

Board of Health

August 4, 2005

5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Jerry Anathan, Dan Brown, and Duane Gregory

Members Absent: None

Health Agent: Jane Evans

Health Inspector: Vacant

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

AGENDA

Public Comments

There were none.

Old Business

None

New Business

293 Commercial Street

Request for Seats

The applicant, Stephen Boggess, had supplied the board with documentation showing the property's Title V flow assignments. However, the Health Agent did not have enough time to thoroughly review the numbers before the meeting. Likewise, board members had only been provided with the documentation minutes before the meeting started.

Motion: Duane Gregory made a motion to allow eight fast food seats for the proposed coffee shop in Unit D subject to the Health Agent's verification that the property has sufficient unallocated gallons per day to accommodate the seats. Jerry Anathan seconded the motion and it passed 3-0-0.

Discussion

Dr. Cheryl Andrews, Chair of the Board of Selectmen and David Nicolau, selectman

Cheryl suggested that the BoH may want to start issuing administrative consent orders (ACOs) again due to recent developments with the sewer. Cheryl also informed the board that the BoS would not sign off on any ACO (a power they granted themselves the previous week) until the BoH has qualifying criteria in place. Cheryl also urged the board to start educating residents on the availability of ACOs and informed the BoH that the BoS would be sending a letter out soon to everyone in town updating them on the sewer.

Cheryl then brought up the plumbing code and, more specifically, the public toilets that are mandated by it. Both she and David noted that a number of businesses in town that should have public facilities under the code do not have them. They felt that the shortage would best be addressed by bringing businesses up to code before having the town build new restrooms. Cheryl also mentioned that any property designated a “mall” must provide public restrooms. She felt that the board doesn’t necessarily need to crack down on violations, but may want to consider the issue when businesses come before the board for other matters.

Cheryl and David then brought up concerns with beach closings and the amount of dog poop on the beaches. Cheryl noted that the BoH may have more immediate tools to address the situation than the BoS.

Dan then asked the selectmen for their commitment to provide the BoH with the resources—including adequate staff—they need to get out of crisis mode, which the town’s Health Department has been operating in for months. Cheryl responded that the BoH should “Put it in your goals” for next year. David also said, “Give us your goals. If you feel you need extra help, just let us know and then we’ll work on it.”

Motion: Dan Brown asked that Director of Public Works David Guertin be taken next for a presentation. There was no objection.

David made a quick but very informative presentation on the Pilgrim Lens—the aquifer directly under Provincetown—and its relationship to the engineering and operation of the sewer plant.

Appointments

Matt Damon

Matt informed the board that after living in town for three years he recently decided to volunteer to serve on a town board. He felt his educational background—in culinary arts and restaurant management—would best fit the Board of Health. Matt also informed the board that he received his realtor’s license in May. Although Duane Gregory and Jerry Anathan expressed concerns that some people may view a third realtor on the board as excessive, everyone agreed that anyone with such a concern is more than welcome to apply.

Motion: Jerry Anathan made a motion to appoint Matt Damon as an alternate member with a term expiring December 31, 2006. Dan Brown seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0-0.

Ken Janson

Ken previously served on the board. Duane and Dan had both served with him and welcomed his return.

Motion: Duane Gregory made a motion to appoint Ken Janson as a regular member with a term expiring December 31, 2005. Jerry Anathan seconded the motion and it passed 3-0-0.

Approval of Minutes for July 21, 2005

The minutes from the July 21, 2005 meeting were not available in time for the meeting. They will be considered at the board’s next meeting.

Any other business that shall properly come before the Board

Next Meeting: The next meeting will take place on September 1st (The August 18th meeting was scrubbed due to the Carnival parade.)

Health Inspector Position: Dan announced that Brian Carlson had accepted the job as Health Inspector. He worked previously for the AIDS Support Group and has an educational background in education.

ACOs: Dan, referring to the ACO criteria brought up earlier in the meeting, noted that requests can probably be separated into two types: those from people with working Title V systems and those from people with failed systems. He wondered if the BoH needs criteria for the former since there wouldn't be any real hurry to get them off Title V. Duane said that the only thing the BoH would need to change is to let people with failed systems know ACOs are available. Dan offered to draft criteria for the board to consider at the September 1st meeting.

Beach Closures: Jane presented information to the board on the number of beach closures on the Cape. Provincetown has more than any other town. The main difference, Jane noted, is that Provincetown's beaches are along a working harbor. One contributor may be seabirds, which feed on fish entrails dumped into the harbor. Another may be boat waste, but that doesn't seem likely since the harbormaster hasn't reported any violations and told Jane that the pump out boat is in constant demand. Provincetown also is the only town on the Cape that allows dogs on the beaches during the summer and there have been a lot of complaints about dog poop. Rainwater runoff and unintended septic discharge may also be contributing factors. Next steps? Jane pointed out that DNA testing (if the town could afford it) probably wouldn't provide many answers since it's not very reliable. Dan pointed out that the current testing also isn't very accurate since it tests for "indicator" bacteria and not harmful bacteria or pathogens. Jane would like to collect water samples from further away from the beach. (The county only has to collect samples in three feet of water.) If the bacteria counts are not as high further out, then we can focus our attention on land-based sources. If the counts are similar—especially around the breakwater—then we can focus more on birds. Problem is: the Health Department doesn't have it in their budget to pay for additional tests. Jane noted that the wastewater plant has testing facilities, which she may be able to use. She will look into it. Jane mentioned that the summer is almost over so our window of opportunity is closing. Dan reported that Sarah Peake provided him with another potential piece of the puzzle. She had been talking to some of the local fishermen who said they noticed that recent closings had occurred after a strong southwest wind, which may be washing guano off the breakwater and into the East End. Jane also reported that the Health Department needs more signs to announce closures. Right now the town only has nine—all of which are in disrepair and need replacing—for 18 beaches.

Beach Cleanliness: Jerry presented the board with research she had done on options for signs and dog poop receptacles that could be placed at each town landing. The products were ideal but costly. Duane wondered if the newly formed animal welfare committee could help to raise money. Dan suggested checking with the Chamber of Commerce and PBG. Jerry will look into it and get back to the BoH on her findings. Dan pointed out that DPW needs to be included in the discussion from the outset so that we don't get ahead of them.

Health Agent's and Health Inspector's Reports

Jane said she continues to operate in crisis mode. She apologized for not completing the members'

packets before the meeting but just didn't have time. Dan mentioned that he had to drive Jane around to post beach closure signs because the town doesn't have a vehicle large enough to accommodate them. Plus, he felt that posting signs is not an effective use of the Health Agent's time. Dan wants to get the Health Department the resources they need. Jerry asked about the possibility of a summer intern. Jane will be on vacation August 22nd through Labor Day. Although the county will provide assistance in her absence, she will be on call. The board expressed its hope that Jane would not have to be bothered on vacation.

Board Members' Statements

Duane commended Dan on his first meeting as chair.

Dan thanked everyone for their input, hard work, and support.

Jerry reiterated that she will be on the sign detail.

Adjournment

Duane Gregory made a motion to adjourn at 7:00pm. It was seconded by Dan Brown and passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Gaudiano

Evelyn Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by _____ **on** _____, 2005.
Dan Brown, Chair