

MINUTES
STURBRIDGE BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
Monday, July 19, 2010 7:00 pm

Meeting called to order 6:35pm.

Present members: Linda Cocalis, John Degnan, Bob Audet;
Administrative Assistant, Lynne Girouard; Health Agent, Alyssa Rusiecki.

Administrative and Correspondence: The Administrative assistant reviews routine correspondence. Mr. Degnan asks about the water service at 27 & 40 Main Street and at the release at 367 Main Street, which is C & R tire. The Agent informs the Board that she received a complimentary “Thank you” letter from one of the septic installers regarding the Agent’s responsiveness to a septic system installation.

Office scheduling is discussed; the office will be closed on Friday, July 23, 2010. The Board approves.

Animal Control Issues - The Animal Control Officer, Ron Komar, attends to make his report. Regarding the barn inspection book, he has received the data and there are thirty-seven properties, but either none or one inspection has been completed. The inspections are due January 1, 2011. Regarding a report of abandoned cats, Mr. Komar did not report the address to the members, however, he states that a neighbor brought the kittens to a shelter in Natick, (names of neighbor or shelter not provided) and that upon Mr. Komar’s attempting to cage the adult four or five cats, (number unknown), resulted in the cats escaping. Mr. Komar feels that wild cats are a severe problem in Sturbridge and that the resolution is euthanasia. The Agent disagrees and states that she feels that every attempt should be made to place cats, and there are different options such as local adoption, community shelters, and programs such as neuter and release. Ms. Cocalis states that many barn owners may like to adopt cats to keep down their rodent population that is inherent with grain storage. Mr. Degnan feels that one attempt should be made to place cats and then they should be euthanized. Regarding a more structured program, such as neuter and release, the Board puts the issue into abeyance and will re-visit at a later time. Regarding barn inspections, Mr. Komar will complete these as part of his regular schedule and he states that he has a checklist of conditions to use. Ms. Cocalis states that manure management is an important issue. The Board concurs.

Bicycle-Friendly Communities – An interested resident, Dr. Louis Fazen, attends to discuss to the positive effect of becoming “a bicycle friendly community”, including health and economic aspects. There is discussion that Sturbridge’s roads may not lend themselves to be bicycle-friendly, but the Board is in support of the effort and suggests that Dr. Fazen receive introduction to other interested Boards, such as the Planning Board, Open Space Committee, and perhaps the Conservation Commission.

Pools, revisiting variance requests – Ms. Cocalis provides literature to the two Board members. There is a discussion about main drains and their effectiveness in pre-existing shallow pools. Ms. Cocalis states that these pools did receive approval from the Building Inspector for construction and since she was not on the Board of Health at the time, she does not know why the Board of Health was not involved and she feels that the pool owners could sue the town because costly changes are being asked to be completed. Dr. Audet states that he feels the pool owners should be given the opportunity to ask for a variance. Ms. Cocalis states that she is aware that the State is looking at the regulation for main drains.

Pool – Sturbridge Country Inn variance request – lack of a main drain. Motion to accept the variance by Chairman Cocalis, Dr. Audet seconds, vote (2-1) Degnan opposed. The Agent is not asked for a recommendation.

Pool – Comfort Inn variance request – lack of a main drain. Motion to accept the variance by Chairman Cocalis, Dr. Audet seconds, vote (2-1) Degnan opposed. The Agent is not asked for a recommendation.

Additional pool information will be discussed later in the meeting.

Vote for Executive Session, (to be held jointly with the Board of Selectmen)

The Board voted to enter Executive Session with the Board of Selectmen for the purpose of discussing potential litigation.

Audet, yes.

Cocalis, yes.

Degnan, yes.

Prior to the vote, a member of the audience, Cheryl Blake from Casella Waste Systems, asks why the Board is going into Executive session, and it is stated for a legal matter to discuss legal strategy.

8:00 pm Executive Session

9:15 pm Return to regular business

Pool – Travelodge variance request – lack of a main drain. Motion to accept the variance by Chairman Cocalis, Dr. Audet seconds, vote (2-1) Degnan opposed. The Agent is not asked for a recommendation.

Pool – Publick House variance request – lack of a 2nd main drain. Dr. Audet asks how deep is this pool. The Agent responds, nine feet. The members would like to review the pool on-site. Issue put in abeyance.

Pool – Motel 6 variance request – lack of a main drain. Motion to accept the variance by Chairman Cocalis, Dr. Audet seconds, vote (2-1) Degnan opposed. The Agent is not asked for a recommendation.

Outstanding business regarding H1N1/preparedness: The Agent discusses the final distribution of the H1N1 funding. The Board approves the use of the consultant, mapping infrastructure, and small hardware. Mr. Degnan suggested we buy children's hand-washing literature, if there is any funding remaining.

New Business: Tight tank follow-up - The Agent provides the Board a copy of the proposed letter to send to owners of tight tanks who have not complied with State regulation, by either not pumping regularly or providing documentation on operation and maintenance, bedroom restrictions, and/or required notice in the Registry of Deeds. The Board approves the draft letter to be mailed and with no changes noted.

The May 3rd minutes are approved, (3 – 0).

There is no time for any additional Agent's report. The next meeting shall be Monday, August 2, 2010.

Motion to adjourn the meeting 9:45pm, seconded, approved (3 – 0).