

Board of Health Hybrid Meeting
in Person - Town Hall, 334 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA
Thursday, January 5, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER: (Roll Call Vote) – Chairman Michael Lanoue opened the meeting at 6:30pm.

Present in person: Michael Lanoue, “aye.” Present via Zoom: Dr. Ruby Chang, “aye,” Peter Stanton, “aye.”

Also present: Health Agent, Rebecca Jurczyk; Health Inspector, Stephen Browning

2. MEETING MINUTES:

a. December 1, 2022 (Discussion/ Vote)

P. Stanton made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2022 meeting; R. Chang seconded. M. Lanoue asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: R. Chang, “aye,” M. Lanoue, “aye,” P. Stanton, “aye.” All in favor: 3-0.

3. BOARD OF HEALTH QUESTIONS/ UPDATES:

a. Local Composting Program(s) – S. Browning provided an update on his research on groceries, which are required to compost, to understand the resources used, staff time, cost and any barriers/issues to composting. Overall, smaller groceries are using Berkshire Compost and supermarkets use Casella and other larger scale options. All reported time and cost were not a concern - the only issue noted was cleaning bins. Overall, all were interesting in being part of larger composting efforts. He noted that a goal is to have restaurants composting as well. P. Stanton stated restaurants do not have the volume, but if there was a convenient, easy way they would likely do it – S. Browning added providing pick up would be helpful.

- i. It was discussed that the transfer station would be an ideal drop-off point and agreed that R. Jurczyk would reach out to the DPW to discuss how to proceed and perhaps join the next BOH meeting – and to inquire how other towns manage resident composting.
- ii. R. Chang stated public outreach/education on categorizing and disposing of items and ways to decrease food waste is important - and suggested reaching out to the schools/superintendent. She also suggested contacting the Town to understand what funds are available to purchase for composting bins. M. Lanoue clarified that potentially Berkshire Compost would pick up from the transfer station – and would perhaps provide bins. He also inquired how it would work with private trash haulers and how much they would charge. R. Chang stated she has additional information and would forward to the Board. E. Mooney suggested reaching out to private schools and Simon’s Rock – S. Browning added Simon’s Rock has a Food Studies program and could be helpful overall.

4. BOARD OF HEALTH BUSINESS:

a. Continued... Review agreement between TriTown Health Department and Town of Great Barrington to capture existing Public Health Nursing Funds for the Shared Services Collaborative. (Discussion/Vote) – M. Lanoue provided an overview to clarify how funds can be directed – he stated the funds cannot be supplanted – they must go to the Public Health Nursing Program under the contract. If otherwise, the board would have get approval to add additional services under the contract where funds would be directed. It was discussed whether there was flexibility to direct funds to the Collaborative for a special project. M. Lanoue proposed the funds cover the costs of the vaccine program and to approve the current contract. He also noted, go forward, the Board should better understand the Program’s plan/process and decision-making on activities such as the number of clinics held and vaccines provided. R. Chang explained the complexities of managing/running the vaccination clinics and the role of the nurses – and that the clinics are offered in the evenings to improve access to the vaccines.

P. Stanton made a motion to approve and authorize the chair to sign the contract with the Shared Services Collaborative; R. Chang seconded. M. Lanoue asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: R. Chang, “aye,” M. Lanoue, “aye,” P. Stanton, “aye.” All in favor: 3-0.

5. HEALTH DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

- a. FY24 Budget review – R. Jurczyk presented the proposed FY24 budget that the Board received in advance. She highlighted each line item and provided detail for contracted services totaling \$11,205 which includes the Public Health Nursing contract; shared copier; sharps removal/kiosk; and beach testing for Lake Mansfield and the Green River for which, the board discussed and agreed to continue the current process for water testing in both locations. M. Lanoue asked about fees collected and what percent of the budget those fees represent – R. Jurczyk replied fees go into a general fund, so the percentage is unknown,
 - i. R. Jurczyk suggested setting goals for 2023 so progress can be tracked/reviewed periodically and at year-end. She recommended reviewing the fee schedule which has not been updated recently including research on what other towns are doing. M. Lanoue suggested adding glyphosate regulations/policies and the composting initiative for which there should be a plan by year-end.
 - ii. P. Stanton asked if there are any issues with the proposed budget and pointed out the \$20,000 increased ask over FY23 actuals. R. Jurczyk stated there are additional expenses yet to hit such as beach testing and that \$10,000 of the Health Inspector’s salary was paid from ARPA funds last year due to COVID, so in FY24 it is added back into the Health Department budget. M. Lanoue offered to attend the meeting when the Health Department budget is discussed.
- b. Housing Review – R. Jurczyk reported there is only one housing issue – at 19 Kirk Street which is past the 30-day deadline. She inspected today and found mold remediation and repair/replacement of windows had not been done. She reported that the landlord contacted Catamount for an estimate – and the proposed work and costs were shared with the Board. She stated the work has not been scheduled. M. Lanoue stated the landlord should request an extension in writing and provide a more detailed explanation of the status. R. Jurczyk stated there are other minor violations as well.
- c. Added items – R. Jurczyk stated Deirdre Doherty of the EPA provided a Q&A that will be posted on the Town website. She also stated the Public Health Alliance is offering mini grants to Boards of Health of up to \$3,500 to enhance public health – and she noted the grant must be used by June 30. She stated she would send the information/application to the Board. M. Lanoue suggested applying for funds for the Rural Recovery Center.
- d. Added item – COVID update – R. Chang stated that the new variant accounts for 75% of new cases and there is evidence the current booster is effective in lower risks – though some aspects of treatment are not as effective. She also noted RSV rates are declining and there is an early flu season. She stated having information is important for individual decisions to mask.

6. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME: No citizens requested to speak.

7. MEDIA QUESTIONS: There were no questions from the media.

8. ADJOURNMENT: (Roll Call Vote) – P. Stanton made a motion to adjourn; R. Chang seconded. Roll call vote: R. Chang, “aye,” M. Lanoue, “aye,” P. Stanton, “aye.” All in favor: 3-0. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow, Recording Clerk