



BOARD OF HEALTH
March 2, 2021

The Board of Health held a virtual meeting and was conducted via remote participation. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Present were, Elizabeth Sabounjian, Dr. Jane Williams, and Shelly Newhouse, Director of Public Health.

The Board reviewed and approved the minutes from the February 16, 2021. Dr. King abstained as he was not present for the meeting. Our next regularly scheduled meeting is on March 16, 2021.

3 Hilltop Lane failed septic system update

Mr. Lyman was issued an Order of Contempt by the Northeast Housing Court. His deadline is March 1, 2021 to initiate repairs on his failed septic system or the Sheriff's Department could remove him from the dwelling. Mr. Lyman came to see the Director on Friday February 26, 2021 to discuss the Order. He presented the Director with a contract from a licensed installer and he said he was going to contact him to get the work started. The Director contacted the installer and he in fact was meeting with Mr. Lyman at that moment and received a deposit to begin work. A tree company was present on Monday March 1, 2021, with the installer preparing to start work after they were done. The Director will keep the Board updated on the progress.

Public Hearings

53 Washington Street, application for 12 chickens

53 Washington Street application for variance to keep a rooster

The Board decided to hear the above applications as 2 separate matters. Michelle Gomes is applying for 12 chickens. The animal control officer received a complaint that the applicant was keeping chickens without a permit. After an inspection of the property, he gave a favorable recommendation for the chickens. No abutters submitted any concerns about the chickens. Dr. Williams asked the applicant why she did not apply for a permit, Ms. Gomes stated she didn't know she needed one. Dr. King motioned for approval for 12 chickens, Dr. Williams, seconded, voted 3-0.

The Director explained to the Board that the applicant is keeping a rooster in violation of Board of Health regulation 7.3. The animal control officer received many complaints of noise from the rooster from abutters. Ms. Gomes stated that when they got all the chickens one turned out to be a rooster. Her son Kyle, is autistic and the chickens and the roosters are emotional support animals for him. He plays with them and sings to them as they provide him comfort. Kyle's pediatrician submitted a letter of support for the rooster as excellent therapy for Kyle. Two of the direct abutters provided written comments in support of the rooster. Ms. Gomes also supplied documentation regarding emotional support animals and other cases in Massachusetts relative to roosters. Kyle's only verbal communication is with the rooster and his daily interactions with it. Dr. Williams stated she was in favor of the rooster remaining as Kyles emotional support animal. Dr. King stated he was also in favor, however, with contingencies on the permit if granted. The Chairman, Ms. Sabounjian, suggested a quarterly review period performed by the animal control officer and that the applicant look into some noise mitigating strategies. Dr. Williams, motioned to issue the variance to regulation 7.3 and issue a permit for the rooster contingent on a quarterly review for the rest of the year. Dr. King, seconded, voted 3-0. The Director will inform the animal control officer about inspections and monitoring.

97 Grove Avenue, application for 6 chickens

Tara Melchionna is applying for 6 chickens. A plot plan and aerial shot was presented to the Board. The animal control officer gave a favorable recommendation. No concerns from the abutters. Dr. Williams motioned to approve the application for 6 chickens, Dr. King, seconded, voted 3-0.

Coronavirus update

The Director updated the Board on the current situation in Town. Currently, there are 55 active positives and over 100 in quarantine. There has been a steady decline in cases in the Town and throughout the Commonwealth. The local health departments are not receiving any more doses of vaccine and residents are encouraged to keep trying vaxfinder.mass.gov for vaccine availability. So far the Health Department has completed several clinics for first responders and those age 75 and up. Reopening guidelines have changed as of March 1, 2021 with changes to the gathering limits and sector specific opening guidance. The office has been very busy with the changes and helping those specific sectors. More guidance and changes are expected on March 22, 2021.

Department Business

Olin

The town's consultants have been busy reviewing and evaluating the draft record of decision (ROD) from EPA. The Director has heard from the EPA and there is potential that the final ROD could be issued by the end of March. This will include a clean up plan.

Dr. Williams motioned to adjourn at 6:20 p.m., voted 3-0.

Recording:
Shelly Newhouse, Director of Public Health