**Board of Health**

**Virtual Meeting**

**October 18, 2023**

**7:00 PM** Virtual meeting called to order by Mena Mesiha. Roll call vote: Hope Klassman –Aye;

Chuck Levine- Aye; Signe Peterson Flieger- Aye; Hillary Johnson- Aye; Mena Mesiha – Aye.

Others Present – Staff: Leandra McLean, Linda Callan, Kevin Davis. Others present, Victor Auerbach.

**Town projects update and landscaping service update**

K. Davis reviewed potential and future projects within the Town.

* **40B Edgehill Road –** Project located at the end of Dedham Street and is next to the Brookmeadow Country Club in Canton. Davis explained that there is not much additional information since last the BOH met. There has been multiple meetings with the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Stormwater plans have been submitted for review, but at this time, no approvals for the project to proceed have been issued.
* **Birchhill Subdivision** – This project has been in the works for approximately 10 years and is located along Bay Road heading towards Mountain Street and is near Dry Pond. This project is considered to be a flexible subdivision, with approval from The Conservation Commission, the Planning Board and the ZBA. 8 lots are being developed with drainage parcels and open space.

A single-family home will be located on each lot. There will be 2 individual roads leading into this subdivision, each ending in a cul-de-sac. The developer has not yet submitted any filings for development of the individual lots, but these lots have been sized to meet BOH regulations. Many public meetings have been held with the ZBA, Planning Board and Conservation Commission. Approval for this project by the Board of Health (BOH) will require “new construction regulations be met”, meaning that no variances for any part of this project falling under the BOH purview will be granted.

Davis noted that approximately 8.5 acres will be deeded to the Conservation Commission. Houses will be located close together, providing open space areas behind each home. Part of the proposed project lies within the Town of Stoughton’s Zone 2 limiting those homes built in that area will be on larger lots and consist of only 3 bedrooms. There will also be some limitations on the other lots but the understanding is the developer is looking to build mostly 3 bedroom single family homes (with maybe one or two homes consisting of 4 bedrooms. Davis will have additional information at the next BOH meeting.

**Groundwater at School Street**

A resident was concerned with soil testing being performed at the site of the new library and that the testing was compromised. (There was a hill at the location which has since been leveled.) The Professional Engineer for the project, James DeVellis, responded to concern that a registered soil evaluator performed testing with observation from representative Board of Health. Findings showed a 7-foot separation which more than meets both the State and Local regulations regarding septic system design.

Upon completion of the project, an as-built on septic will be required. If anything is wrong, a permit will not be issued until all requirements have been met.

**Landscaping Services Update**

Davis explained to the BOH that it has been more difficult than he anticipated with getting landscaping companies to register. Over 40 landscaping companies who may/not be doing business in town have been emailed, notifying them that they must be permitted to perform work in Sharon. Every day, staff from the DPW, including Town Engineer, Building Inspector, and Davis, hand out flyers and notifications to landscaping companies performing work in town about the need for them to be registered. In addition, Davis is also working with Nancy Fyler of the Neponset Stormwater partnership to send out notifications and newsletters to homeowners beginning in the spring of 2024 with the requirement that landscapers must be registered with the Town. Starting in January 2024, those who have failed to register will be sent summons letters to appear before the BOH. Those who fail to answer the summons will have fines assessed. To date, only 9 landscaping companies have been permitted.

Goal of registering landscapers is to gather information as to what is being put in the ground, pesticides being used, etc… The cost of the permit is $25.

**Sharon Gallery update/ KDavis**

Improvement of signalization and traffic flow is in process at the border of South Main Street and Old Post Road. This is a fairly large project which entails adding additional lanes and traffic signals. There have been multiple public meetings on this project. The goal of this project is to reduce traffic congestion in the area. Pedestrian improvements will also be included. Sewer lines are being put in along South Main street and running into Foxboro. 665 South Main Street is where the project begins. This and other infrastructure additions are being put in to handle the upcoming development.

Weekly updates on the status of the project will be posted to the Towns website and on social media.

**Increasing Revolving Fund Yearly Availability**

McLean informed BOH on the necessity for increasing the expenditure amount from the Revolving Fund Account from $40,000 to $100,000. With the increase of costs for vaccine and other clinic related costs, health promotions run through the department, as well as anticipated emergency public health assistance, it is believed that a limit of $100,000 would better meet the departments needs.

McLean has worked with Selectboard and Town Administrator and this request will be an article in the warrant for the upcoming town meeting scheduled for November 30, 2023.

Mesiha asked for a brief update on the various accounts controlled/overseen by the Health Department. (Trash/Dumpster. Revolving accounts including Health and Septic.

**Health Department Update**

McLean informed BOH that the department looked into purchasing the RSV vaccine. The cost of this vaccine was over $200 and the insurance requirements for reimbursement were burdensome. At this time, the Health Department will not be purchasing.

COVID vaccine is also expensive, over $200, but the Health Department will be reimbursed for many of the vaccines provided, resulting in the department breaking even on its cost expenditure.

Staff in the department are working hard to ensure that all data (including health insurance information) is correct and up to date, to better our chances for reimbursement.

**Victor Auerbach introduction** McLean Introduced V. Auerbach to BOH. He is a new Admin Assistant helping in the office.

**Update on new residents to Sharon**

Mclean informed BOH that 15 new families are in town and staying at the Econo Lodge on Route 1. These folks come from Haiti, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic. These are all families and are here legally. There is a movement in the background who are working on greeting our families which consist of 32 people, 13 of which are school age children. M. Dussault of Sharon Public Schools has been great to work with. Some of the children have IEPS. The range is preschool through Highschool. Transport has been set up. DPH Nurses provide initial health screening. The families are being provided with medical and mental health needs. A couple of the woman are pregnant, and we are working with them. The National Guard is providing transportation of a medical nature and legal nature. These families don’t fall into emergency shelter situations. Assistance from State will be slower. Meals are being delivered as well as water. Last Thursday, volunteers from the community joined in on a zoom meeting to come together to see what other needs may be. We are waiting to hear if Best Western will be taking in families. The rumor is they have 96 rooms and that beginning November 1, they have been reserved by migrant families. We are trying to confirm this.

At present the Econo Lodge has 23 rooms reserved for migrant families.

It is important that we are able to plan. Difference in assisting the current 15 families than an additional 20 to 30 families. A. weekly meeting has been set with DPH representative. She has been very responsive and helpful.

A community wide 11am zoom meeting has been set up to meet weekly in order to best meet the needs of the migrant families. A fund has been established to accept donations. Will assist in providing laundry services and transport to local stores. A Municipal task force has been set up with Dussault spearheading. The Community has been good with outpouring of support.

**Permitting update/ Updating Policy/ Regulation**

McLean informed BOH to expect updates in the following regulations: Animals, Tobacco, Food and Pools. Will be bringing updated regulations to the Board in November and December for a vote.

**Health Department update**

McLean informed Board that the Department has finished all townwide flu clinics. The numbers are down about a third from previous years. The Middle and High School administration chose not to hold clinics for their students, staff only. In looking at vaccinations in general, these numbers are in line with what is going on. Per Diem nurses are vaccinating the homebound.

McLean is in the process of renewing vaccine orders with Dr Barnett. DPH inspection is scheduled for 2nd week in November.

COVID: McKesson put order into processing OCT 2. Unclear to as where vaccines are. Have yet to receive. Have received from the State, Moderna 6-11 years, and 12 and older and for those uninsured.

COVID tests from the State have arrived (no cost to us). Once stickered will be sending out.

Mass.gov has great dashboard. COVID status remains low. But creep is on. Up to moderate in the Berkshires. Wastewater numbers are low. Flu B is in the area, have not yet seen Flu A.

Tickborne diseases continue. Not a terrible year.

Health clinics are held twice weekly in the office and monthly at Hixson Farms and COA.

DPH sent out an email regarding performance standards and credentialing for Public Health Departments. Will begin to review during the winter, after flu and COVID clinics subside.

Community Health Equity survey closes at the end of the month.

**FY 24 Budget update/ looking ahead to FY 25**

Budget all set. Looking ahead to FY25. Would like to incorporate PT Administrative position within the Health Department budget.

**Historical minutes review and approval**

Will review and vote at the next BOH meeting.

Next BOH meeting scheduled for November 15.

Reminder that Annual Town Wide Meeting is scheduled for November 30.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Klassman, Johnson.

Hillary, hope, signe, Mena Levine 5-0-0

Hope Klassman –Aye; Chuck Levine- Aye; Signe Peterson Flieger- Aye; Hillary Johnson- Aye; Mena Mesiha – Aye.

**Vote:**  5-0-0 (Motion Passes)

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm