

BOARD OF HEALTH VIRTUAL MEETING

Tuesday, October 6, 2020 – 5:00 PM via Zoom

PRESENT: Anthony Segal, Chair; Fred Schubert; Andrew Fisher; Ed Fahey, Agent; Peter Cohen; Louise Maron; Emilie Jarrett, RN, Comm. Health Assn.; John Olander, Agent

GUESTS: Emilie Jarrett, RN, Comm. Health Assn., Laura Kittross, Berkshire Reg. Planning; Rick Bell

Approval of Minutes: It was suggested that approval of all recent minutes be done at the next meeting by which time everyone will have copies of each to review. Approval of minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: Tony noted that the beach is officially closed and that it did not ever become a “hot spot” for the COVID-19 virus.

The School has been open and it has been going very well.

Camp Russell is now closed. They had only one episode, which was handled effectively.

Rick Bell raised the issue of the inspection of abutters to the landfill. Tony will contact Mass. DEP to arrange for a meeting at which a plan and a timeline can be created. In the meantime, he will forward to the rest of the Board the email from Rick that contains information on the issue in depth.

Laura reported that she has spoken to Louise and Fred about who is doing what in terms of inspections, etc. The concern was that John Olander is working more hours than he is getting paid for and there was some question as to whether to BRPC was doing everything it was getting paid to do. There was a discussion of the necessity to drive all permit requests to the on-line system. That will give Becky (Admin. Asst.) a clear picture of what is needed and the ability to prioritize assignments. That will ensure that John will not be overloaded with work beyond the amount of time he is paid for each week. The three people to whom requests usually are sent were asked to be sure to insist that all requests are referred to the on-line system.

Laura also advised the Board of a new bill (SAPHE 2.0) in the Legislature designed to create dedicated State funding for all the individual town boards of health. Currently, Massachusetts is the only State that requires each town’s board of health to be funded out of municipal taxes. Dedicated State funding is intended to allow towns to be able to hire certified workers and vastly improve the quality of work being done.

Fred moved that the Richmond Board of Health indicate it is in favor of SAPHE 20 and supports the principals behind the bill. It is the Board's hope that the bill will pass. The motion was seconded by Andy and passed by unanimous vote.

Tony will access the link and sign the Board on as a municipal entity in his role as Chair of the Richmond Board of Health.

NEW BUSINESS:

John Olander brought to the Board the issue of the house on Canaan Rd. which may be in an unsafe condition. The owner of the property first raised the issue but on hearing that he will be responsible for any required improvements, has backed down and is no longer cooperating. Ed explained that it is usually the tenant that requests an inspection and that without the tenant's permission, there can be no access to the building.

There was a discussion of just how urgent the situation is. The consensus was that Ed, as the BOH Agent, contact the State Police to request that they do a wellness check. Even just having the door opened and seeing into the home can give the Trooper a sense of the situation. Ed would accompany the police on this visit.

Peter advised the Board that he has heard a complaint from the Inn at Richmond about Balderdash, alleging that they are not adhering to COVID-19 rules about masking and social distancing. He was advised to call the Selectmen with that complaint. Tony responded that he had recently been to Balderdash and felt that they were in compliance with all of the rules. Furthermore, he has tested the noise level at Richmond Pond coming from Balderdash and has determined that it was well within acceptable limits. The test was conducted with an app on his I-phone so there is no way to determine the accuracy of that reading. Tony noted that Neal Pilson, the Selectman, is well aware of the complaints being lodged at Balderdash and is dealing with it.

Agent's Report: (see attached) John read off the items from the report, providing extra details as appropriate.

Community Health Report: Emilie reported that Richmond has had just 7 cases of COVID-19 positive tests since March, two of which occurred in September, but no further cases have been reported since September 27. Emilie said all protocols had been followed in the 7 cases and the last two are now considered closed.

The flu clinic has gone very well and indeed the number of people coming in for flu shots has increased over previous years. Emilie began with 40 home-bound people and then held a clinic at the school for students, teachers and families.

Next Meeting: As Tuesday, November 3rd is Election Day, the next meeting will be held on the following Tuesday, November 10, 2020.

There being no further business before the Board, Fred moved that the meeting be adjourned.
The motion was seconded and passed with unanimous approval.

Signed:

Anthony Segal, Chair

