

October 12, 2023  
Sterling Board of Health Meeting  
Butterick Building, Room 205  
1 Park Street, Sterling, MA 01564

Meeting Minutes

6:01 PM                      Chairman Allen Hoffman called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call:**                      Allen Hoffman, Chairman – present  
Anne Marie Catalano, Member – present  
Cathie Martin, Member – absent  
David Favreau, Health Agent – present  
Elaine Heller, Administrative Assistant – present

**Attendees:**                      Janis Brown, Don Brown, Joan Kranich, Joseph King, Rosanne Mapp, Laura Ricci,  
Andrew Bluestein, John Boardman, Gail Hassett, Paul Salber, and Richard Lane

**General Business Updates:**

Approve Any Available Minutes: September 14, 2023:

After review, Ms. Catalano made a motion to approve revised minutes of the meeting and Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Catalano – aye; Hoffman – aye. Unanimous vote.

Health Agent Report: September 19, 2023 Supervisor of Records Response to September 5, 2023 Public Records Appeal Request:

The Supervisor of Public Records noted that with no Board of Health additional records for submission, the Appeal is considered closed.

Signatures: None

DPH – Interagency Updates:

In the absence of Ms. Martin, there are no DPH updates. There have been no cases of EEE or West Nile Viruses in Sterling. There is a link on the town website to the state's information.

Other Items:

There was a recent flu clinic at the Senior Center administered by the VNA Association; approximately 100 people were vaccinated. The Health Agent also noted there is bus service available for seniors.

Resident Rosanne Mapp read a letter into the record stating a vote of no confidence against the current Board of Health.

**Appointments and Agenda Items:**

Variance Request: 37 Main Street:

Sterling Subsurface Sewage Disposal Regulations: Reg. IV.O,4: Prohibits temporary buildings or structures having a footprint of greater than 50 square feet over a septic system leaching area. A raised 71.7 square foot outdoor storage shed placed over the corner area of the leaching area is proposed.

Andrew Bluestein, owner of Emma's Café, presented this variance request. The structure will be a metal shed placed on 9 cinder blocks and will be in front of the septic vent pipe. The shed will be used for storing paper goods. Mr. Favreau has reviewed the variance and has no issues. A motion to approve the request was made by Catalano and seconded by Hoffman. Roll call vote: Catalano – aye; Hoffman – aye. Motion carried.

**Discuss/Approve Revisions to Local Subsurface Disposal Regulation:**

Chairman Hoffman opened a Public Hearing on this topic. He noted the Public Hearing was announced 2 weeks prior in local newspapers. He then moved that the Sterling Board of Health adopt the following regulation:

“Prior to the sale of a dwelling, the owner must demonstrate by a soil evaluation test that no portion of the septic system lies below the high groundwater elevation.”

No vote was taken on this motion.

Mr. Hoffman read into the record Title 5 Code 310 CMR 15.303(1)(a)7. “a cesspool, privy or any portion of the soil absorption system extends below the high groundwater elevation.” He also read the state sanitary code and noted these codes are applicable to all septic systems in Sterling. (see attached document.)

Health Agent Favreau commented the regulation is the most specific way to determine groundwater. A lengthy discussion ensued with attendees at the meeting, most objecting to the regulation.

Ms. Catalano then made a motion to continue the hearing approval at the next meeting 11/9/20223. Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Catalano – aye; Hoffman – aye. Motion carried.

A motion to close the Public Hearing portion was made by Catalano and seconded by Hoffman. Roll call vote: Catalano – aye; Hoffman – aye. Unanimous.

**Review/Discuss Warrant Articles of October 16, 2023 Special Town Meeting:**

Board members indicated the warrant articles have been reviewed. No discussion.

**Adjourn:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Catalano and seconded by Hoffman. With a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 PM.