

Harvard Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Zoom Meeting
Monday, January 25, 2021
Approved: February 8, 2021

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

Attending: Alison Flynn, Clerk, Harvard Board of Health (“BOH”); Ira Grossman, Health Agent, Nashoba Associated Boards of Health (“NABH”); Joan Eliyesil, The Harvard Press; Allie Duval, potential tenant, 325 Ayer Road; Nicholas Deane, property owner, 325 Ayer Road.

Ms. McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Ms. Flynn read aloud the Remote Meeting Preamble.

Ms. Levison stated that she’d like to include an update from her attendance at the NABH Quarterly Meeting; Ms. McCarthy agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENT- Ms. Eliyesil asked whether NABH plans to run a COVID-19 vaccination clinic for the 75+ category of Phase 2. Mr. Grossman advised that there are no current plans to do so as the availability of the vaccine is too questionable at this point in time, and NABH is expecting to only receive 100 doses per week. Ms. Levison stated that the issue is further complicated by the requirement to order doses 10 days in advance, and Ms. McCarthy added the State is currently receiving 8,700 doses per week.

NEW BUSINESS

a. 325 Ayer Road: Request for approval of tenancy by Allie Duval in Suite B-110-B- Ms. Duval explained that she intends to use the vacant space to pour scented candles from a wax melting pot, and sells only wholesale. She stated that while her business is growing, she is currently the sole employee working 20-25 hours a week, and intends to possibly also have her son-in-law working an occasional Saturday morning in the space. Ms. Duval indicated that there is no water used in the process or cleanup. Mr. Grossman advised that he has no concerns with Ms. Duval’s intended use, and is comfortable with allowing her tenancy considering the current total headcount at the Appleworks Building. Mr. Mitchell made the motion to approve the tenancy as presented; Ms. Levison seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote. Ms. Levison requested that Ms. Duval notify the BOH if she increases her hours toward 40 hours or adds another employee; Ms. Duval agreed.

b. 113 Poor Farm Road: Consider proposed habitable space above detached garage- Mr. Grossman advised the Board that Title 5 indicates a space receiving an occupancy permit should be considered as part of the flow, even if there are no plans to add water. He indicated he received a proposed floor plan for a new, detached garage at this property that includes a finished space proposed to be an office on the second floor. Mr. Grossman advised that Harvard’s plumbing permitting process does not trigger a review by the BOH, so there is the potential that the property owners could later add water to the office without the BOH’s knowledge. The BOH members agreed that it would be helpful to invite the applicants in for a room count discussion to consider whether a deed restriction would be appropriate. Ms. Flynn will reach out to the engineer to request the discussion and a whole house plan. She will also review the BOH records to identify whether a septic permit is on file.

c. Update from Land Use Boards Meeting of January 12, 2021- Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Grossman indicated there was nothing substantive to report.

d. Update from recent DPH COVID-19 Conference Calls & enforcement of new and revised orders issued by Governor Baker- Ms. McCarthy reported that the call today with Secretary of HHS Mary Lou Sudders advised that they are working toward setup of 7 mass vaccination sites which are not currently operational because of limited vaccine availability. She also indicated that a revised FAQ on the vaccine has been posted to the DPH webpage; Ms. Flynn will add it to the BOH COVID-19 page. Mr. Grossman advised that the State is working to prepare Town Hall-style outreach on the vaccine which will be recorded. He also noted that the DPH search lists many vaccination sites, but not all have the vaccine and it is expected to be a while before the supply meets demand. Ms. Levison noted that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, a single shot which does not require a cold chain, will be evaluated in the next few weeks,. Mr. Grossman noted that very mild side effects have been reported by those being vaccinated. Ms. Levison stated that the Council-on-Aging (COA) is gearing up to help seniors make appointments online, and suggested the BOH craft language regarding the sign-up process for the COA's use. Mr. Mitchell noted that the Leominster Hospital and Marlborough Hospital vaccination sites are closest to Harvard. Ms. Levison will draft suggested language to be approved by Ms. McCarthy. The BOH members reviewed and revised the statement received from Mr. Garreffo regarding vaccination efforts. Ms. Flynn will add it to the BOH COVID-19 webpage and circulate it to all members to be used in reply to resident inquiries.

e. Update on EDS planning for vaccination clinic- Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Mitchell reported on a recent conference call with MEMA which advised that 75% of costs toward vaccination effort are currently reimbursable, with a possibility that 100% will be shortly approved. They stated they also learned that volunteer time and in-kind donations can count against the 25% not reimburseable. Ms. Flynn will provide Ms. McCarthy with sample timesheets to be tailored for use by the volunteers. Mr. Mitchell added that Ms. Flynn and Mr. Grossman's budgeted time cannot be included, but any time above and beyond, as well as overtime hours of the DPW and School's IT employees, can be included. Mr. Grossman stated that NABH's goal, if vaccine availability increases, is to set up regional dispensing sites, each servicing a multiple towns, because it's more cost effective and an efficient use of resources. He further confirmed that he does not think Harvard would have to run its own clinic if the supply chain opens up. Mr. Grossman advised that the First Responder Clinic run by Nashoba in Boxborough went relatively smoothly and exhibited a capability for increased throughput. He also indicated that if Harvard is interested in running clinics now, it would be more appropriate to consider partnering with a pharmacy and run targeted clinics for senior housing. Mr. Grossman shared that Mr. Garreffo will be reaching out to COAs to see if they are interested in coming to NABH in small groups for vaccination. Ms. McCarthy stated that it is better to be prepared to run a clinic than not, and suggested the BOH move forward with planning. Mr. Grossman noted that the Harvard volunteers at the First Responders clinic were very helpful.

Ms. McCarthy stated that volunteer resident, Suzy Opalka, has agreed to assist in formatting the spreadsheets to track volunteers, and will provide Ms. McCarthy with a status update. Ms. Opalka is also exploring whether a BOH vaccine information page may qualify for a Worcester Polytech Institute (WPI) program which assists small businesses with webpage design. Ms. Levison noted that the BOH may be required to use the Town website to post information. Ms. McCarthy reported that Ms. Opalka is also tasked with speaking with someone at WPI about the specific logistics of a drive through clinic, organizing the parking area, and how to administer to residents in larger vehicles.

Ms. McCarthy also reported that Dr. Miotto of Worcester has agreed to be the medical expert guest of the BOH in Zoom forums encouraging vaccination. Ms. McCarthy is working with resident volunteers Julie Sniffin and Jenny Gormley on coordinating the Zoom forums. She stated that the plan is for the initial Zoom with Dr. Miotto to include a presentation and live Q&A, followed by rebroadcasting of that recording at subsequent forums and live Q&A fielded by Harvard residents in the medical field. She explained that the initial forum will be open for registration by all residents, with subsequent forums marketed to the Lions Club, COA, and the three churches. Ms. McCarthy also suggested the forums be open to other NABH communities. Resident volunteer Ellen Leicher agreed to assist with the EventBrite sign up. Ms. McCarthy will advise the BOH of the date of Dr. Miotto's forum, anticipated to be held in mid-February, once confirmed.

Ms. McCarthy indicated that the next Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) meeting will designate the individuals to author individual sections of Chief Denmark's draft Operational Plan.

Mr. Mitchell volunteered to assist Ms. McCarthy in preparing a presentation to update the SB regarding vaccination efforts; Ms. Levison will review the draft presentation subsequently. Ms. Levison indicated that she spoke with Ms. Wallace and Ms. Minar regarding the current vaccination efforts; Mr. Mitchell indicated he had conversations with Mr. Sklar and Mr. Maiore; Ms. McCarthy stated she also spoke with Mr. Sklar. The members agreed that all SB members expressed support of the BOH efforts.

f. Update from the Emergency Response Team- No update was reported.

g. Clerk and Health Agent Update-

- Ms. Flynn requested approval of the invoice AlphaGraphics for the production of the town-wide mailing in support of the waste hauler regulation. Ms. Levison made the motion to approve the invoice; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.
- Ms. Levison reported that she attended the NABH Quarterly Meeting and learned that the Harvard assessment for FY22 is \$1.92 less than the BOH estimate in the submitted budget. Ms. Levison will advise Mr. Bragan and Ms. Finch. Ms. Levison also reported that she learned that NABH made staffing adjustments responsive to COVID-19 needs.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Continued review of draft algal bloom procedures- The BOH members reviewed and revised the draft algal bloom protocols. Ms. Levison will incorporate the revisions and ask Ms. Flynn to send the draft to Ms. Von Loesecke, Mr. Leicher, Mr. O'Shea for comment, copying Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Grossman.

b. Continued discussion regarding preparation of financial warrant for algae monitoring of Bare Hill Pond (due 2/12/21)- The members reviewed and revised the draft budget for the warrant article. Ms. Levison will prepare a draft initiation form for final approval at the next meeting.

c. Status update regarding COVID-19 Protocols of the Immaculate Heart of Mary School- Ms. McCarthy stated that she will complete her review of the protocols and work with Ms. Flynn to prepare a response.

d. PFAS update, including continued discussion re MassDEP Private Well PFAS testing program- Mr. Mitchell indicated that he contacted the Army consultant to express concerns that Harvard residents' privacy is protected, and will follow-up.

e. Review Action Items- Mr. Mitchell stated he would like to work with Mr. Grossman on preparing the best practices for well samplers. Ms. Levison indicated that a recent NextDoor posting has her concerned that it has been forgotten that the only vacancies on the Transfer Station Committee are those designated to be a BOH representative unless the charter has been changed.

PERMITS

- Baker Commodities- The BOH members reviewed the permit application of Baker Commodities, Ltd., for hauling of food waste. Mr. Mitchell made the motion to approve the permit as submitted; Ms. Levison seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.
- EL Harvey- Ms. Flynn advised that she has not heard anything further from EL Harvey since she last expressed, at Ms. McCarthy's suggestion, that she will no longer discussing their application status outside of a meeting. Mr. Grossman indicated that a Cease and Desist Order will need to be issued if they are currently operating without a permit.
- Republic and Waste Management- Ms. Flynn advised that they are currently operating with expired permits, and the submitted application packages are still incomplete.
- The members agreed to adopt a policy that if a complete application has not been received by the BOH by the 2nd Thursday in February, the haulers receive a letter advising that their permit has expired, to Cease and Desist operations, and request a discussion be included on a meeting agenda if they would like further consideration. Ms. Flynn will send such a letter to any noncompliant haulers on February 11th at noon.

MINUTES

The BOH members reviewed and revised the draft Minutes of January 11, 2021. Mr. Mitchell made the motion to accept the minutes as amended; Ms. Levison seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

The BOH members reviewed and revised the draft Minutes of January 15, 2021. Ms. Levison made the motion to accept the minutes as amended; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA- Items for the next agenda were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT- Ms. Levison made the motion to adjourn at 9:01 p.m.; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All members were in favor by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Flynn, Clerk

Documents Referenced:

- Agenda
- 325 Ayer Road: E-mail from Nick Deane to the BOH regarding Allie Duval's proposed tenancy (1/15/21)
- 113 Poor Farm Road: Proposed plans for a garage with habitable space
- Draft algal bloom procedures
- Draft budget for the algae warrant article
- Draft Operational Plan for COVID-19 vaccination clinic
- Waste hauler application package of Baker Commodities, Ltd.
- Draft minutes of 1/11/21 and 1/15/21