MINUTES
April 4, 2024

OPENING: The regular scheduled meeting of the Board of Health opened at 6:00 p.m.

Members in attendance:
Sue Brzoska - Chairperson
Mikenzie Cain - Vice-chairperson
Dr. Terry Putnam - Member

Town Staff:
Tom Hibert - Health Director
Richard Stefanowicz – Fire Department Chief

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

Ms. Cain made a motion to accept the minutes from February 15, 2024, March 7, 2024 and to include the Nursing reports from March. Dr. Putnam seconded the motion. The roll call vote of the Board was unanimous in favor to approve.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE’S REPORT

Refer to the attached March 2024 nursing report.

DISCUSSION

Burning Complaint: A resident on 16 George Loomis is concerned about the wood smoke from neighbors burning outside in their fire pits at night. She is unable to sit outside or open windows when the burning occurs in late spring and summer and is concerned that it is an unhealthy situation. She suggested that the BOH require burning permits for outside burning pits with instructions on the back for preventing nuisance smoke. Fines should be in place for repeat offenders.

Mr. Hibert referred this issue to the Fire Department since burning is regulated by that department. Chief Stefanowicz is both a fire chief and a fire warden. He explained that this is not an open or agricultural burning issue. People are allowed to have a fire pit for cooking or heat any time of year. If that burning creates a nuisance, the fire department will investigate and extinguish the fire, if necessary.

When the Chief surveyed the neighborhood after the fact, the source of the smoke came from a neighbor on Fenton Drive which is about 35 feet above her house. He said in order for smoke to dip down at night, there would have to be an inversion which usually does not occur at night. The Fire Department checked previous records for smoke complaints in that area, but found none close by. The Chief had spoken with the resident of
16 George Loomis twice and advised her to call the department when there is an active fire with smoke instead of calling the next day. If a call comes in through Dispatch, the firemen will come with a fire truck to investigate. Mr. Hibert will contact the resident.

Fee Schedule: The budget hearing was March 23rd. Operations was leveled funded except for the purchase of the e-permitting software.

Mr. Hibert presented options for increasing our permit/license fees to help onset the cost of the e-permitting software. Some of our fees are on the low side compared to other towns. One suggestion was to increase all fees by $25. That would generate about an extra $10,000 a year. A second option was to increase fees based on the FDA’s Voluntary Standards. In this case, fees are based on risk. The higher the risk, the more inspections, the higher the fee. Risk level 4 would be a hospital, nursing home, etc. An example of a Risk level 3 establishment in our Town, would be a large restaurant. A third option was based on the Berkshire Health Alliance fees. Ms. Brzoska wants to look at each fee individually and adjust accordingly. Some fees should be merged such as repair and new percolation tests. A new permit should be created for an Emergency Septic Repair.

Renewal Application Update – Mr. Hibert said there are two establishments that need to bring in their required certifications – the Gristmill Café and La Patisserie. Choke saving certification is required if there are more than 25 seats. A Serv Safe certified employee is required to be present each shift. The Board of Health’s Food Establishment regulations need to be updated to include certifications.

Mort Vining Road Oak Ridge Subdivision – Mr. Hibert performed all the percolation tests for the 28 lots. The lots are a good size so there is room for both the septic system and the well. Mr. Hibert had no issues with the subdivision plan.

Fat, Oil and Grease (FOG) Regulations: No update.

Tobacco Violations – the 2 businesses removed the tobacco/nicotine products for 3 days with no issues.

HEALTH DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Disposal Septic System:

- 16 Foster Road – a repair percolation test was performed.
- 21 Foster Road – a repair percolation test was performed.
- 19 Foster Road - The plumbing was too low, so the pipe from the house to the tank has to be raised before a final inspection is made.
- 12 Meadow Lane – a repair percolation test was performed.
- 75 Hillside Road – a repair percolation test was performed.
- 234 Sheep Pasture Road – final inspection conducted for the repair of the tank using hydrolytic cement.
- 9 Overlook Lane – Mr. Hibert sent an enforcement letter concerning the undersized system. Mr. Hibert contacted the engineer and was told that the owner did receive the letter. The engineer requested to use the 2011 percolation test to expand the system. Dr. Putnam made a motion to use the 2011 percolation test. Ms. Cain seconded the motion. The roll call vote of the Board of Health was unanimous in favor. There will be a deed restriction for a 5 bedroom house.
- 272 Granville Road – effluent surfacing and system being pumped. A percolation test was performed. Mr. Hibert will check when the plan is going to be submitted.
- 246 Feeding Hills Road – final inspection conducted and a Certificate of Compliance issued for the repair.
- 72 Granville Road – issued a Certificate of Compliance for the repair.
- 3 South Loomis Street – a repair plan approved. The system was moved from the backyard to the front because of the high ground water. The well will be moved to the backyard.
Housing Inspection:

- A resident at Ahrend Circle did not think the water in the washing machine was hot enough. Mr. Hibert checked with the State about the water temperature range which is 110-120°F. Mr. Hibert measured the water temperature as 110°F.
- 80 Bungalow Street – Mr. Hibert will schedule an inspection with the Highland Valley representative.
- 19 and 21 North Longyard Road - Mr. Hibert received a complaint about an RV set up in the backyard. There is a concern that someone is living in it. There appears to be a wire running from the house to the RV and there are water tanks. According to the new Housing Code, the Board of Health has to grant permission in writing to live in temporary housing such as an RV or tent. Mr. Hibert sent a letter to the owner in Chelmsford inquiring about the use of the RV.

Food Service Inspection:

- Sweet Treats by Bella – submitted an application for a Residential Kitchen (Cottage Food) permit on Klaus Anderson Road. Requirements consist of storing business ingredients and food separate from the family food; pets and other people cannot be admitted into the kitchen while food is being prepared, food to be sold is limited to those items that do not require refrigeration (cookies, cakes, bread, jams, jellies). Other canning is not permitted.
- Cousin's Maine Lobster - Mr. Hibert issued a Temporary Food permit even though they are a full mobile food truck.
- Kettle Bread – Mr. Hibert conducted an inspection using the new Inspection software. No major issues.

Western Hampden County Public Health District Updates:

- Shared Service Coordinator – There are 3 qualified applicants to be interviewed next week.

MEETINGS

- PHE Grant Meeting: The March meeting was cancelled. The next meeting will be after the interviews.
- Hampden County Health Coalition – Mr. Hibert missed the meeting this week. He has been helping with a preparedness exercise planned for the end of May.

Next Meeting – May 2, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Putnam made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 pm. Ms. Cain seconded the motion. The roll call vote of the Board was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

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Tom Hibert, Health Director                                               Sue Brzoska, Chairperson

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Dr. Terry Putnam, Member                                                      Mikenzie Cain, Vice-Chairperson

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Date