

Harvard Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Zoom Meeting
November 29, 2022
Approved: December 12, 2022

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

Others Attending, including but not limited to: Alison Flynn, Board of Health Clerk; Joan Eliyesil, The Harvard Press.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. Mitchell called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. Ms. Flynn provided abbreviated remote meeting instructions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss preparation of Annual Town Report (due Mon., 1/23/23)

Mr. Mitchell asked that Ms. Flynn provide the BOH Members with the 2021 Annual Town Report for comments prior to the December 12th meeting. Ms. Levison suggested she provide details of her efforts for Recycle Your Reusables and COVID-19, and Ms. McCarthy include information regarding her efforts on climate.

Report from Land Use Boards (LUB) Meeting (11/15/22)

Ms. McCarthy reported that the LUB discussed ongoing Conservation compliance issues at Pine Hill Village which have stalled the next phase of construction. Ms. McCarthy indicated that there was no update on the 203 Ayer Road project.

Consider BOH impact from temporary housing at Devens

Ms. Flynn advised that Mr. Garreffo stated that he does not foresee an impact to the Harvard Board of Health with the establishment of temporary housing at Devens. She stated that Mr. Garreffo reported that Ms. Braley, of NABH, visited the site the day prior. Mr. Mitchell indicated that Mr. Garreffo's written comments advised that there may be some impact to the NABH, but not to the Harvard Board of Health. Ms. Levison stated that she was advised by the Medical Reserve Corps. that the MRC will not need to assist.

COVID-19: Current status and update regarding distribution of test kits and PPE

Ms. Levison indicated that all test kits and pediatric masks have been distributed, and that she has offered surgical masks and KN95s to the Council-on-Aging (COA) and Library. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Levison agreed to meet at the Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) trailer over the weekend to rotate the stock of masks. Ms. Levison advised that as of 11/24/22, Harvard has a 1.84% positivity rate.

Update from DPH Interagency Local Boards of Health Webinar of 11/22/22

Ms. Levison and Mr. Mitchell reported on their attendance at the webinar; Ms. Levison provided the BOH with her notes. Ms. Levison and Mr. Mitchell explained that the proposed changes to Title 5 will affect 20 communities on the Cape and Southeast Massachusetts which have reached their Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for total nitrogen, which has a negative impact on shellfish and the estuaries. Ms. Levison stated there will be three meetings for public comment on the proposed changes.

Ms. Levison reported that there was no discussion of distribution of COVID-19 test kits and whether there is an expected spike in cases after Thanksgiving. Ms. Levison also reported that MAHB has new guidance on dry hemp products, the Office of Local and Regional Health is reorganizing slightly, and funding is available for clerical assistance in connection with preparing responses to requests to the Capacity Assessment.

Clerk Update

- Ms. Flynn advised that the new Land Use Boards Administrative Assistant, Brie Jones, and new Assistant Town Clerk, Andrew Sammarco, began working in Town Hall this week.
- Ms. Flynn indicated that the COA project is scheduled to be completed in February; the group agreed that the LUB's move to Hildreth House would likely not be until early-Spring.
- Ms. Levison indicated that she received an e-mail from the prior owner for 30 Cruft Lane letting her know that the property is coming back on the market. Ms. Flynn stated that both she and Mr. Garreffo have been in touch with the listing broker and informed her of the binding agreement for upgrade of the septic and well with the current owner.

OLD BUSINESS

Approve FY24 budget submission

The Members reviewed and revised the draft budget submission. The Members agreed that they approve the budget with or without the request for additional hours for the Board of Health Clerk. Ms. McCarthy made a motion to accept the budget for FY24 as presented; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

Ms. Levison indicated that she wrote to Mr. Kilhart to see whether he would be agreeable to collaborate on a townwide recycling mailing and the Styrofoam takeback event in FY24 and has not yet heard back.

Consider revisions to Article I: Sanitation, including previously drafted tight tank regulation and sample long sewer line deed notification

Ms. Flynn agreed to incorporate Mr. Garreffo's comments into the draft regulation prior to the next meeting.

Status of satellite phone base station installation at the Bromfield School and Public Safety Building

Ms. Levison stated she has not received an update from Mr. Woodsum. Ms. McCarthy indicated she would ask him the next time she saw him.

Continued discussion regarding the changes to textile, food waste, and mattress disposal restrictions, including but not limited to discussion re placement of additional textile recycling bins on municipal property and consideration of draft correspondence to the Schools re food waste

The Members agreed the location for the textile bins on municipal property should be in a high-traffic area. Ms. Levison suggested the new COA building would be a great location. She will continue to follow-up to identify a location.

The BOH Members reviewed and revised the draft memo to the schools regarding the new waste ban materials. Ms. Levison will finalize the revisions for send out by Ms. Flynn.

PFAS update, including but not limited to report from the Devens Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting of 11/15/22 and efforts to organize a showing/discussion of “Dark Waters”

Mr. Mitchell reported that, most important to Harvard, they are in the process of finalizing the Area 1, Phase 2, work plan. He indicated that it has gone through several rounds of comments and responses, and they hope to have it finalized so they can start the investigation in the Spring. Mr. Mitchell stated that Area 1 includes the area of Harvard which borders Devens and has been the subject of sampling, from the area of Harvard which borders Devens. Ms. Levison asked whether additional testing is needed to identify whether the area of contamination has moved with the water. Mr. Mitchell explained that Phase 1 was to identify whether there is a contamination problem, and that Phase 2 is to now identify the nature and extent of the problem which was confirmed in Phase 1 by taking more samples and placing monitoring wells. Mr. Mitchell stated that it has not been confirmed whether there is a linkage between the contamination at Devens and the presence of PFAS in wells in Harvard. Mr. Mitchell stated that Phase 2 will include bedrock wells on-site and in Harvard, and that all prior investigation wells on-site have been in the overburden. Mr. Mitchell indicated that they are also continuing with other areas of investigation, including of the surface waters.

Ms. Levison indicated that she does not have an update to provide on her efforts to organize a showing of “Dark Waters”, but is planning the event for late January.

Recycle Your Reusables: Continued discussion regarding financial support

Ms. Levison reported that Irene Congdon of MA DEP suggested the Department of Public Works should be supporting Recycling Your Reusables with RDP funds. Ms. Levison explained that Ms. Congdon indicated that Harvard would be awarded an extra RDP point this year, equal to \$350, because of Ms. Levison’s and the BoH’s assistance with the event. Ms. Levison agreed to prepare a draft request to Mr. Kilhart for Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Flynn’s finalization.

Drought: Continued discussion regarding next public outreach steps

Mr. Mitchell reported on his communication with the State Geologist regarding already published reference materials available from MA DEP, EPA, and the US Geological Survey. He will forward these links to Ms. McCarthy to incorporate into her initial flow chart. Ms. Levison suggested that it is important for the BOH to get the message out that if the State says “critical drought”, all water users, including those with private wells, should be conserving. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. McCarthy will continue to draft the two outreach articles for finalization in February, and publication in early

March and early April. Mr. Mitchell asked Ms. Flynn to identify the MA law establishing ownership of subsurface waters; Ms. Levison suggested that Ms. Briggs of MA DEP would be able to provide her with this information.

Consider preparation of an EAT request submission

Ms. Levison and Mr. Mitchell suggested that arrow signs and safety vests which state “Board of Health” would have been helpful at the drive-through test kit distribution. Ms. Flynn stated that she is not currently having any issues with her laptops, the oldest being purchased in 2019, and does not need any additional equipment to assist her with remote work. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Levison agreed to check equipment stored in the EDS trailer for mouse damage. Ms. Flynn will label the chairs and pop-up tent, last known to be stored in the Old Fire Station, when she has a moment.

Prepare comments to the Harvard Climate Initiative Committee (HCIC) on the draft Climate Action Plan (CAP)

Ms. McCarthy advised that comments are not needed at this time.

Action Items

Action items were reviewed. The Members confirmed that they would like to calibrate the fluorometer this year, but not every year. Ms. Levison confirmed that she would be interested in cyanobacteria training with Mr. Snook; Mr. Mitchell suggested that Mr. Garreffo or his designee might be interested.

PERMITS

• Review of septic permits issued by Health Agent from 11/9/22 through 11/29/22

Ms. Flynn advised that Mr. Garreffo issued septic permits for 110 Warren Ave., for a revision to the breakout area with inclusion of a retaining wall for an existing system, and for 204 Bolton Road, for a replacement of a building sewer line.

• Waste Haulers: Consider process for permitting companies whose vehicles are not accurately lettered, and action against haulers operating without a current permit

The Members agreed that they are willing to permit haulers who do not have the correct company name on their trucks as long as the telephone number on the truck forwards to the correct entity.

The Members agreed to not pursue a 2022 fee from a hauler who is currently operating without a permit as the BOH was in the process of updating the application forms, but to order a cease and desist letter if haulers are not permitted going forward in a timely manner.

MINUTES

The Members reviewed and revised the draft Minutes of 11/8/22. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the Minutes of 11/8/22 as amended; Ms. McCarthy seconded. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. McCarthy were in favor; Ms. Levison abstained.

The Members reviewed and revised the draft Minutes of 11/15/22. Ms. Levison made a motion to approve the Minutes of 11/15/22 as amended; Ms. McCarthy seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

The Members reviewed and revised the draft Minutes of 11/29/22. Ms. Levison made a motion to approve the Minutes of 11/29/22; Mr. Mitchell seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

DISCUSS ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

It was agreed that the BOH will not hold a regular meeting on December 26th, but will hold a meeting at noon on December 27th, if necessary, to only answer budget questions if posed; Ms. Flynn and Mr. Garreffo will not attend that meeting. Ms. Levison will prepare a draft cable slide reminding residents to apply for a stable permit for review by the BOH Members at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. McCarthy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:41 pm; Ms. Levison seconded. All were in favor by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Flynn, Clerk

Documents Referenced:

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes of 11/8, 11/15, and 11/19/22;
- Draft revisions to Article I: Sanitation, and sample long sewer line deed notice;
- Draft email to schools re food waste;
- 2022 Town Report Memo;
- J. Garreffo's written comments regarding the draft Sanitation revisions and temporary housing at Devens
- Harvard COVID-19 Case Report 11.24.22
- Draft budget narratives and workbook
- L. Levison's Notes MDPH Webinar of 11/22/22