

Board of Health Meeting
Thursday, February 9, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER: (Roll Call Vote) – Chairman Michael Lanoue opened the meeting via Zoom at 6:35pm with a roll call vote: Dr. Ruby Chang, “aye,” Michael Lanoue, “aye Peter Stanton, “aye.” Also present: Health Agent, Rebecca Jurczyk; Health Inspector, Stephen Browning.

2. MEETING MINUTES:

a. January 5, 2023 (Discussion/ Vote)

P. Stanton made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2023 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 reported on composting at local schools stating at Simon’s Rock, Maryann Tebben, Director of the Food Studies Program and the Farm Manager are composting mostly by collecting kitchen scraps - and are applying for a grant for composting equipment. They are interested in being involved in any Town composting initiatives. He also contacted Monument Mountain High School about composting, but there was no interested at this time. He stated he would reach out to the Waldorf School which has a farm and would likely be interested and the Steiner School. He also reached out to Juliette Haas of the Egremont Board of Health, who described the process for launching their composting program - and educational campaign which focused on how composting benefits the town by reducing solid waste and carbon emissions and providing compost to residents. He stated their cement collection bins cost \$500 and that the highway department was part of the effort from the beginning which was helpful as their equipment is used to turn the compost. M. Lanoue asked about Sheffield’s program as their compost is dropped off/picked up at their transfer station - and P. Stanton added it is picked up by Berkshire Compost and brought to Stanton Farm - and Berkshire Compost provides receptacles for people to use.

i. R. Chang stated she met with Joe Aberdale, DPW Superintendent to review the project/plan - he agreed with the goals and they discussed available DEP grants as well as DEP’s approval/oversight of composting sites. She added that the Town can gain points for composting and other Town recycling efforts which are considered when awarding grants – in addition, the Town will need to complete significant paperwork and have recycling policies in place in order to apply. She also noted larger grants are available from the Community Compact Grant Program - and there are other sources of funds for collection buckets. R. Chang stated next step is to obtain funds for the transfer station collection site and provide educational materials to schools. It was discussed that the approach is for the transfer station to receive composting and contract with someone to pick up/haul away regularly – and potentially providing resident access to composted material. R. Chang stated the private haulers agreement with the Town should be updated to include waste pick up/composting – and haulers should have the opportunity to provide input. M. Lanoue noted some of the haulers already offer pick up - R. Chang added we should also understand where the waste goes. It was agreed next steps are to get support from the Town/residents for a composting program, collect/distribute educational materials and understand what needs to be built/related costs.

b. Updates from Health Inspector and Dr. Chang – No updates were provided.

4. BOARD OF HEALTH BUSINESS:

- a. 2023 Goals and Priority Organizing. (Discussion/ Vote) – R. Jurczyk shared an outline of some goals for the Health Department for the Board to consider and prioritize high (complete in 3-6 months; medium (complete within 9 months) or low (by year-end or beyond). The Board agreed the glyphosate moratorium is a high priority. Composting is a medium priority as it is ongoing and other activities related to composting including waste hauler guidelines should be combined under composting. PFAS is a high priority as the DEP is studying it. Leaf blowers is a low priority. The fee schedule is a high priority. It was agreed the Board would continue to consider the goals.
- b. Recommendation to SB on how J&J Opioid Settlement funds are spent. (Discussion/ Vote) – R. Jurczyk provided an update on opioid settlement funds noting \$3,000 has been received to-date, \$6,000 is expected annually until 2038 - and in total, GB will receive \$50,000 over 10 years. She stated that logistics on how the funds will be appropriated need to be worked out, but the process is the Board of Health/Health Department makes a recommendation to the Selectboard, and based on community input, the Selectboard makes a final recommendation for Town Meeting vote as a special warrant article. She also stated she received a letter from the Rural Recovery Center requesting funding – and noted its federal grant will end in 2024. She stated she would send the letter to the Board and clarified their request for funding is to support continued operations - providing harm reduction services to anyone in any phase of recovery. She clarified that Berkshire Harm Reduction provides test kits for fentanyl and noted the Recovery Center houses the sharps kiosk. The Board agreed to review the Recovery Center’s request letter and discuss it at the next meeting.
- c. SP # 932-23; Special Permit application from Berkshire Aviation Enterprises, Inc., 70 Egremont Plain Road, Great Barrington, to permit an airport in an R4 Zone at 70 Egremont Plain Road, in accordance with Sections 3.1.4 E(1), 7.2 and 10.4 of the Zoning Bylaw. (Discussion/ Vote). R. Jurczyk stated this is a recommendation to the Selectboard on an application from Berkshire Aviation Enterprises to grant legal operating status in the zone they are currently in as they are now under a pre-existing, known conforming status – this is an application to become fully legal in 2023. The Board acknowledged receiving/reviewing the application.
 - i. Dennis Egan, Esq., Cohen Kinne Valicenti & Cook, representing Berkshire Aviation Enterprises, DBA Walter J. Koladza Airport presented on the special permit application to move from the current preexisting, nonconforming use at 70 Egremont Plain Road and, by special permit, grant legally existing use. He noted the airport is located within the water quality protection overlay district and regarding the Board of Health’s jurisdiction, there is private water and septic on site which are in compliance. He asked for any questions.
 - ii. R. Chang asked about contamination from lead content in soil and leaded gas fumes around the airport especially with school children nearby and noted it is the airport’s duty to ensure the area is safe. She asked that lead levels be monitored including the Green River which is the Town’s water supply. D. Egan replied the lead levels in the soil and water were tested in 2017 and, after 86 years of operation, are at levels near what is naturally occurring for lead in soil – and so there are no plans to monitor/test ongoing. He noted the airport has state of the art double walled underground storage tanks with electronic monitoring devices and are significantly outside the 200-feet required by the Wetlands Protection Act for the Green River and meet all water protection overlay district and DEP requirements. He also noted by 2030 all aviation fuel must be unleaded. It was discussed that there have not been elevated lead levels in children locally.

- iii. M. Lanoue asked about the amount of air traffic each year – D. Egan replied he does not

have the numbers, but it is small. M. Lanoue asked if there have been instances of contamination like fuel leaks – D. Egan replied there have not been any leaks nor reportable incidents – and all hazardous materials are handled according to regulations approved by the GB Fire Department. R. Chang clarified how oil is stored and carted away and raised concerns about extinguishing fuel fires using PFAS which can get into ground water. R. Jurczyk added the soil is sandy and there is a low water table so contamination can happen quickly and testing every 10 years may not be sufficient. R. Chang asked for monitoring of the environment including for fuel spills, air quality and soil contamination – and noted the need for an updated DEP SWAP report. P. Stanton asked if the Board has considered all matters in its purview – R. Jurczyk stated it is just septic and a well which are in compliance.

iv. P. Stanton asked about noise and light pollution – D. Egan detailed limitations on timing and days for continuous take offs/landings. He noted runway lights are automatic and there has not been any light pollution he is aware of.

v. Public comment:

- Michael Mah, Commissioner, Pittsfield Municipal Airport, stated there has been no correlation between public health issues and larger air traffic including jets and larger runways. He also clarified that fire retardants are controlled by the Fire Department which uses nothing of concern to extinguish fires.

vi. The Board discussed their recommendation to the Selectboard and interest in monitoring groundwater, lead contamination and noise/light.

P. Stanton made a motion to pass along to the Selectboard with a request to consider environmental testing/monitoring as it relates to nearby water sources; light and sound pollution; and an updated DEP SWAP report; 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. Public Health Alliance Mini Grant Applications (Discussion/Vote). R. Jurczyk stated \$3,000 grants are available for public health related projects – and noted there is no deadline for applications. Potential opportunities such as the police pill removal program, nursing program, and supplies for emergency centers were raised. The Board agreed it would think about potential opportunities and make a decision at the next meeting.
- b. Review Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative Updates (Discussion) – R. Jurczyk reviewed the report with the Board and discussed how to promote the car seat program with residents and the blood pressure clinic with potential new locations. She noted 137 COVID cases and 32 cases of influenza in October-December and a watch on one case of the mumps.
- c. Other items added – R. Jurczyk stated the Department’s budget hearing is on February 28 at 6:30pm – and a rabies clinic is scheduled for early March. She also noted at the next meeting will be a discussion of a special permit application for the Habitat for Humanity housing project on North Plain Road – and noted it is served by Housatonic Water Works. L. Lanoue asked how the water quality situation would be addressed – R. Jurczyk replied the Housing Trust is providing funding for in-home filtration systems - and that drilling wells would require shared utilities among the homeowners which is difficult to manage. It was also confirmed the next meeting date is March 2 and would be a hybrid meeting.

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 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow, Recording Clerk