

**Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Great Barrington, Massachusetts
Via Zoom
May 6th, 2021**

Present:

Michael Lanoue, Chairman
Ruby Chang
Peter Stanton, Vice Chair

Rebecca Jurczyk, Health Agent
Ned Saviski, Health Inspector

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** (Roll Call Vote) 6:33PM
- B. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**
April 1 Meeting Minutes (Discussion/ Vote) – Approved.
- C. PUBLIC HEARING**
To review, uphold, or amend the March 2021 Correction Order, as amended on April 13th, 2021 following the April, 8th 2021 Inspection of all four dwelling units located at 232 Stockbridge Road.

Motion to Resume the Public Hearing (Roll Call Vote) 6:35PM.

Motion: Peter Stanton to Resume Public Hearing

Second: Ruby Chang

Michael Lanoue: In Agreement

Vote: 3-0

Rebecca Jurczyk: We were unable to get in Unit 1.

All Units: Smoke and Co2 detectors were operational at the time of our inspection. The Fire Department inspected all four units filing a report that says all detectors are operational.

Unit 2: Violation #11, was corrected in April but no longer operational. Water temperatures are extremely high – over the maximum of 130F. The landlord stated this would be turned down right away.

Unit 3: Violation #17, the kitchen window was partially corrected. Violation # 28 was corrected as well as Violation #31. The Building Inspector noted that this correction did not satisfy their requirements based on the materials used.

All three units had pest management, evidence visible. We will need receipts and documentation of ongoing management.

Michael Lanoue: Major corrections are still outstanding?

Rebecca Jurczyk: 21 violations covering all four units are still outstanding.

Michael Lanoue: The Property Owners are over the allotted amount of time outlined in the Correction Order to abate all remaining violations. What are our options for next steps?

Rebecca Jurczyk: Working with Town Council to proceed with what was discussed during the executive session at our last meeting.

Ruby Chang: Concerned about egress on third floor. It will be difficult for any occupants to see where they are going if there is any kind of smoke or fire. Also, the heating equipment is right up against the wood. Children are sleeping in dormers. Two beds on the floor and kids are sleeping there without ventilation.

Michael Lanoue: Egress issues seem to be the most important. My understanding is that we've done as much as we can to encourage the owners to take the necessary steps to bring

all units up to the Minimum Standards for Human Habitation.

Council, Alex Weisheit: I will follow through with what we discussed during executive session.

Michael Lanoue: Any comments from the public?

Doug Miskin: Doesn't represent the tenants but did talk to Rebecca and Mark Pruhenski. Would like to discuss with Alex if appropriate.

Council, Alex Weisheit: Can talk off the record after the public session has ended.

Rebecca Jurczyk: Not normal practice to go directly to Town Council. Please go through her, and she will reach out to Alex.

Kevan Sano, Eldest daughter of landlords: Does anyone speak Spanish to tenants? They have limited English abilities. Is there an interpreter?

Michael Lanoue: We're observing the conditions of the units. Not aware of a translator there.

Doug Miskin: Would like to relay community concerns. What will the town consider?

Michael Lanoue: Not moving towards condemnation but rather enforcement. That's why we're pursuing the Housing Court avenue. The idea is to get compliance of the correction order. That is the next step we're taking.

Doug Maskin: Is the town prepared to ask the court to order the Landlord to provide alternate housing?

Council, Alex Weisheit: Yes

Rebecca Jurczyk: We are cognizant of these concerns. We do not want to see these residents homeless.

Council, Alex Weisheit: At this point Condemnation is not going to be part of the action.

Michael Lanoue: Any other comments? Are we in favor of continuing the public hearing or close it?

Rebecca Jurczyk: Recommend continuing until June 3rd meeting.

Motion: Peter Stanton to continue until June 3rd meeting.

Second: Ruby Chang

Michael Lanoue: In Agreement

Vote: 3-0

D. BUSINESS

1. **Housing Concern** Discussion regarding complaint and Follow up Inspection of indoor air quality issues at 899 South Main Street, Unit 126, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

Rebecca Jurczyk: Performed an inspection April 22nd. We met with the occupant and she stated there seems to be a correlation between the odors and when the heat or central air is on. Reached out to other Health Departments across the state and have some phone calls scheduled for guidance. Recommends holding off on voting until she can provide more of a reference point to what other health departments do with these issues.

Michael Lanoue: Was outgassing, but the specific issues were odors coming from within the duct work. Was this ever inspected by building maintenance?

Have we heard anything from Berkshire Housing Management?

Rebecca Jurczyk: Only one conversation with Berkshire Housing. They feel they've done what's required.

Ruby Chang: How does this housing accommodation relate to GB Board of Health as opposed to the Pittsfield Housing Authority?

Rebecca Jurczyk: We have jurisdiction because the unit is in Great Barrington. We have not had an official response from Berkshire Housing in relation to these concerns however, Berkshire Housing hired an independent air quality specialist to do a total environmental assessment of the unit in October. Berkshire Housing provided copies of the inspection report to the Health Department.

Sara Oberschall, Copake, NY: Two different Issues. First was intense off gassing. Second, Fumes coming from other units coming into Diana's unit. Senior living community. Mother cannot turn on heat or air conditioning. Also, condensation on the floors, and windows steam up. This could lead to mold. Diana has been in mediation with management twice. Who is responsible for inspecting the vent system? Odors generally between 11:00 pm and 2:00 am. Sara thinks Diana should have an advanced indoor air quality test. Can't get the management to do anything?

Ruby Chang: We are reaching out to other towns and for legal support to see what we can do. We don't have the answer right now.

Diana Wilson, Tenant: Room fills with odor of shellac and varnish around 1am, specifically in the bedroom. During heating system maintenance, the apartment filled with strange odors. This odor is smelled outside and inside. The Unit also gets cooking odors and food smells directly through the vents.

Sara Oberschall: It's affecting Diana physically. Should we look for legal help ourselves?

Michael Lanoue: We should send something official to the housing department. We are trying to explore whatever avenues we can. Could be an issue that was always there and has not been picked up on.

Rebecca Jurczyk: Building Department does do routine inspections every 5 years. We can reach out to the inspectors.

Michael Lanoue: Wait until we get an official response and we can go forward from there. Keep this on the agenda for our next meeting. .

Diana Wilson, Tenant: Berkshire housing has offered to move her to another unit, or another location but she will be placed on a waiting list.

Rebecca Jurczyk: There should be no fear of retaliation from management. Have anyone with similar concerns reach out to the Health Department if they need to, we are happy to go over renters rights.

2. Updates Related to Public Health and Housatonic Water Works. Re-occurring agenda item, only new concerns and/or updates shall be shared.

Rebecca Jurczyk: The only thing new is that we are going to get a date for a report to be presented to the Select Board, and the Board of Health will be officially invited.

E. COMMUNITY COVID-19:

- Health Dept. Review – 35 Positive Cases in April in Great Barrington. No safety standards complaints. Starting to open up with the safety standards. Face covering updates. Full opening remains to be seen.
- BOH Q & A -None
- Citizen Q & A - None

F. HEALTH DEPARTMENT UPDATES: Grant awarded to 7 Town collaborative including Great Barrington for two full time Public Health Nurses. \$300,000.00 per year Grant for 11 years.

G. BOARD OF HEALTH UPDATES: No other updates

H. MEDIA QUESTIONS: None

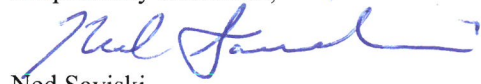
J. ADJOURNMENT: (Roll Call Vote) 7:55 PM

Peter Stanton: Motion to Adjourn

Ruby Chang: 2nd

Michael Lanoue: In Agreement

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ned Saviski", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ned Saviski
Health Inspector