Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

May 25, 2023

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

Members Present: Kelly Lamas, Chair; Antonio Tavares, Member; Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary (called in remotely)

Also Present: Paulina Matusik

Meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Ms. Lamas and Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

Monthly Business:

The meeting minutes from 4/20/2023 were presented. Motion was made by Mr. Tavares to accept the 4/20/2023 minutes, seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0. Ms. DeSantis will sign them at the next meeting.

Visitations:

None

Actions/Correspondence:

There was continued discussion on whether the department should continue to be called the Board of Health or changed to the Health Department. Mr. Tavares reported that he spoke to Marc Strange who informed him that there is no legal reason why the name cannot be changed. Ms. Matusik also stated that she spoke with Mr. Strange and explained the reasoning behind the proposed name change. Mr. Tavares asked what would be gained by changing the name. Ms. Lamas explained we are two separate entities with the board members being elected and the health department staff working on different tasks. Ms. DeSantis understands the need to make the change to keep in line with the state's guidance. Ms. DeSantis made a motion to change the name from the Board of Health to the Health Department. Seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

There was a discussion on who should be the Agent of the Board. On 8/25/20, the BOH voted themselves as "agents to the board for the purpose of doing inspections and responding to emergencies after hours or in the event the health agent wasn't available. Ms. Matusik presented the board with the legal authorities of the board should they have to act in public health emergency situations. She reported that she currently does the shelter and EDS planning for the town. Ms. Matusik recommends that whoever is in the Health Director role should be the agent of the board to address emergencies. Ms. DeSantis asked who would be next in command should the director not be available. Ms. Matusik reported that all staff members have has some sort of training. Ms. Lamas felt that Ms. Matusik could appoint the person in command if she wasn't available based on who she felt was ready to do so. Ms. DeSantis made a motion to appoint Ms. Matusik the Agent of the Board in her current role as Interim Director. Seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0.

Ms. Matusik shared with the board members a folder of all legal notices from other departments. Some notices require a signature or comment, but most are informational only. After a discussion, it was determined that all informational correspondences will continue be brought to the monthly meetings for board members to review. Should something require a signature or comment, Ms. Matusik will email the board members directly and they can decide how to proceed from there.

There was discussion for a septic variance for 44 Briarwood Lane. There are two variances being asked for. The first one is for a reduction of ground water from 4 feet to 3 feet. The reason for this request is that the system is too big and this will prevent water from going into the neighbor's yard. It will also eliminate the need for a pump which in turn is cost effective. The second variance is to use a Cieve analysis in leu of a Perc test. The perc test was unable to be completed due to the ground being too wet. Both Chrissy Florence and Tim Fontaine were present for the attempted perc test and are in agreeance with the variance requests. Mr. Tavares made a motion to approve the variances for 44 Briarwood Lane. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

There was a request for chickens at 14 Vienna Avenue. The homeowner is looking to have 5-6 chickens that will be used for pets and for eggs. Mr. Tavares made a motion to approve the chicken request at 14 Vienna Avenue up to 25 chickens and no roosters will be allowed. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

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Other Discussion:

Ms. Matusik presented the board with an update on the Shared Services Grant. Ludlow is now the lead for the grant due to Chrissy Florence no longer working for Palmer Board of Health. Ms. Matusik provided some details on the proposed budget which will be reviewed by the state the following day. There is currently $449,442 in the budget which includes a Shared Services Coordinator and a part time nurse. Ms. Matusik is looking to also hire a full time Social Worker, along with a full time Emergency Management person. The social worker would do community outreach for the four communities, along with clinical services as needed. We will also be able to pay a consulting fee for Title V inspections and perc Tests. Lastly, there will be money for inspection software/hardware for all four towns. Money can also be allocated for future conferences and trainings. Ms. Matusik will provide further information after the State approves the budget.

There will be a MDPH Student Intern working in the Health Department starting on May 30, 2023. She will work Mondays and Tuesdays 10:00 AM- 4:00 PM and needs to complete 160 hours by August 18th. She will work on two projects while here. The first is completing a Community Health Needs Assessment. The second is to look at the Opioid and Mental Health needs of the town.

Ms. Matusik reported that she and Ms. DeSantis attended the recent Town Meeting but were unable to vote on the department's article. The Board of Health Chair is the only voting authority for the Health Department. The article did pass and the CPR Training Revolving Fund will now include all trainings and not just CPR.

Mr. Tavares wanted to recognize Angela Kramer for the recent thank you she received in the Register from a family for the care that she provided to their loved one. Ms. Matusik also presented to the board two letters that were recently received thanking Ms. Kramer for her work.

The next Board of Health meeting will be on June 15, 2023 at 4:30 PM.

A motion was made by Mr. Tavares to adjourn the meeting at 5:45PM. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne DeSantis

Secretary

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