

March 14, 2024
Sterling Board of Health Meeting
Butterick Building, Room 205
1 Park Street, Sterling, MA 01564

Meeting Minutes

6:00 PM Chairman Allen Hoffman called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Allen Hoffman, Chairman – present
Anne Marie Catalano, Member – present
Richard Lane, Member - present
David Favreau, Health Agent – present
Elaine Heller, Administrative Assistant – present

Attendees: Gail Hassett, Laura Ricci, Don Brown. Chris Stoddard, Kathy Maki,
Ben Cheslawski, Tim Hardy, Evan Carloni, Maureen Cranson, and
Rosanne Mapp

General Business Updates:

Approve Any Available Minutes: February 15, 2024:

After review, a motion to approve revised minutes of the February 15, 2024 meeting was made by Richard Lane and seconded by Anne Marie Catalano. Roll call vote: Lane - aye; Catalano - aye; Hoffman - aye; Motion carried.

Health Agent Report: Beaver Resolution Permit:

The Agent reported that the season for trapping beavers runs from November 1 through April 15. As of the meeting date, 10 beavers have been trapped: 6 in the Campground Road area and 4 in Pratts Junction area.

The department has received a complaint regarding property on Bean Road and a review of the complaint is in process.

Health Agent Favreau attended a seminar in Taunton which discussed Title 5 inspections process, I/A Septic System, and Nitrogen loading and credit land were among the topics of discussion.

There is a new complaint regarding the cannabis facility on Chocksett Road; it may be necessary to bring the owners before the Board.

DPH - Interagency Updates: Nothing at this time.

Appointments and Agenda Items:

Variance Request: 193 Clinton Road:

Local Upgrade Request: 310 CMR 15.405(1)(g): Reduction of system location setbacks from water supply lines, private water supply wells (but not within 50 feet of the well). 100 feet required, 54 feet proposed.
310 CMR 15.405(1)(i): A Sieve Analysis May Be Performed if a Percolation Test Cannot Be Performed. (Soil Sample Taken for Sieve Analysis due to wet conditions at time of testing is proposed).

Engineer Chris Stoddard appeared before the Board on this variance request. This is a failed septic system with wetlands on the property. Approval of the Conservation Commission has been obtained. The well is connected to the house. Mr. Stoddard is not sure if there is town water to this home.

Health Agent Favreau advised he is satisfied with this plan. This is a 2-bedroom home with a recorded deed restriction.

A motion to grant the variance, including the use of a sieve analysis, was made by Catalano and seconded by Lane. Roll call vote: Catalano - aye; Lane - aye; Hoffman - aye. Unanimous vote.

Variance Request: 6 Fitch Farm Road:

Sterling Subsurface Sewage Disposal Regulations: Reg. IV.g., Leaching facilities 0-1,499 GPD shall be constructed with the following minimum 4-foot separation distance to estimated seasonal high groundwater (3 feet separation is proposed).

Local Upgrade Request: 310 CMR 15.405(1)(1h): Reduction of the required 4-foot separation between the estimated seasonal high groundwater table and the bottom of the leach area. 3-foot separation between the estimated seasonal high groundwater table and the bottom of the leach area is proposed. 310 CMR 15.405(1)(i): A Sieve Analysis May be Performed if a Percolation Test Cannot be Performed. (Spoil Sample Taken for Sieve Analysis due to wet conditions at time of testing is proposed).

Evan Carloni, the Engineer on this project, explained this is a 4-bedroom home with a failed trench system. The plan has been reviewed by Mr. Favreau and it meets regulations.

After review of the plan by Board members, Lane made a motion to approve the variance as written and Hoffman seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Lane - aye; Hoffman - aye; Catalano - aye. Motion carried.

Discuss Job Posting of Animal Inspector:

Health Agent Favreau and Town Administrator Caldwell have discussed this job posting. The Animal Control Officer for Sterling has expressed interest in filling the position. Mr. Hoffman suggested the position must be posted even though someone is interested in it. Select Board member Maureen Cranson noted the position must be posted internally.

Hoffman believes the Control Officer should apply for the position as part of the process, as her position and that of the Animal Inspector are two separate jobs.

A list of responsibilities of the Animal Inspector has previously been given to Board members.

A motion authorizing the Health Agent to post the position was made by Lane and seconded by Hoffman. Roll call vote: Lane - aye; Hoffman - aye; Catalano - aye. With all in favor, the motion carried.

Other Items:

Mr. Lane asked about the cannabis seminar attended by the Health Agent, inquiring if DEP could help with odor issues. The Health Agent stated this was not addressed at the seminar he attended.

Lane noted he attended a seminar at Devens; this topic was discussed and DEP has solutions to odor problems and can assist a town, if needed. Mr. Lane spoke with a woman from DEP, Michelle Delmar, who is a recognized expert in odors; her "nose" has been certified. Favreau indicated she has been a great resource in other areas of concern. The Health Agent will work on resolution of the issues at the Sterling cannabis facility and will call on DEP only if needed.

Public Session:

Resident Laura Ricci spoke of her concerns on the odors she notices emanating from the cannabis facility. Mr. Lane said there should be a set schedule for changing filters, with a good supply of filters on hand. Ms. Cranson indicated changing filters depends on where they are in the harvest cycle. Health Agent Favreau will visit the facility and advise them they may need to come before the Board if the problem is not corrected; the Board may conduct a site visit.

Discussion ensued in regard to the contentious observation hole regulation. According to Mr. Hoffman, two opinions from Town Counsel indicated everything done by the Board was legal. Mr. Lane

commented that the special town meeting vote indicated residents want the regulation rescinded and the Board works for the voters.

Set Next Meeting Date:

The next Board meeting will be on April 11, 2024, in Room 205 of the Butterick Building at 6:00 PM.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn was made by Catalano and seconded by Lane. With all members in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Materials: Minutes