickinson noted food particles can get into the trenches and cause failure sooner. Mr. Dickinson noted there will need to be a restriction on the Deed, limiting the home to six bedrooms.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion for 579 Chestnut Street, for Section 309-11 and 303-14 of the Ashland Board of Health Regulations to not design for a garbage disposal, and allow 6 feet between trenches. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion for Local Upgrade Approval, 310 CMR 15.284, to allow two feet above seasonal groundwater; 310 CMR 15.405(110) to allow a reduction requirement of 12 inches between the inlet and outlet tee; and 310 CMR 15.405(i) to allow the system to be designed on a sieve analysis with a deed restriction with no increase to bedroom count. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Septic Waiver request, 58-62 Waverly Street, 6:25 P.M.

Dan McIntyre, engineer for the project, shared the plan on the screen, he noted this is a 3-unit apartment building and that the owner also owns 64 Waverly Street. The cesspools are located at the 64 Waverly property; they are in the process of designing a system for 64 Waverly also. Mr. McIntyre noted they are proposing conventional stone and pipe trenches to service five bedrooms. The pipe will remain on the 64 Waverly Street property, and a new easement will be created, the current easement will be gone, that work is in progress. This is served by Town water, there are no wells involved. Mr. McIntyre noted they are requesting the following waivers from the Ashland Board of Health Regulations:

- 303-7 Two percolation tests required (one provided). The soil was observed to be consistent in test holes 1 and 2. In addition, a second percolation test on the abutting property (64 Waverly) confirmed the design rate.
- 303-11 Leach area to be designed for a garbage grinder (Tank designed for garbage grinder but not leach area). The small lot size prohibits expanding the leach area by 50% to account for a garbage grinder.
- 303-14 Trench spacing to be 10 feet (6 feet provided per Title 5). The small lot size and slope limits trench separation. As proposed, the design meets Title 5 requirements for trench spacing.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to grant 58-62 Waverly Street variances from Ashland Board of Health Regulations 303.7, allowing one percolation test; 303-11, to be designed without a garbage disposal with a deed recording stating that no garbage disposal can be installed while the septic system is in use, and; 303-14, trench spacing to be ten feet. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Animal Waiver Request for a second pony, 36 Larcridge Lane, Richard Hoffman

Ms. Mortensen noted that she has visited the site and said the owners did a good job in clearing the space, creating a nice paddock. Richard Hoffman, owner of the home, and Robert Hall, requested bringing in a second pony because they were advised by their veterinarian that the first pony may be dealing with stress, and that a companion, a second pony, could keep her at ease. Dona Walsh, Animal Inspector, recommended approval.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to allow the property owner to house two ponies at 36 Larcridge Lane, a waiver of 8.1 of the Board of Health Keeping of Animal Regulations. Mr. Byrnes seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Review of Regulations of the Ashland Board of Health relative to the Keeping of Animals

Ms. Mortensen noted that the Board of Health Animal regulations are somewhat antiquated and should be brought up to today's standards. Dona Walsh had reviewed some others and found Framingham's to be a good model, and are more specific. Ms. Mortensen asked that Members review and research the Regulations, during at the next meeting Members can raise any questions or concerns. The following meeting would be a public discussion to allow for public input, and during the next meeting the Board would deliberate and vote on whether to adopt the Regulations.

Consent Agenda:

- **Appointment of Justine Grassey, Assistant Animal Inspector**
- **Appointment of Burial Clerks:**
 - **Tara M. Ward**
 - **Cindy Livingstone**

- John Matarese, Jr.
- John Matarese, Sr.

Review and Approve Minutes, June 1, 2021

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to approve the consent agenda. (Excluding the Appointment of the Burial “Clerks”, which will be moved to the next agenda, the wording will be changed to Burial “Agents”). Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Health Director’s Agenda:

Arbovirus Reports / Update

Mr. Gupta noted that the July 10, 2021 report showed there was one positive test sample for West Nile Virus (WNV); the report received yesterday, July 19, 2021, showed 12 positive (WNV) test samples. Fortunately, there have been no human cases for both WNV and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

Abandoned Pools / Update

Two abandoned pools have been brought to our attention; both have been treated by Central Mass Mosquito Control Program. We have issued Administrative Letters to both owners, requiring them to secure the pools which have been abandoned for 5-7 years. We ask the public to bring any abandoned pools to our attention so that we may get it treated and secured.

MetroWest Shared Public Health Services Grant / “Fill in the Gap” Grant

Mr. Gupta noted we are getting more information, there are six other towns involved in this grant program. Funding will be \$300,000 over the next three years, we are in the process of putting the job positions out to fill. Mr. Gupta asked that Mr. Etskovitz sign the Commitment Letter as Chair.

Motion: Ms. Mortensen made a motion to authorize Ron, as Chairman of the Board of Health, to sign the Metrowest Shared Public Health Services Grant. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Agenda Topics for Future Meetings, August 10 or 17, 2021

The Board agreed to next meet on August 17, 2021; in September the Board can go back to twice per month, and can talk about meeting in-person, if they so choose. Ms. Mortensen discussed the Board having a casual, untelevised meeting, in the lower level meeting room to discuss goals and objectives for the next year.

Animal Regulations

Title 5 Regulations, Waiver Requests for Innovative/Alternative Systems – Mr. Ryder noted that if the Board was going to upgrade the Title 5 Regulations they would need to be published in the paper twice and post it in Town Hall. The DEP approved technology and grants typical waivers, such as the Eljen for repairs only. Ms. Mortensen would prefer to keep to the current procedure, or possibly add a section to our Regulations for certain repairs that would not require waivers. Mr. Ryder and Mr. Gupta will review and make a recommendation to the Board. Mr. Gupta will look into how many waivers have been issued recently, and will let the Board know when it is ready to be put on the agenda.

Adjournment

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

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 7/20/2021 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. COVID-19 Confirmed and Probable Cases – Graph
2. Spreadsheet including number of Fully Vaccinated by age range
3. 579 Chestnut Street, Septic Application and Design Plan
4. 58-62 Waverly Street, Septic Application and Design Plan
5. Waiver Request for Additional Pony, 36 Lartridge Lane
6. Keeping of Animals Regulations
7. CMMCP Abandoned Pools – Information Sheet
8. June 1, 2021, Draft Meeting Minutes
9. A recording of the meeting is available at WACATV.com