

**TOWN OF STURBRIDGE, MA**  
**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Monday August 9, 2021**

**Meeting Called to Order: 2:00 PM**

**Quorum Check:** Confirmed

**Members Present:** Linda Cocalis (LC), Richard Volpe (RV), Dr. Louis Fazen (LF)

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:**

Ken Lacey (KL) Health Agent

Tricia Valiton (TV) Health Inspector

Alex McConnon (AM) Town Administrator Assistant

Lenny Jalbert (LJ) Jalbert Engineering

Dina Perry (DP) resident

Abutter (A) resident

David Foss (DF) Wilcox & Barton

Bob Brooks (B) Wilcox & Barton

**2:00 PM** – LC reads open meeting dialogue.

**2:03 PM- Review Minutes** – Minutes for June and July are still being updated.

**2:05 PM – COVID19 Update** - KL states that there is a new mask recommendation the state has suggested, as well as social distancing and the Delta variant. We have our weekly call with the State on Tuesday so hopefully we will get an update. There is also a meeting at Tantasqua next week that KL has been invited to attend. They are looking to see if we plan on being more strict than the DESE guidance. Several parents have already reached out to us with questions. LC asked if we should have a meeting for all of us to meet and discuss this, maybe have parents call in with their questions so we can all respond?

**2:07 PM – LF joins virtually**

**2:08 PM - COVID19 Update** – KL continues. Jamie Terry will also be at this meeting as the Health Agent for Brimfield and also as our Region II PHEP Coordinator. This meeting is for teachers and administrators and KL was invited to represent the Sturbridge Health Department. We had our first ever regional flu clinic last fall with one agent from each town there and that's really how we developed a great working relationship with the schools then. LC reads the agenda for the Tantasqua meeting. KL states that DESE released new mask recommendations two weeks ago for the new school year. LC reiterates that we may want to have a meeting to have parents come in for a "listening session" so we can hear our stakeholders' concerns. KL states that we currently have four active cases in town: 1 is underage, and all are unvaccinated and none of them have been hospitalized. LF asked if these were all symptomatic? LC said we will reach out to our Nurse and find out. LF states that the Selectmen sent a memo requesting that we post this

information regularly. LC states that we have been willing in the past to do this, and we had it posted when there were a bunch of cases, and we can do that again now that cases are picking up again. LF asks if we have a denominator of how many people have been tested in town? LC states that we don't get those numbers now that at-home tests are so readily available, we may not be able to get accurate data. LC asks to come back to this subject so the Hearing can begin.

**2:25 PM – Hearing: 59 Bennetts Rd (well variance and septic system)** – KL gives an overview of the Plan to the Board. LF has a copy of the plans to review from his location. LJ states that the project is to take down an existing 2-bedroom house and replace it with a new 2-bedroom house on the same non-conforming lot. They have already been before the Planning Board of Appeals and received approval. The septic system designed is an Advantex AX20. The brochure is available for the Board to review. LJ states that the water that comes out of the system is clear and odorless and could be used to irrigate your property if you wanted. KL explains how the system works to the Board and that it is approved by the State. LJ states that the system is required to be monitored by a professional licensed through DEP and must be reported to the state as part of the permitting with the state. LF asks what size system and if it is sufficient for a 2-bedroom house. LJ states that the requirements are 110 gallons per bedroom and this is designed for a total flow of 220 gallons, which is sufficient for a 2-bedroom. LF asks how we will know how to inspect this system, how many of these have we inspected in town? KL states that this is the first system of its kind in town, and that he will inspect it following the field manual. LF asks are we confident we can assure proper installation? LJ states that the installer brings in the consultant/distributor who oversees the installation. KL states that he is confident. LF states that he wants to be sure we have the right qualifications in our department. LJ states that this system requires a Certificate of Occupancy upon completion, which is signed by the Engineer, the Installer and the Health Agent in order to be accepted and licensed by the state. KL states this system will be tested and reported several times a year, which is more than other systems. LF has a concern about the water table being 1-2' below the surface and the possibility for that water to leak into the tank. LJ states that the tank is water-tight by design. LF asked if the Health Department has a monitoring system to track this. LC states that the state tracks it as part of the licensing with them. KL states we do have a spreadsheet to track all our IA systems, this is no different. LC reads a neighbor's comment aloud. The neighbor could not be in attendance, but KL spoke with them earlier in the day and they sent in their comment for the Board. KL described the conversation he had with the neighbor, specifically about tight tanks. The neighbor has a tight-tank and would prefer to see one of those put in here. KL explained how tight-tanks are not meant for year-round use, which was a surprise to the neighbor. KL explains that the only thing not treated in this system is basically viruses and pharmaceuticals. This is a much better filtration than traditional systems. Discussion on setbacks and distances.

**2:52 PM** – RV motions to grant a variance for the well 10' from the property line and 66' from the septic system. LC 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF. LC, RV, LF: unanimous.

**2:54 PM** – RV motions to allow the septic system 11' from the southern boundary and 55' from the neighbor's well. LC 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF. LC, RV, LF: unanimous.

KL reminds LJ that there needs to be a Deed Restriction for the 2-bedroom filed before the Certificate of Occupancy can be signed. LJ confirms his understanding. Hearing closed.

**2:57 PM** – KL states that within the last year we received a resident complaint from Mr. Zoto about well issues around Walker Pond. This was news to the Health Department that they had been working with DOT and DPW for so many years. We hired two consultants to review documents and water samples. B states there appears to be high salt and elevated arsenic levels. He spoke with DOT program and was told there were thirteen applications and only two of those were approved. There are two requirements that were not met with most applications: that the water at the tap must be potable and the homeowner must be willing to replace the salt-based filtration system. B suggests we sample before the treatment system, at the well. Discussion about how many samples would be needed, similar geologic landforms, continuing literature review, etc. LC states that DOT won't help us because there is arsenic in the wells. Is there an option of the town running water to these people? Would DOT do this? DF suggests a broader survey for analysis; the lower cost permanent solution is sometimes turning to town water. Discussion about reaching the edge of the scope, billing, new scope of work proposal. A new proposal will be forthcoming, as will billing.

**3:41 PM** – LC motions to move forward with the next scope of work and approve \$1,500.00 and outlining potential sampling program. RV 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF. LC, RV, LF: unanimous.

**3:42 PM** – KL continues COVID19 updates: We just heard back that out of the four cases, three were symptomatic. LF requests numerator and denominator data.

**3:46 PM** – KL discusses our public outreach at National Night Out. We had the Bite Lab from the State and handed out bags of information about ticks and mosquitoes and it had a DEET wipe in it. We handed out 35-38 bags. LC would like to get a banner like the Police and Fire have, our tent was lacking distinction. Perhaps we can ask Betterment?

**3:50 PM** – KL asks what the Board would like to do about the Selectmen's request. LC states that one update each week sounds good, RV agrees.

**3:51 PM** – KL will be posting the Administrative Assistant position and would like applications by August 25, 2021. LC described the process of interviewing and selection in the past so LF is aware.

**3:53 PM – PHEP updates** - KL was re-appointed to the Executive Committee. EDS drills were discussed- still deciding if we will run a typical flu clinic or a COVID clinic this fall. KL states that iPads were approved for many communities and we were on that list. We should see that this year. KL met with the new Emergency Management Coordinator last week to look at our inventory and try to get more space in the CERT trailer for our EDS equipment. KL also spoke with Andy Pelletier in Southbridge about the regionalization discussion that's happening throughout the state. Andy wants proactive services like intervention services, social services, etc. and wants to team with us to come up with a plan. LC asks LF if he would be on board with something like that for social services? LF said he would, LC states that we support that.

**4:07 PM** – LC asks for any landfill updates? KL states there was a discrepancy with the plans. Assumed elevation is common, but they found about 80' discrepancy and now they need to send a surveyor out and do ground work- a new proposal is coming.

**4:09 PM** – LC asks for any updates on South Shore Drive? KL states no new updates.

**4:10 PM** – LC motions to close the meeting. RV 2<sup>nd</sup>, AIF. LC, RV, LF: unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Valiton

Health Inspector