

Ashland Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2023
ZOOM Meeting

Ronald Etskovitz, Chair
Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Clerk
Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director

Ed Burman, Vice Chair
John Byrnes, Member
Bernadette Lunkuse, Member

Members Present Via Zoom Meeting:

Ron Etskovitz, Ed Burman, Barbra Sekesogundu Simon, Jay Byrnes and Bernadette Lunkuse

Others Present:

Rajit Gupta, Health Agent/Director
Laura Clifford, BOH Admin. Assistant
Victoria Wheeler, BOH Intern
Mark Dassoni, Resident
Eric Dickinson, Engineer/Designer

Call Meeting to Order, 6:00 P.M.

Mr. Etskovitz called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM, and noted that not all agenda items may be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Citizens Participation

Mark Dassoni, resident, noted that he has been following proposed legislation with members of Rep. Jack Lewis' office, pertaining to tax credits for family caregivers.

Ashland Groundwater Regulation, Michael Herbert, Town Manager

Mr. Etskovitz announced that this item will be tabled until the next meeting. Mr. Gupta noted that the EPA and DEP had sent updates late today which are being reviewed by Town Counsel, a revised draft Regulation will be sent to the Board.

Member, Jay Byrnes, Agenda

• **Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic, August 12 & 13, 2023, Update**

Mr. Byrnes reported that Members of the Community Host Group have continued to reach out to various resources, including people who can get clinic patients signed up for health insurance so they can be provided with follow-up care. Steve Mitchell has met with Framingham State regarding housing for the RAM officials, it sounds like that was a good meeting. The Community Host Group met with Keefe Tech on February 20, 2023, and that was also a good meeting. Mr. Byrnes noted the big push is to get general support staff, but said they are in good shape. Mr. Gupta noted that Metrowest Care Connection could be a good resource for follow-up care, this Organization connects uninsured and underinsured people with resources; they operate out of Framingham and are mostly funded through the Metrowest Health Foundation. Mr. Gupta noted that he has met with them, and will connect them with Mr. Byrnes.

Septic Variance Request, 243 Olive Street

Eric Dickinson, Engineer/Designer for 243 Olive Street, explained that the septic system is in failure, it is a 3-bedroom, single family house. The existing system is basically in the center of the backyard;

there is a wetland system to the North, soil testing was done on the South side. The existing sewer pipe in the house comes out 3.5-feet below the top of concrete; to avoid a pump they would like to raise the pipe 1-foot, and are asking for 3-foot separation, opposed to 4-foot. It was not sized to include a garbage grinder to avoid encroachment into the resource area/buffer zone, a garbage grinder will be prohibited, they will need that variance. Mr. Dickinson noted that studies show only 2-feet of separation is needed, for a repair you only need to show that it is bettering the current situation.

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to grant a variance from Ashland Board of Health Regulations Section 303-11 to allow the subsurface sewage disposal system to be designed without a garbage disposal with the conditions that no garbage disposal be installed within the house and a deed recording be placed on the property stating no garbage disposal shall be installed in the house while the subsurface sewage disposal system is in use, for 243 Olive Street. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Motion: Ms. Sekesogundu Simon made a motion to grant a variance from Title 5 Regulation 310 CMR 15.405(1)(h)(2), to allow a reduction from 4-feet to 3-feet separation between the bottom of the soil absorption system and the seasonal high groundwater elevation, for 243 Olive Street. Ms. Lunkuse seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Health Director's Agenda:

- **Update on 137 Pond Street and other Housing Cases**
Mr. Gupta explained that he is still working on the 137 Pond Street case; we have not heard from the owners since the last meeting with them. Mr. Gupta noted he is working with Town Counsel as it will most likely need to be filed in the Court.
- **EZ Convenience Store, 69 Pond Street, Burst Water Pipe**
Mr. Gupta explained that the store was closed due to the damage and the water inside the store; they were able to mitigate the damage and reopen on Wednesday.
- **Childhood/COVID Vaccination Clinics**
Mr. Gupta stated the Clinic is going strong but it was not held this week because the nurse was not available; the request for COVID vaccine has been very low. Mr. Gupta noted they are in the process of applying for a grant through Metrowest Health Foundation for the Clinic. Victoria Wheeler, Intern, and Jess Twardowski, Public Health Nurse, are helping to write the grant.
- **In-Person Board of Health (Public) Meetings, March 31, 2023**
The deadline for the previous Governor's Order regarding Public Meetings is March 31, 2023; if it is not extended, the April meeting will be in person.

Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to whether the Tobacco Fines have been paid by the two vendors. Mr. Gupta noted that Clocktown Liquors has paid their fine, but Family Dollar has not; Family Dollar has some other issues that are being addressed by the Food Inspector.

Mr. Etskovitz inquired as to the court process, regarding 137 Pond Street. Mr. Gupta noted that the property owners were given one month to make repairs, to come up with a proposal as to what they were going to do with the property. One contractor came in but said he wouldn't be able to take on this job; it has been over a month since the deadline expired.

Consent Agenda:

- **Review and Approve Board of Health Draft Meeting Minutes, February 21, 2023**
- **Review YTD Budget Report FY2023**

Motion: Mr. Byrnes made a motion to approve the consent agenda as submitted. Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

Discuss Future Agenda Items; Next meeting dates: March 21, 2023, April 4, 2023

- Groundwater Use Restriction Regulation
- Request for Variance from Rules and Regulations Relative to the Exhibition, Housing, Maintaining and Keeping of Animals, 15 Tyler Lane

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Burman made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Sekesogundu Simon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 3/7/2023 MEETING
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. 243 Olive Street, Septic Design Plan, Septic Variance Letter
2. BOH Year-to-Date Budget Report, FY23
3. BOH Revolving Account, Year-to-Date Budget Report, FY23
4. Draft Minutes, February 21, 2023
5. A recording of the meeting is available at WACATV.com