

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Minutes of Meeting

April 23, 2020

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A Regular Meeting of the Board of Health was held via Zoom on Thursday, April 23, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. The meeting was duly posted. Board members present: Chairwoman Jeannine Lopes, Michael Silva and Peter DeTerra. Also present: Mary Freire-Kellogg, Health Agent and Amanda Blais, Administrative Assistant.

**Before the Board:**

Chairwoman Lopes asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of March 26, 2020. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Silva; seconded by Mr. DeTerra. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed a new animal permit application for 7 Summit Drive. The applicant requested a permit for eight chickens. Motion to approve the new animal permit for eight chickens was made by Mr. Silva; seconded by Mr. DeTerra. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed a new well application for 7 Summit Drive. The Health Agent stated the well would be used for irrigation purposes and that the resident asked if the well could be hand dug or if the well needed to be done by a well driller. The Health Agent mentioned there are no regulations other than the regulations from the State. Mr. DeTerra stated he didn't believe the applicant had the space to hand dig the well and advised the well be done by a well driller. The Health Agent stated the only issue among the Board would be whether or not the well would be hand dug or done by a well driller. The resident called into the meeting to state that the father-in-law would use a jackhammer but doesn't have his own company. Chairwoman Lopes informed the Health Agent she could send a letter to the Board of Public Works to notify them of the work being done. Mr. Silva mentioned he believed the Board is covered and stated the major concern is that the well will be used for irrigation and not the purposes of drinking. Motion to approve the well permit for irrigation purposes was made by Mr. Silva; seconded by Mr. DeTerra. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed septic system repair plans for 305 New Boston Road. Mr. DeTerra abstained from discussion and voting regarding the property. The Health Agent mentioned the repair plans were submitted to the Board via email. Motion to approve the septic system repair plans for 305 New Boston Road was made by Mr. Silva; seconded by Chairwoman Lopes; abstained by Mr. DeTerra. The motion passed.

**Public Hearing:**

None.

**Health Agent's Report:**

Ms. Freire-Kellogg discussed updates regarding COVID-19. The Health Agent stated residents continue to call the department with concerns that not everyone is wearing masks, however the wearing of masks is only guidance from Governor Baker but is not yet mandatory. The Health Agent stated it would be difficult to mandate and the Board of Health cannot police the matter, nor do they have the authority to

do so; the Health Agent can only educate the public. Chairwoman Lopes reiterated that the wearing of masks is only the Governor's recommendation. Mr. Silvia suggested the Health Agent, Town Administrator and Police Chief put dialogue together in the event that policing the matter would happen and the Health Agent stated a lot of work would have to go into doing so and major questions would need to be addressed. Chairwoman Lopes stated residents should be following State guidelines and recommendations, as well as be aware that Massachusetts is number three on the list of critical states. The Health Agent stated more positive cases continue to be reported to the department. The Health Agent informed the Board of the following concerns the department has received from residents: mandating residents to wear masks and gloves, leaves blowing from yard to yard that may have the virus, and people walking the bike path, parks and beaches without wearing masks. The Health Agent has also recommended to establishments that employees wear PPE, however establishments are running into the issue of acquiring such PPE.

Ms. Freire-Kellogg stated parks and beaches have been closed by the Board of Public Works, however when the Health Agent asked to have the gate shut and locked in parking lot at the beach, BPW felt this was unnecessary. Chairwoman Lopes stated the gate should be shut and locked but BPW should want to do this on their own; Boards should be working together. Chairwoman Lopes asked the Health Agent to make contact with BPW Superintendent to see if this could happen without ordering the BPW to do so. Mr. Silvia stated the Board should make a motion to order BPW to shut and lock the gate and the Health Agent mentioned she doesn't want to stop people from being outside, however she could ask the BPW to monitor and if residents are not social distancing, then BPW will have to shut and lock the gates. Mr. DeTerra stated he believed education is best and BPW should monitor the parking lots. The Health Agent mentioned she has more signs that can be posted in areas where gatherings normally take place.

Ms. Freire-Kellogg informed the Board of complaints from residents regarding the number of deaths due to COVID-19 are not being posted. The Health Agent feels that posting this information does not serve a purpose and assuming that a person passed away from the virus doesn't feel right. The State is posting deaths by County to preserve privacy.

Ms. Freire-Kellogg informed the Board that the department received \$15,000.00 in relief funds to be used for COVID-19 resources. The Town Administrator requested postcards be created with COVID-19 information; these postcards would be printed and mailed to all residents using these funds. The Health Agent stated the postcards must be paid by credit card and is willing to use her personal credit card, however she doesn't want to wait months for reimbursement. Also to be paid with relief funds is a purchase for thermometers, and the possible purchase of a portable hand sink and digital sign to post COVID-19 information. The Health Agent asked the Board if relief funds could go to Community Nurse since hours are being spent on COVID-19 cases.

On another note, Ms. Freire-Kellogg began to discuss EEE awareness and reiterated previous guidelines and recommendations. The Health Agent stated Bristol County Mosquito has already started preparing for the season.

Ms. Freire-Kellogg informed the Board of two tobacco establishments that were issued FDA violations. The Health Agent stated the Tobacco Inspector will perform a re-inspection of the establishments.

#### **Invoices/Other Business:**

There being no other business before the Board, Mr. Silvia made a motion to adjourn and was seconded

by Mr. DeTerra. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Amanda L. Blais*

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Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant