

TOWN OF STURBRIDGE, MA
BOARD OF HEALTH
Monday September 13, 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

Steve Zoto (SZ) resident

James Racicot (JR) D'Errico's Market

Dominic Mercurio (DM) D'Errico's Market

2:00 PM – LC reads open meeting dialogue.

2:02 PM- Review Minutes – LF is participating virtually and requests time to review minutes in digital format.

2:05 PM – COVID19 Update - KL states that there are 17 new positive cases, down from 29 last week, and the website continues to be updated weekly. There is a push by the CDC and the State for a third dose of the vaccine for immuno-compromised individuals and booster doses for all others is still being discussed at the Federal level. The State wants to know who is interested in operating booster clinics when it becomes available, as there could be 800k-2.4million individuals eligible in our state when boosters are approved. LC asks how many individuals would be eligible locally? KL states that it seems the latest numbers of fully vaccinated individuals is over 6200 so far, but not sure how many of those are immune-compromised. RV asks if we can still use the Southbridge clinic? KL states that he isn't sure. He has also reached out the Palmer Health Agent about the Palmer clinic but hasn't heard back. That clinic hasn't been broken down, but has been closed since early June. LC states she believes a regional clinic would be best, RV agrees. KL states the majority of our COVID Nurses are school nurses, so it would be tough for us to run a clinic for more than a day or two. KL states that we normally run a flu clinic around October, is the Board interested in a flu clinic, COVID or a combination clinic? Last year we vaccinated 100 individuals, we could try for 200 this year. LF states the regional effort doesn't sound like it will work. KL responds that we're not sure since Southbridge is a hospital and we're not sure where we stand with the Palmer clinic. We may be able to, but we're waiting to hear from the State. If we run a clinic we can't limit it to Sturbridge residents, it would have to be open to the public. LF asks if it would make sense to coordinate with the Senior Center's flu clinic to offer the COVID booster. KL states that the Senior Center flu clinic is on September 25 and the boosters haven't been approved yet. Any immune-compromised individuals are eligible now and have access at many locations. LC states that the

State website has our town's population listed incorrectly so we received the correct number from the Town Clerk. KL states that basically all the populations are wrong because the state is using ten-year old data. Sturbridge has a population of 9,107, not the 10,569 listed. This changes our percent to 69% vaccinated compared to the 59% listed on the state site. Our largest opportunity is to vaccinate 12-19 year olds.

2:20 PM – Hearing: 365 Main Street, D'Errico's Market (grease diverter variance) – DM introduces himself to the Board. D'Errico's is opening their fourth location and have chosen Sturbridge. They will offer high-quality cut-to-order meats. KL states that D'Errico's is seeking a variance to the town's requirement for an external grease trap to allow for an internal grease trap/diverter. DM states that any fats cut off the meat is used in other products, so not much is discarded as waste. LC motions to close the discussion, RV 2nd, AIF. LC motions to grant a variance at 365 Main Street for an internal grease trap diverter, RV 2nd, AIF. LC, RV, LF: unanimous.

2:27 PM – Walker Pond well pollution updates – SZ introduces himself to the Board. He has not heard any updates since the last meeting and would like to know what steps are being taken. KL states that the initial assessment has been done by Wilcox & Barton and they came back with a lot of information from DOT & DPW. We completed surface water testing and the engineers have suggested we do a few more things. We just signed off on that plan today, so we expect that the next steps will begin later this week. KL states that we might want to join the Walker Pond Association meeting or have them come to us for updates and discussion. LC states there may be a correlation between the sodium and the arsenic, but we need to know more before we report back to Todd Smola. SZ asks if there is a chance Massachusetts will choose well water as their source? He states he heard this was a possibility from someone in Palmer. KL states that might be Palmer-specific, he hasn't heard anything like this. SZ states that he hasn't heard anything about the noise pollution from the Mass Pike, and asks if the Board can do anything to help move that along. LC asks SZ to gather a list of all names and submit a complaint to us, or even a petition and we can put something together. SZ agrees and thanks the Board.

2:45 PM – LF asks those present to shift their microphones because he is having a difficult time hearing.

2:47 PM – COVID19 update – KL states as of Friday, Worcester County was at 60% vaccinated, which puts us higher at the 69% vaccinated rate. LC states that if anyone was vaccinated out of state we wouldn't have those numbers. RV states that he knows many people from town who were vaccinated out of state. RV states that the most vulnerable population are the most vaccinated in town. LF asks if anyone has reached out to CVS to see if walk-in vaccination is available? KL states he is not aware of them specifically, but that all the places who have vaccine – like Walgreens, Walmart, doctor's offices, etc. – are all open for walk-ins. It seems to be the testing that is harder to find. LF asks about vaccines for shut-ins? KL states we had a shut-in clinic back in the spring before the state took over home-bound vaccination. LF states that booster shots will be available in the next month and asks if we will be looking to offer these in November or so? KL states this question was already posed to the Board in earlier discussion. LC states we are waiting until they are approved, then KL will bring all the

information to the Board so we can discuss specific plans. KL states that the state wants to know what our interest is to run a clinic at the local level once boosters become available and asks the Board to respond. LC states we are, RV agrees. LF agrees and questions funding and personnel.

2:58 PM – Administrative Assistant job update – KL states we received 22 applications, pre-screened 6 and then he and Linda chose the top 3 for in-person interviews. Interviews will happen this Friday and he hopes to have an update for the Board next week. LF asks to be able to review the resumes and their feedback before deciding. LC states that we normally narrow them down and then have a final interview before the Board to make a decision. LF asks if the compensation level has already been set for this position? KL states that all positions are graded and stepped. LF would like to come into the office to review resumes.

3:01 PM – PHEP updates – KL states they met a couple weeks ago and discussions about grant funds were discussed. In the past we have received a lot from these funds, including: a vaccination station, a vaccine cooler, dividers, masks, gloves, thermometers, etc. We are required to have an annual drill, and we can use the flu clinic.

3:04 PM – MADEP Air sensor grant – KL states that information came in from DEP on an air sensor grant. It's a competitive grant for a5-10 fine-particulate air sensors. KL asks if the Board has any interest? LC asks if they allow a regional application perhaps Southbridge and Charlton would want to?

3:10 PM – Sturbridge Agricultural and Equestrian Center – LC states that a meeting is scheduled for tonight with the Selectmen. She and KL had a conversation with the gentleman there about the road that goes through the landfill and their concerns. The road turns out to be only an access road so we will need to meet with their engineers to have them find a new way to access those areas. DEP said it's not a good idea to drive through or over the landfill. We invited them to the next Board meeting to discuss this. LC states she sent a letter to Cheryl Sbarra and Charlie Kaniecki and asked if we have a right to cite them under noisome trades; the answer was yes. It is still in the very early stages but we want to be involved. LC states she will be attending the meeting tonight and asks the Board if they agree for her to speak on behalf of the Board. RV agrees. LF asks to confirm that our number one issue is the use of the access road? LC states yes, for now it is. Down the road we may be concerned about noise. LF asks if DPH is involved? LC states that Charlie Kaniecki was a Regional Director under DPH before the state moved away from regionalization. LF asks who we can speak with about animal husbandry, Eastern Equine, waste, etc.? LC explains the use of the bio-digester and that it is overseen by DEP. LF asks if Connecticut is involved in this as far as noise is concerned? LC states she does not know the answer to that. KL states the meeting is being held at the Publick House tonight and will be live-streamed on Youtube.

3:26 PM – ARPA funding – KL states this is the next set of funding to the towns from the Feds and distributed to the State and replaces the CARES Act funding. KL forwarded an email to the Board a couple weeks ago because Public Health is one aspect of what the money is meant for. LC asks who makes the decision on how to distribute the money? KL states the Board of Selectmen. KL states that we have already spent over \$30k on COVID nursing so far, and projecting out to June 31, 2022 he estimates we will need another \$50-75k more. LF asks if

towns around us are receiving this money as well, maybe this is an opportunity to work with other communities? KL states this money is for the town, not for regionalizing. LF asks if we can use the money for health education services such as concussion education. LC states this money is meant for COVID costs; we can look at health education in another way. RV agrees. LC states we should use it to request a product, such as the tent we borrowed from another town or a tabletop display for presentations like we do on the Common or at the Senior Center, or a vehicle for inspections and field work. RV asks when the BOS is looking for proposals for the money? KL states any time now moving forward. LC asks KL to look into estimates for a tent like the ones the Police and Fire departments have and other products for health education to support what LF is asking for. LF states the recycling center needs basic improvements. LC asks for specific examples. LF said throwing recyclables over your head into an open container is not friendly for all ages. LF also states it is not a modern recycling center. LF describes the facility in Southboro and would like to interview the Director there for ideas on funding and operating to bring back to the Board. LC and RV agree.

3:56 PM – South Shore Drive updates – LC states we received a letter from the Attorney today and asked KL to do an assessment. If there aren't nuisance concerns we can close it out, and if we have concerns we can move forward. KL will report back after the assessment.

3:58 PM – LF motions to approve the minutes for August. RV 2nd, AIF. LC, RV, LF: unanimous.

3:59 PM – RV motions to close the meeting. LC 2nd, AIF. LC, RV, LF: unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Valiton

Health Inspector