



Town of Oak Bluffs
Board of Health
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William White
Chairman

James Butterick
Thomas Zinno
Board Members

Meegan Lancaster
Health Agent

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
February 25, 2020 – MINUTES**

Members Present: William White, Thomas Zinno
Member(s) Not Present: James Butterick
Others Present: Meegan Lancaster, Lorna Welch, Kara Shemeth

Chairman White called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

APPOINTMENTS:

- **10:00 a.m. – Kara Shemeth on behalf of Tony & Melanie Williams, 18 Fairway Dr. M37 P 37**
 - 1) **Proposed leaching field to property line (37-45) 4'**
 - 2) **Proposed leaching field to property line (37-38) 7'**
 - 3) **Proposed leaching field to bulkhead 10'**
 - 4) **Proposed leaching field to foundation 14'**

Ms. Shemeth presented the variance requests to the Board. Ms. Lancaster previously reviewed the application and stated that this was a best case scenario given the size of the lot and other factors. Mr. Zinno made a motion to approve. All in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- **January 28, 2020 – Postponed (Mr. Butterick not in attendance)**

BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION:

- **Corona Virus Update**

Ms. Lancaster provided the Board with a chart of a decision making tree that was developed by the CDC for local Boards of Health in case there is contact. She has been corresponding with the Edgartown Health Agent since some residents returned from a cruise and have self-quarantined. The biggest identifier right now is if someone has travelled from China. There is suspicion that that definition might change. There was further discussion referring to the CDC document. The CDC Public Health Assessment Guide shows the timeline of the suspension of travel to China on January 27th. On January 30th World Health Organization declared a public health emergency. January 31st a public health emergency in the US was declared. February 2nd entry was suspended for people who had been in China within the last 14 days. February 3rd was the Guidance Risk Assessment which has been evolving and changing a lot. If we do have an issue here there will be a very large quantity of public health involvement. The island Health Agents have a plan in place; if there is a case here depending on where the person has been the Health Agent of that town would contact the businesses. There was further discussion about how far back the lookback would be and what the protocol would be for someone to follow who is feeling ill.

AGENT / ADMINISTRATION UPDATES:

- **DPH/MAHB Regional planning grant meeting**

Ms. Lancaster spoke with someone from the Mass Association of Health Boards which is an organization that we are a member of. They are looking to expand their reach into consulting and planning. There is a \$50,000 planning grant and Oak Bluffs BOH would be the lead agency for this grant which means we can be reimbursed up to 15% of any expenses we incur in this role. The health agents all work together on a lot of shared services such as the tick program, the mosquito program and we have the same provider for nursing contracts. This grant is for regional planning and most of the regulations that the island health agents are responsible for enforcing are state promulgated. So this would be an efficient way to share some of the tasks and would have a better quality of service delivery and ultimately perhaps at a lower cost.

Mike Hugo from MAHB would be our consultant for the project. The last time this grant application was submitted was in 2011 because it fell by the wayside. We are really fortunate to have MAHB consulting with us and leveraging their expertise.

- **Summary of 2019 tick tracking, tick borne illness and deer culling numbers**

Ms. Lancaster stated that Dick Johnson is looking to retire but we are not sure when that will happen and he will be hard to replace. The Board reviewed the 10 year summary sheet provided to them. The culling numbers have exponentially risen. The main factors that they have identified for that are having the hanging facility at the Ag Hall and also the financial incentives that they offered this year. Another big part of it is private land owners are allowing more hunting on their land due to more outreach. There was growth in the population due to several years of really high acorn production which provided deer a great food supply. This year we basically had no acorns so the thought is between the culling and the lack of acorns there should be a substantial herd reduction. The goal is to have 15 deer per square mile and we are at about 49 per square mile. Another goal is to shift towards culling females for reproductive reasons. There was a 43% increase in the culling numbers this year which was a banner year.

There was further discussion about ticks and tick borne illness. The Texas Lone Star Tick showed up in one yard survey in Oak Bluffs last year. Dick Johnson suspects that there is an Asian Long Horn Tick that is likely to start showing up here as well.

Mr. Zinno made a motion to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Lorna Welch, Administrative Assistant.

DOCUMENTS: Public Health Supervision of Returning Travelers from China, DPH Grant Opportunity – MA Municipal Public Health Shared Services Program, Summary of 2019 Tick Tracking