

**BOARD OF HEALTH  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, August 27, 2014**

**ATTENDEES: Robert O'Hanley, Member  
Richard Lombard, Member  
Charlotte Parker, Member  
Deborah Ketchen, Health Agent  
Anita Wright, RN, Public Health Nurse  
Lori Bentsen, Administrative Asst.**

Meeting Open: 6:38 PM

**AGENDA:**

The first item on the agenda was posted as possible Executive Session for the Board to discuss the health agent's job performance. Deborah Ketchen told the Board that she wished to discuss these issues in Open Meeting and also requested an Open Meeting in a letter to the Board. Also present at this meeting; Eileen Hurley, Board of Health Member, Merrimac, MA, Kevin Greaney, James Scanlan, Scanlan Engineering, Georgetown, MA and Richard Briscoe, R. A. Briscoe, Inc., Groveland, MA. Richard Lombard said that he would start by saying that he has issues with the restaurant inspections not being done in the time frame that was requested by the Board approximately one year ago and this request was documented in meeting minutes. Richard Lombard said that the Board specifically requested at an earlier Board meeting that Deborah start inspections this year in January and no inspections were done in January, February, March. Richard Lombard said he also had issues with the filing of food establishment inspection reports which was also discussed at a previous Board meeting and documented in meeting minutes. Charlotte Parker agreed and said that she had a copy of the meeting minutes of March 10, 2014 when the Board spoke to Deborah about their displeasure about restaurant inspections not being done. Richard Lombard said he was very concerned about the inspection that was done at Gerry's Variety with regard to the frozen yogurt machine that was recently installed. Richard Lombard said to Deborah that there was nothing in your inspection report with regard to the cleaning of the yogurt machine. Deborah said she spoke to the owner about cleaning the yogurt machine and actually it is not in the code. Richard Lombard disagreed and said that it is in the Massachusetts food code which states if the establishment is processing dairy products, the owner is required to do a bacteria test once a month and submit that report to the Board of

Health. Eileen Hurley said that Deborah told her that when she was hired, the Board never told her that she would be doing restaurant inspections. Deborah said that she was hired to do septic system inspections and percolation tests. Robert O'Hanley disagreed and said that Deborah was told her main job duties were septic system inspections and food establishment inspections to be done twice a year. Robert O'Hanley said that Deborah was told that she would also be expected to handle complaints. Robert O'Hanley said the Board budgeted additional money to hire a food establishment inspector because of the health agent's hours being reduced. Richard Lombard agreed and said the Board budgeted \$2,000 to hire a food establishment inspector from MVPC to do summer inspections when the health agent is busy with septic systems. Richard Lombard said that the Board interviewed Rosemary Decie from MVPC and the Board decided to hire her and all of a sudden at the following Board meeting most of the restaurant inspections were done. Charlotte Parker agreed and said that at a meeting the Board spoke to Deborah about her not having started any inspections in January and then at the next meeting most of the inspections were done. Charlotte Parker said that if we are going to talk about what we don't like about the health agent's job performance, I think we need to talk about what the specific problems are because restaurant inspections are not the only issue. Charlotte Parker said she would like to talk about several things that upset her personally and she has talked about these issues at previous meetings. Charlotte Parker said that since she has been on the Board there have been about five issues that have occurred. Charlotte Parker said that she would like to read what she has written. I am very upset that we, as a Board had not heard about this problem sooner from Deborah and that I am now put in position to have to pay from the Board of Health budget for items we had no knowledge of. This needed to be a Board discussion and decision. I know that we are in a tough place right now because it is the end of the fiscal year and the police radios need to be paid for on June 30 and it is now June 26. I will authorize verbal payment but I do so against my better judgment. I would have liked to have had a Board meeting before doing this, I think that the thoughts and decisions of all Board members should be heard and voted on in an official manner and written into the official minutes. I have only been on the Board for a short time and I been involved with several items of misinformation or no information from the health agent. Second, the Tea Garden septic system problem that was never told to the Board, the lack of restaurant inspections done in the winter when the health agent has more time and septic systems are at a minimum. Also, 1 Holly Lane was another thing that the Board never heard about until the Board received an email from an abutter complaining about the property. Charlotte Parker said the last thing she would like to discuss is the emergency preparedness coalition which is why we thought Anita should attend this meeting. It was discussed at a previous meeting that Richard Lombard

thought that too much time was being used for coalition meetings rather than the time being spent doing restaurant inspections. The Board discussed the possibility of having Anita Wright, Public Health Nurse attend the coalition meetings. The next day, Deborah sent an email to the coalition informing them that the Board no longer wanted her to attend coalition meetings. Charlotte Parker said that she was upset because at that meeting it was a Board discussion only, no decision was made and no vote was taken. Robert O'Hanley said that Deborah was spoken to about the police radios and it won't happen again. Robert O'Hanley said that there needs to be better communication in the office. If Lori, Deborah and Anita can't get along, you need to look for another job. Richard Lombard said it's not an issue of getting along, it's doing your job. Robert O'Hanley said that I have spoken to Lori about emailing Deborah about things that are going on and not just leaving things on her desk hoping Deborah will see it. Robert O'Hanley said as far as coalition meetings, I thought it was a good idea to have Anita attend those meetings to free up time for the health agent to do septic system and restaurant inspections. Robert O'Hanley said he feels the main problem is the hours that were cut in this office. Robert O'Hanley said he feels it has created a lot of stress in the office for the employees and the Board has to get it fixed by getting more hours. Robert O'Hanley said he has talked to a Selectman about more hours and, hopefully, the Board will be able to get more hours at town meeting in the spring. Robert O'Hanley asked Richard Briscoe if he would like to comment. Richard Briscoe said that Deborah's 15 hours a week is not sufficient to cover the septic and I base that on the health agent in West Newbury who works four days a week and makes \$70K to do just about what you are expecting from Deborah in 15 hours. Richard Briscoe said that he works with health agents in thirteen towns around here and Deborah is one of the most responsive health agents. Richard Briscoe said he feels very strongly on keeping Deborah and getting her more hours to do the job. Robert O'Hanley said that when they hired Deborah we had resumes from about five other people and with the limitations of what we were paying and the cut in hours by the Selectmen, we felt glad to get Deborah for that time and money. I voted against the cut in hours but two of the Board members were friends with the Selectmen and I was out voted. Richard Lombard said that he applied for the health agent position and being a registered sanitarian, did not understand why he was not selected. Robert O'Hanley said personally, I didn't want you to do the job. Robert O'Hanley said in my opinion, you have a problem dealing with people. Robert O'Hanley said we need to decide what we are going to do on this issue and move on to other items on the agenda. Charlotte Parker said that this meeting requires formal written complaints in the health agent's personnel file. Charlotte Parker made a motion that she would like put in the personnel file that the members of the Board of Health feel that the health agent has not always performed her job duties to their satisfaction. Restaurant

inspections have not been done to expectation, filing of food inspections needs to be implemented and kept up to date, communications must directly go to Board of Health members as soon as a situation occurs. Any monies spent on behalf of the Town or the Board of Health must come before this Board and voted yes or no by the Board. The Board said that after six months there will be reevaluation of the health agent's job performance and if the job performance has improved to the Board's satisfaction, the letter will be removed from the personnel file. The Board voted by unanimous vote, to table this issue to the next Board meeting to get information from the Personnel Officer to see if any amendments are required.

The Board had further discussion with Anita regarding her attending emergency preparedness coalition meetings. Anita told the Board that she thought it best that she serve as an alternate and have Deborah remain the representative for Groveland. Robert O'Hanley made a motion that Deborah Ketchen will be the representative for Groveland at Region 3A Coalition and Anita Wright serve as alternate. Charlotte Parker seconded the vote and Richard Lombard abstained. The Board told Deborah that they would like a written report after each coalition meeting.

The Board voted by unanimous vote to table review and approval of meeting minutes of 8/6/14 to the next Board meeting.

The Board approved by unanimous vote septic system variances for 97 King St., 5 Governors Rd. with a two (2) bedroom deed restriction, 214 King St., 671 Salem St., 268 Washington St., 3 Rocky Woods Rd. The Board reviewed each of the variance requests with Jim Scanlan, PE, Scanlan Engineering, Georgetown, MA. Jim Scanlan submitted letters for each property which specifies each variance request and the letters are attached hereto.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 PM

Next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2014 at 6:30 PM