

# Buckland, MA Board of Health Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2023

Via Zoom

## Agenda

### Agenda

- Open the meeting.
- Review/approve minutes from Jan. 19, 2023 meeting
- Health Agent Report:
  - Emergency Response Planning
  - COVID-19: Cases, updates, regs/guidance
  - Review BOH page on town website
  - Review/process mail – someone will collect from Town Hall.
- Any other items not reasonably anticipated by Chairman 48 hours prior to meeting
- Public Comment.
- Adjourn the meeting.

### Attendees

Peggy Hart, chair

Julia Godfrey, member

Carmela Lanza-Weil, member

Randy Crochier, CPHS

Janice Sorensen, public

Tim B.

1. Chair Peggy Hart opened the meeting at 4:02 pm
2. January 19, 2023 meeting minutes  
One typo was noted; once corrected, chair Hart moved to approve the minutes; member Julia Godfrey seconded the motion; all voted in favor.
3. Health Agent Report  
Randy Crochier reported on a number of issues:
  - Mr. Crochier and Health Agent Kurt Schellenberg are following up on a complaint concerning an RV parked on a property on State St. which appears to be occupied, possibly in violation of the Zoning bylaws and/or health code.
  - A new employee is coming to FRCOG to oversee the Public Health Excellence (PHE) training hub; there will be more employees hired for this initiative.
  - Health Agents have been busy with food establishment inspections. Chair Hart noted an inquiry had come to the BOH regarding what inspections

are needed for an enterprise based in a home kitchen; information will be forwarded to Mr. Crochier.

- Question about the variance process if a permit is denied by the county health agency (for example, for a septic system design).
  - Mr. Crochier replied that an application for a variance must show the design meets the “equal protection” standard for protection of the public.
  - The specific designs member Godfrey is referring to include a composting toilet and an alternative gray water system. Mr. Crochier noted the design must show that a “whole system” can be accommodated on the property, and then the capacity may be reduced.
  - Janice Sorensen asked about financial hardship; Mr. Crochier replied the example he had offered (extensive renovation required for the installation of a hand-washing sink) was actually not a financial hardship issue.
  - If a variance is sought, the BOH would hold a public hearing to hear testimony with the applicant present, and the Health Agent would explain why the application was denied. Once the public hearing is closed, the BOH would vote. The BOH would be free to seek additional expertise.
  - Mr. Crochier and Ms. Sorensen will continue the conversation about the specifics of particular plans outside the BOH meeting.

#### 4. Emergency Response Planning

Member Carmela Lanza-Weil asked if CPHSHealth Agents and/or members of the BOH might have a presence at local planning efforts for emergencies. Mr. Crochier noted health agents could have occasional presence, but that there are not enough staff available to attend all meetings. Member Lanza-Weil will reach out to Herb Guyette to continue the conversation, and invite him to attend the next BOH meeting.

#### 5. COVID-19 Updates

Western Franklin County is currently at the “yellow” level with 1 - 4 cases likely in Buckland in the last two weeks of January. Mr. Crochier noted the current issues in regard to COVID are hospital capacity and the scarcity of PCR testing in the county.

#### 6. BOH page on town website

- Water testing: BOH members expressed a desire to add information about private well testing to the webpage, and asked Mr. Crochier if there is any provision for financial assistance for low income families. Mr. Crochier noted there are no state regulations about water quality, only



guidelines, and there are no funds available to assist residents in getting their water tested. He suggested working with the Town to create a discretionary fund to support testing, or to reach out to the Mary Lyon Foundation or CDBG funds. BOH members asked what is recommended in terms of frequency? Every 3 - 5 years, although dug wells (as opposed to drilled wells) should be tested more often. BOH members noted that all the information on the webpage links to private companies for testing, and asked how much it costs. Mr. Crochier replied \$100 - \$350, depending on the labor involved.

- BOH members noted outdated information on the webpage, including the mask order from October, 2021 - should it come down? Who makes decisions about what is no longer relevant? Member Lanza-Weil will reach out to Town Administrator Heather Butler for guidance on updating webpage information.

7. Processing Mail

- Member Lanza-Weil noted most of the mail in the BOH mailbox relates to approved septic plans, which she has placed in the BOH file drawer. There was also information about servsafe classes, with contact information for the educator
- Member Godfrey referred the question of a denied permit to Mr. Crochier, and asked if copies of permits issued needed to be retained. Mr. Crochier said if there is a public records request for a permit, CPHS Health Agents can respond.
- Chair Hart passed information about a home kitchen inspection along to Mr. Crochier.

8. Other business

- Member Godfrey asked where to find information on the housing code. Mr. Crochier advised finding a copy of "the red book," and will also share relevant code sections with the BOH via email.
- The General Bylaws of the Town of Buckland are available on the town website, and as a hard copy from the Town Clerk.
- BOH members are searching for pre-2018 minutes.

9. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

10. Member Godfrey moved to adjourn the meeting; member Lanza-Weil seconded the motion; all voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Alison Cornish, Boards Clerk