The regular meeting of the Board of Health was held on Tuesday, June 8, 2021. Michael LaFever, Chairman; Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary; Kelly Lamas, Member and Andrea Crete, Health Agent were present. Minutes are being recorded by LCTV video and are being transcribed from the video. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mr. LaFever. **This meeting was held during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic.**

Board members read the minutes of May 25, 2021. Minutes were signed by Ms. DeSantis.

Board members signed departmental bills.

Mr. LaFever asked about the current unfilled Public Health Nurse position. Ms. Crete stated there has been no applications received. The position is currently only posted on the Town website and no longer with outside sites.

Board members reviewed inspection reports submitted by Ms. Crete.

The meeting was joined by Angela Kramer and Martha Seed, by phone.

Ms. Kramer spoke of a webinar she attended on vaccine hesitancy. Currently the town has 48% of its residents fully vaccinated. The webinar mentioned of incentives for people who get vaccinated. It also provided education on the safety of the vaccines. Ludlow Cares will be hosting a Pioneers night on July 9, 2021 to help support getting people vaccinated. Ms. Kramer spoke with Big Y supermarkets about the possibility of offering an incentive through their pharmacy as a way to help with hesitancy. Ms. Lamas would like to see Ms. Seed attend the Pioneers night as a way to introduce herself and meet the community.

Ms. Kramer attended the Infectious Disease Symposium at Baystate Health. The focus was on tickborne illness. There was a lot of discussion of how people can defend themselves from ticks. Ms. Kramer has recently written an article for the Council on Aging newsletter on this topic.

Ms. Kramer provided a weekly COVID update. Ms. Kramer states this week the town has only seen 4 cases. There has been a major decrease throughout the state. One case involved a vaccinated resident that went to a wedding with kids held at Harrington Farm in Princeton, MA. A lot of people ended up with COVID from this event. Ms. Kramer is still waiting to receive more information on this case. Ms. Kramer is currently working with the Ludlow Boys & Girls Club to hopefully hold a question & answer session for its members.

In a follow-up from a topic from the past meeting, Ms. Kramer did mention that cases of infectious disease that are within the jail or Stonybrook are included in the case count for the Town.

Ms. DeSantis asked what Stonybrook is. Ms. Kramer mentioned it is a place that was opened by the Sherriff's Department in January for individuals that are Section 35. It is a rehab and treatment facility.

Mass DPH just released a survey for parents to fill out about the vaccine for kids.

6:00 p.m. – <u>Public Hearing on Proposed New Cemetery Location</u>

The hearing was joined by Steve Santos, Chairman of the Board of Public Works. Ms. Crete confirmed that there were 2 abutters notified of the hearing. Ms. Crete also reached out to DPH to attend the meeting. There has been communication with Dierdre Doherty from MassDEP. The DPW will contact DEP about the possibility of needing a state permit for the site.

Mr. Santos: I'm Steve Santos, Chairman of the Board of Public Works. I had thought, we as a Board thought, that this was all taken care of with our last director and obviously it wasn't. It is all downgradient. The reservoir obviously sits higher. There is no drainage and I don't believe there is any wetlands where this is going to be. It's a hard all gravel area. Before we start, I did bring a copy of the certified.

Ms. Crete: Oh perfect, thank you

Mr. Santos: For what we needed for our 2 abutters. We did get the 1 back from Water & Sewer, but we didn't get the other one back. This is basically what we are trying to do (showing plot plan). This is Center Street. This is not going to take place all in one shot. This is the approximate property line and then this is Westside Drive over here. This is the parking for the reservoir over here and obviously you see the elevation changes, it goes up quite a bit. So, what we anticipate is trying to do these 4 sections to start with. Get this entryway and as we sell the lots just progress towards the back. There is going to be no onsite drainage, so there is no, this roadway will be paved and everything is going to sheet off. So, there will be no drainage onsite. I'm not sure what we are doing for water, if anything at this point. We might do a shallow well over here for watering the flowers and stuff like that. The only water line that we have is in the WRA here, and we cannot hook up to that.

Ms. DeSantis: Why is that?

Mr. Santos: They just won't allow us because it's a transmission line.

Ms. DeSantis: What does that mean?

Mr. Santos: What it does is that it goes from the Quabbin reservoir and it feeds South Hadley, Chicopee, everything else, so it's a major. You don't want to start poking little holes in it for a service. It's a 42-inch concrete pipe. It just goes straight to the municipality and then they deal with it.

Ms. DeSantis: Ok

Mr. Santos: Other than like the chlorination station you guys see up on Center Street farther where they came in and came out, that's about it. Like little services, No, no if's, ands, or buts. That's basically about it, a maintenance garage. A small maintenance garage to keep mowers up there, and then other than that, that's about it.

Ms. DeSantis: Will that be built as part of phase 1?

Mr. Santos: No, there's just not enough money in the perpetual care fund. So, we have to do the entrance and we are going to try and do at minimum these 2 sections. Then we will do this piece of roadway and probably gravel some of this so that we have a turnaround. Then as we go.

Ms. DeSantis: So, you're bringing equipment to maintain just from storage.

Mr. Santos: Correct, there will be nothing stored here right now. Everything is at Island Pond now.

Ms. DeSantis: What is this area back here?

Mr. Santos: It's a reflection wall, just some seating and a concrete walk. That's about it. I'm not sure how that is going to be. Right now, we have no military spots right now. I don't know if we are going to put this military or we are going to do something over here or something like that. We are talking with Eric about what he wants to do. Obviously, there will be veterans buried here. There will have to be something. Ultimately if we had enough money, we would develop the whole thing and be said and done. It's just not feasible right now.

Ms. DeSantis: How many sites are we talking?

Mr. Santos: 2400, it's set up for hopefully a 20 year.

Ms. DeSantis: I'm thinking, what happens when this busts. You know?

Mr. Santos: It's one of those things where, when you get half way, it's something to look at. The problem is, is that there is not good, flat, hard ground to put a cemetery. You kind of need the good soils. You can't have too much clay, because it holds water. If we dug a grave today, it would fill up with water. We would have to pump it out and put it back in. it can't be too sandy, because when you try to stack them up next to each other, it just keeps caving in. It's not the best ideal conditions, but the thing is trying to find a parcel this big. Hopefully it will get us 20 years. There is still some room at Island Pond. These are set up the same way, they are not head to toe. What I mean by head to toe is that we have a car path in between. So, you will have a headstone, you will have a burial, and then you will have a car path. Technically, what we are doing now is using up the car paths. We've got the same provisions here. You can actually expand this within itself if you have to. It gets to be tough. You know St. Aloysius over on Berkshire Ave. Those are what they call head to toe. If you don't get a really tight machine in

there, you got to start picking up stones and moving them. It gets to be, cemeteries are a very delicate situation. People don't like to get things moved around. Stones, flowers, stuff like that, you would move them and gently move them back. Right now, all we've done is cut the trees down. The surveyor is going to come put some points in, so we know where we are. We had to do this step and then we go to Planning Board for site plan approval. They said it's no big deal. Other than that, there was nothing else that I was told we needed from you guys. I did see something, an email from Dierdre, she did give Jim a link and like you explained, doesn't think anything pertains to what we are doing. If we were on the high side, I think there would be an issue.

Ms. Crete: Yeah.

Mr. Santos: I think we are on the low side. All these are gradient lines, so your flat.

Ms. Lamas: So, this is the paved area, right, of where you park for the reservoir?

Mr. Santos: Yes

Ms. Lamas: And this is the runoff where people park when there is too many people?

Mr. Santos: Yes, the gate is basically, that yellow gate is right here.

Ms. Lamas: So, I guess my question would be, what, is there a plan for the congestion of parking at the reservoir. When people do go and its busy, and its nice out, and there's runoff.

Ms. Crete: They wouldn't be able to park here.

Mr. Santos: No, and that's the reason why, I mean. We got a lot of pressure now, because it was more of a safety issue. They were parking on the side street and then they were running across Center Street.

Ms. Crete: Right.

Mr. Santos: So, the Board got concerned about that. We do have signs printed up already that during construction it will be closed. That's what this is, it is a fence. We are going to have to fence this piece in. The only time I believe we are going to have issues, is if we have a Saturday funeral. Most of the funerals are done by 11:00. So, if you have an 11:00 funeral, you are out of here by 1:00. There is usually not that much congestion at the reservoir. We were talking to Water & Sewer about giving them a piece over here. They want nothing to do with it. They want to be able to control what they have, for the capability of what they have, for the people they want in there at the time. So, I think it's going to be an ongoing situation. Unfortunately, if somebody gets struck crossing Center Street, I think it will come to light a little bit faster. There is actually no provisions here what so ever for parking. What you see, I don't know if you guys have been up there, what you see what we trimmed out is going to stay there. Some of these

trees will stay there and the rocks will stay there. It should start about 70 feet back from the road will be the roadway. That's all I have.

Ms. DeSantis: When do you anticipate this might be opening for the first customer?

Mr. Santos: As soon as possible.

Ms. DeSantis: Really?

Mr. Santos: We are running out fast.

Ms. DeSantis: Ok. Good.

Mr. Santos: We anticipated starting in early spring. The cost that came into play is, we have very limited funds that we can use out of perpetual care. So, we are going to use our annual bid contractors to do a lot of what we can do, but we are trying to do a lot of it inhouse. That's why we were trying to do it inhouse. This plan was drawn up by our old director, Steve Frederick. We both worked on this, laid it out, pretty cut and dry, and then there wasn't enough money to have a full engineering firm do all the elevations. There is not a lot of grade change here. It is all fairly flat. There is not going to be a lot of excavation or a lot of grade change here.

Ms. DeSantis: So, you will start paving the first 2 sections.

Mr. Santos: Yeah, we are trying to do these 2 sections and then we might pave up a little bit farther. Then we will put a gravel road across. So, when they come in, they have somewhere circular. Then when we do the next one, we will give them gravel. I mean, like I said, it's going to be a work in progress. We did raise the rates a little bit on plots themselves in order to generate some more revenue. To try and get this thing built faster. Other than that, it's pretty easy. That was another thing about this site, I guess when they looked into that. It was a fairly flat, good drainage, natural drainage, where we didn't have to do catch basins and runoffs and swales and stuff like that. Definitely a little farther than we would like, but there is nothing left down here.

Ms. DeSantis: Is there a name for this area?

Mr. Santos: Not yet. Right now, we have a Center Street Cemetery. I don't know, that's up to the commissioners, what they are going to name it. We are just worried about getting it built first.

Ms. DeSantis: Yeah.

Ms. Lamas: I hear the need and the concern for a new cemetery and then I'm picturing the people that go to the reservoir on a Saturday. No parking, and then they are pulling in to across the street. That becomes another issue. It's like this catch-22.

Mr. Santos: That is how we are going to try and curtail this. We are going to have to put this piece of fence in, up there quite a ways. So, it makes it inconvenient for people to park there. Because, I mean, this will be paved. I mean if they want to come in and walk all the way around.

Ms. Lamas: I not talking about people parking in the cemetery, I just think people, where to park in general.

Ms. Crete: Can they park on the side?

Ms. Lamas: No

Mr. Santos: No, because that is all posted for "No Parking".

Ms. Lamas: That street is....

Ms. DeSantis: My concern is if people pull in and park.

Mr. Santos: Yeah.

Ms. Lamas: Or park across the street on Reservoir Drive and walk across.

Ms. DeSantis: They are doing that already.

Mr. Santos: That's what they do now.

Ms. Crete: Well, if they are there to hike and walk, it just adds a little bit more.

Ms. Lamas: It's a busy street. A lot of things have happened on that road.

Ms. DeSantis: very good

Ms. Crete: So, are you, do you want to vote on it or wait until the next meeting?

Mr. LaFever: We should probably wait and see just in case we get any input. I mean, I can't see where there is any health issues there, but just in case.

Ms. Crete: Yes

Mr. LaFever: We should probably wait.

Ms. Crete: Ok, we do have another meeting coming up this month.

Mr. Santos: Ok

Mr. LaFever: So, it would be 2 weeks.

Ms. Crete: I mean, we could say yes, pending hearing back from Dierdre. Or, you know, if they did have to pull a permit, then obviously they would have to go through DEP. They wouldn't be able to do anything until, I think you get DEP approval. It sounds like they won't even need that approval.

Mr. Santos: My thing is, I don't know if I could get a preliminary yes, in order to go forward with the Planning Board.

Ms. Crete: They are looking for us to approve?

Mr. Santos: I'm looking for you to approve to go to the next step. I don't want to go through this whole thing and find out that I didn't. I can't skip to step 2 without going through step 1. You know what I mean?

Ms. Crete: Right.

Mr. Santos: Because I need site plan approval from them.

Ms. Crete: We don't supersede DEP on this.

Ms. Lamas: Right.

Mr. LaFever: When does the Planning Board meet?

Mr. Santos: They are talking probably; I think Doug said I can't get this meeting which is next week. Because it's the same thing, it has got to be public hearing. So, that's going to put me another 2 weeks out.

Ms. Crete: Even with them?

Mr. Santos: Yes, because they need a public hearing just like you guys.

Ms. Crete: Ok, I thought it was just us.

Mr. Santos: So, like I said, people die every day. I just got to have somewhere to put them.

Ms. Lamas: So, I guess we could do a preliminary yes then. If that's?

Ms. Crete: That's what I would do.

Mr. LaFever: There is really no reason not to. I mean, we could say yes, accept if it needs approval from the DEP. I can't hardly imagine that it would. Considering the location and the elevation, I can't imagine that there is any true health risks there. So, does someone want to make a motion for approval pending on input from the DEP?

Ms. Lamas: I move to approve the cemetery lot on Center Street pending approval from the DEP.

Ms. DeSantis: I'll second it.

Mr. LaFever: All in favor?

Board Members: Aye.

Mr. Santos: Ok, perfect. Thank you very much. Do you guys want this plan?

Ms. Crete: If I could have it, that would be great. We don't have a copy of it.

Mr. Santos: That's fine.

Ms. Crete: We have to close the hearing.

Mr. LaFever: Yes. That ends the public hearing for the cemetery approval.

Ms. Crete: at 6:15.

Mr. LaFever did speak to residents in the area. The residents are happy with the location of the new cemetery. Ms. Lamas is still concerned with the parking for the reservoir.

Ms. DeSantis asked about when Ms. Crete would return to Big Y to verify if corrections were completed on the inspection report. Ms. Crete stated that most of the critical violations were able to be corrected while the inspection was performed and there was not a need to go back. If there were items that could not be corrected, she would give a time for a reinspection.

Ms. Crete provided the Board with a presentation of the departments 10 essential services. Ms. Lamas would like to take an additional week to really look into each item. That way the Board can discuss restructuring the department more in-depth at the next meeting. Ms. Lamas would like to really go over each section and look at what the Health Director job description would look like. In most other departments the Health Director takes the responsibility of emergency preparedness. Ms. Crete said that emergency preparedness was done by the nursing director in the past. When that position transitioned to a Public Health Program Coordinator, the responsibilities went with the new position. Ms. Lamas will be using Health Director job descriptions from other local departments to make a comparison.

The town currently does not have an Animal Inspector. Ms. Crete has been the backup in the past and is willing to fill in until a new Animal Control officer can be hired. Ms. Lamas made a motion to nominate Ms. Crete as a backup Animal Inspector. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0. Paperwork will be sent to DAR.

Ms. Lamas spoke of a few different committees that the town currently is not part of. Ms. Lamas would like to see representation from the town in regards to these committees.

Ms. Lamas asked if the office assistant will be returning to live meetings to record the minutes. Ms. Crete states that the office assistant only attended the meetings because there was not a department head. Ms. Crete says that the minutes are done from the video and does not feel the need for them to be done at the meeting.

Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. with Ms. Lamas seconding the motion. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne DeSantis
Secretary