Board of Health Minutes August 2, 2021 9:00 am Zoom Meeting

Call to Order: Chairman Ron Kelter called the meeting to order. Other members present: Jodi Stetson, Fred Vohr, FRCOG Health Agent, Randy Crochier, and Town Administrator, Terry Narkewicz.

Format of Future Meetings (Zoom, Hybrid, In-Person) – Given limited meeting spaces large enough to accommodate social distancing, the rise in Covid cases, and limited technology, Ron presented a motion recommending that the Board of Health continue to meet via Zoom for the time being. Fred seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Health Agent Update: the Cooperative Public Health Service District was awarded a Public Health Excellence (PHE) grant that will provide $285,000 annually for a ten-year period. Utilizing the PHE grant funds, the District has proposed to increase housing work, create a combined Health Director/Agent (Randy Crochier was promoted to this position), hire a second full-time public health nurse (Meg Ryan, R.N. hired), reorganize EDS plan involvement, increase age friendly work, purchase new software, and increase part-time health agent Lisa Danek Burke’s hours from 0.33 FTE to full-time. Randy believes that supplementing the District’s overall operations using the PHE funds will stabilize member assessments for quite some time.

Covid-19 Update: Presently there are five (5) positive cases in neighboring communities (Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Erving, & Leyden). Most troubling is that fully vaccinated individuals are susceptible to the variety of variants that have surfaced in recent months. In fact 74% of the individuals infected in the Cape Cod area had been fully vaccinated. With the new school year fast approaching, congregate educational environments will be of concern. Jodi mentioned the need to fill the Emergency Management Director’s position sooner than later should Shelburne’s numbers increase. Both Ron and Fred indicated that they might attend the Selectboard’s August 2nd meeting to hear the discussion surrounding the EMD position.

Town Hall Opening: Randy indicated that he understands the Selectboard’s reluctance to opening the building to the public given its layout and the lack of resources required for daily cleaning. The Town must protect its employees.

Board of Health Clerical Position – Terry noted that in the first round of advertising the Town received nine applicants. Four applicants were scheduled for interview. Shortly before the interviews took place, three applicants withdrew and one did not show up. Until a suitable hire can be identified, Terry has offered to assist the Board in the interim.

Any Other Business:

Salsa Restaurant, 10 Bridge Street – Randy reported that Julio DeJesus has opened a new restaurant featuring Caribbean inspired food.

Adjournment: Ron Kelter presented a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 am. Fred seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.