

Meeting of Buckland Board of Health
Tuesday, May 4, 2021

Present:

Richard Warner, BOH Chair
Marti Ferguson, BOH Member
Peggy Hart, BOH Member
Lisa Danek-Burke, FRCOG Health Agent

Meeting was opened at 6:38 PM

Minutes, April 23, 2021: P Hart moved to approve the Minutes of April 23. R. Warner seconded. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Municipal Opt Out of Mosquito Spraying

L. Danek Burke reported that Randy Crochier has been the point person at FRCOG regarding this issue. He has had conversations with all the local boards of health, and conference calls with State Rep. Comerford's and Hinds' offices. These legislators asked if having more time to prepare would be helpful.

R. Crochier says the state is concerned that many communities including Buckland do not belong to a Mosquito Control District. Buckland could join the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District (PVMSD) by voting at our annual town meeting, at a cost of \$5000. Cost might potentially be covered by Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness funds. Belonging to the PVMSD would provide the service of mosquito surveillance.

L. Danek-Burke mentioned Buckland's Clesson Brook Study Grant, possible areas of overlap in the task of surveillance.

Board members questioned whether the state does routine surveillance in our area, whether information is available to guide our decision making. If the town decides to opt out, the town might be responsible for hiring vendors to do truck spraying if necessary.

R. Crochier is going to try and get answers to this and other questions by Thursday May 6, so that we can meet the current timeline of providing a recommendation to the Buckland Selectboard by their meeting on May 11. There will be a public meeting about state aerial spraying for mosquitoes at 5 PM before the regular Select Board meeting.

L. Danek-Burke said it was impossible for FRCOG to make a recommendation to the towns at this point.

R. Warner proposed to opt out, submit a basic plan, and ask for an extension.

M. Taft- Ferguson floated the idea of opting out of aerial spraying, but not truck spraying.

P. Hart proposed to opt out, with concerns for indiscriminate spraying which would impact wildlife.

The board then discussed what an opt out plan would look like and M. Taft- Ferguson shared her screen with the state template.

R Crochier shared a 63 page document with BOH members including other town plans. Gloucester, for example, is proposing to remediate with outreach to auto shops (remove water from tires).

Some of the other ingredients for an opt out plan include public information. The state has created handouts for that. If the town doesn't belong to a Mosquito Control District, we have to contract with licensed contractors for the services we need.

R. Warner noted that the town has a wetlands map.

L. Danek- Burke referenced a mass.gov/historical arbovirus data document which included arbovirus surveillance in Bernardston in 2018(1 positive). This data likely came from Bernardston's membership in the PVMSD, rather than state surveillance.

The board had further questions- if the deadline for opting out is May 15, by when would a plan so submitted be implemented?

Other business: L. Danek-Burke reported that FRCOG received a SAPHE 2.0 grant that will be used in part for inspection software to streamline inspections.

The board also briefly discussed the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership (MTWP), which was discussed at a recent Select Board meeting. The Select Board was contemplating membership in this, which would have to be voted on at Annual Town Meeting. Members of the BOH agreed it would feel rushed to research and provide information to voters by the June meeting. It will be discussed again at the Select Board meeting on May 11.

The BOH agreed that they were leaning towards recommending opting out of the state aerial spraying for mosquitoes, pending more information from R. Crochier of FRCOG on Thursday, May 6. The Select Board needs vote on opting out, and the BOH will create an opt out plan if so voted.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Hart
Buckland BOH Member

Two handwritten signatures are present. The top signature is in cursive and appears to read 'Peggy Hart'. The bottom signature is also in cursive and appears to read 'M. Taft-Ferguson'.