

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

Thursday October 3, 2019 – 5:00 PM – Richmond Town Hall – 1529 State Road

PRESENT: Mr. Peter Cohen; Mr. Andrew Fisher, Chair; Ms. Louise Maron; Mr. John Olander, BOH Agent; Mr. Anthony Segal; Mr. Fred Schubert; Ms. Phyllis LeBeau, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Ms. Jayne Smith, Agent

GUEST: Ms. Emily Jarrett, R.N., Community Health Assn.; Ms. Claudia Ryan

Mr. Fisher called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Review of Minutes of September 2, 2019: Mr. Segal moved that the minutes be accepted as read. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peter Cohen and adopted by unanimous vote.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS:

Sanitation Funding in BOH Budget: Mr. Fisher spoke with Ms. Danielle Fillio, the Town Administrator, about the issue. Ms. Fillio noted that, while she understood the Board's concern about carrying a line item in their budget over which they have no input, that same situation obtains in Stockbridge because sanitation is a Board of Health issue. Ms. Fillio will look into the issue with the Selectmen to determine if they would approve removing the line item from the Board of Health budget and placing it in a General Budget.

Mr. Olander noted that the issue of Sanitation is the responsibility of the BOH in terms of public education, recycling, etc. There was a discussion of how the control and negotiation of the contract moved out of the hands of the BOH and the Town Administrator to be handled by the Town Administrator alone and whether the Board wishes to regain a place at the table.

The consensus was that the BOH would like to know when the current contract expires, who the Town is considering for bids, what the bids look like in terms of conditions and then have a representative at the contract negotiation meetings.

Mr. Schubert moved that a member of the BOH be involved in any discussions or negotiations with the trash collectors and that the current Chair of the Board will meet with the Town Administrator to arrange for that to happen. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peter Cohen and passed by unanimous vote.

Hilltop Orchard Letter: As Ms. Jayne Smith was unable to attend this meeting, there was no information about the letter, what its content was and even whether it had been sent. The issue was tabled for the next meeting.

Signs for Beach Closing: Mr. Fisher asked whether Mr. Peter Beckwith, Highway Superintendent had been contacted about ordering the signs. It was thought that Ms. Jayne Smith was the one who was to have contacted him, but it was uncertain whether she had done so.

Wording of the signs was the subject of the next discussion. Ms. Ryan offered to ask Mr. Beckwith what has been done in terms of the wording of the signs and ordering them. A discussion then ensued about where the signs will be stored and who will be the individual responsible to post them when an e-coli-positive test of the water was reported. The result of that discussion was that the signs will be stored in Town Hall, notice will be sent to Ms. Claudia Ryan who will pick them up and post them at the beach. That change will be reflected in Mr. Schubert's revised algorithm.

The Beach Testing and Closing Algorithm: (See attached): Mr. Schubert distributed copies of the work he had done to date and went over some additional names and other changes he will now add in light of discussions at this meeting. Mr. Fisher reported that he will be going to the Housatonic Testing Laboratory next week and he will provide them with a copy of the revised algorithm.

Once Mr. Beckwith receives the signs, the other two organizations need to get the signs for their areas so that when Ms. Ryan is advised that the beach needs to be closed, the appropriate people at the Richmond Shores Assn. and at Camp Russell can be notified and can post their signs and close the beaches at their sites.

A final discussion of the order of events that will take place with a follow-up negative result and a follow-up positive result concluded the information that Mr. Schubert will incorporate into his revised algorithm.

Mr. Fisher advised the group that Ms. Jayne Smith is planning to leave her position at the Berkshire Health Alliance and will, therefore, no longer be acting as the Richmond BOH Agent.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Tony Segal reminded the Board that a few meetings back there was a discussion of the house at the corner of Lenox and Lenox Branch Road that had advertised as an Air B&B, offering a kitchenette and a bedroom. He noted that the original plan for the building that was approved only had one kitchen. There was a discussion of the legal definition of "kitchenette," which implies the existence of a refrigerator, a sink and a heating unit (not a full stove). The question was whether it was permissible for the owners to install a kitchenette without obtaining a permit. Mr. Olander thought that was a Zoning Board question and should be referred to that body.

The other question, which is within the purview of the BOH, is whether there was a bedroom or two added. Mr. Olander will check with the Assessors on the number of bedrooms the building contains.

Ms. Louise Maron reported that she has been asked by a resident whether the Town would be spraying for mosquitos as he had not seen any notification. Mr. Fisher noted that the Town has a five-year contract for that service, which is still in effect. Spraying is only done on town-owned property and is usually done in the early morning hours, so it is not readily visible.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election of new BOH Chair for Nov., Dec., Jan.: After a discussion of members' availability it was decided that Mr. Fred Schubert would take on the role of Chair for the months of November and December and that Mr. Peter Cohen would take over the role for the months of January, February and March, as Mr. Schubert will be away Thanksgiving week and at the end of December.

Discussion – Jayne Smith leaving as BOH Agent: Ms. Smith will continue in her position through December 2019, at which time the Alliance will have hired a replacement for her. Mr. Fisher felt it would be important to officially delineate the responsibilities that Mr. Olander has as separate from the ones belonging to the Alliance.

There was a discussion of that issue that included the information that Ms. Claudia Ryan is being trained to do the paperwork involved, which will greatly reduce the amount of time Mr. Olander currently spends, which is considerably more than the four hours per week that he is paid for. Mr. Schubert pointed out that the contract the Town holds with the Alliance very specifically notes that they are responsible for field work and the Town is expected to provide only clerical support and a total of four hours per week of in-field back-up from Mr. Olander.

Mr. Fisher asked Mr. Olander to clearly indicate what responsibilities he wishes to continue to fulfill for the four-hour per week timeframe. Mr. Olander said he wants to do Title V inspections, but the amount of time they involve changes with the seasons. Ms. Emilie Jarrett suggested that Mr. Olander keep a daily log of work so that he can control the amount of time he spends and know when the Alliance needs to step in and pick up the work over that time.

CURRENT NEWS AND EVENTS:

Lake and Ponds Assn. Meeting on Cyanobacteria: Mr. Fisher reported that, the symposium will take place on October 5th from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Zion Lutheran Church, 74 First St. in Pittsfield. Contact Lee Hauge at lakawestmass@gmail.com if you wish to attend. Mr. Schubert noted that he plans to attend.

25th Annual Mass. Assn. of Health Boards (MAHB) Fall Certification Program: Was held at the Blue Bonnet Diner in Northampton to discuss strategies for funding BOH programs, emerging public health issues, vaping, etc. None of the members attended.

BCBHA Dinner on October 24th : To be held at the Country Club of Pittsfield. Ms. Ryan has already registered the Board members who had expressed an interest in attending.

Community Health Report: Ms. Emilie Jarrett reported on the cannabis lecture she attended and provided pamphlets from that lecture that delineate the Cannabis laws in Massachusetts and ten questions to ask about the use of marijuana. (See attached). Ms. Jarrett advised the BOH that one of the topics of the lecture she attended dealt with CBD oil. She understood from that lecture that local establishments are not allowed to add CBD to their donuts, wine or coffee. They are allowed to sell sealed products that do not usually fall under the BOH jurisdiction to regulate. The BOH has the responsibility to be sure that the food establishments are not adding CBD to their products.

Ms. Jarrett then discussed e-cigarettes and vaping. She reported that the CDC has just provided new statistics as of October 1st that indicate there were 1,080 cases of lung injury associated with the use of e-cigarettes or vaping in the U.S. Eighteen people have died nationwide from the same cause. In Massachusetts there are three confirmed cases of vaping-associated pulmonary disease and an additional two probable cases; 61 additional cases are still being evaluated. All e-cigarette and vaping-related diseases are now reportable to the BOH. Ms. Jarrett asked whether there were any cases in Berkshire County and was advised that there have not been so far. Any cases will undoubtedly come through the MAVEN system and will involve Ms. Jarrett who will report to the Board and follow up. In confirmed cases, chest x-rays show abnormalities but no sign of infection. It appears to be a drastic allergic reaction, which seems to respond to steroids and not to antibiotics. There is no cure known at this time.

Ms. Jarrett provided a new map that shows the incidence of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) cases across the country and 12 reported cases and three deaths in Massachusetts. Thirty-Five communities are at a critical risk stage, 53 are at high risk, 121 are at moderate risk.

Ms. Jarrett advised the Board that flu clinics in Richmond will begin next week at the usual locations at the usual hours.

CDC food-borne illnesses Report from 2017: The highlight was that most of the outbreaks were linked to restaurants rather than any other place where food was prepared. The food categories responsible for most of the outbreaks of food-associated illnesses were: Turkey, Fruit, Chicken and Pork.

Agent's Report and Mail: (See attached) Mr. Olander went over the report, explaining in more detail what occurred in each instance.

Next Meeting: Tuesday November 5, 2019 at 5:00 PM was accepted by the group as the next meeting date and time.

As there was no further business before the Board, Mr. Schubert moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Mr. Segal and adopted by unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM.