



TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE BOARD OF HEALTH

Aldrich School Town Hall Annex - 14 Hill Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588
Phone# (508) 234-3272 Fax# (508) 234-0821

The Northbridge Board of Health approved these minutes at a meeting held February 27, 2023.

MEETING MINUTES ~ FEBRUARY 6, 2023

This meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Ms. Lani Criasia, Chair. Other members present were Mr. Chris Cella, Ms. Linda Lermond, RN, Ms. Erin Meagher, NP, and Mr. Steve Garabedian. Also present was Jeanne M. Gniadek, Board of Health Administrator, and Ms. Danielle Edmands, Regional Health Inspector for the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health.

Meeting Minutes: Motion made by Mr. Garabedian to accept the minutes of **January 9, 2023**. Motion seconded by Mr. Cella. The vote was all in favor.

Minimum Standards of Fitness for Human Habitation – 2171 Providence Road: Present for this meeting were Ms. Wendy Rogers, Occupant, Ms. Kelsey Baggi, Attorney representing the owner (this is a VA owned property) and Ms. Christina Kelley, Real Estate Agent.

Atty. Baggi stated that they had just received approval to expend \$28,0000 to repair the heating system in this one dwelling unit. The bid and contractor have been approved. They were unable to provide a start/completion date.

Additionally, Ms. Baggi stated that the window has been ordered – it's an old home and they had difficulty finding another window to repair this one. She stated that the step has been repaired. Ms. Rogers confirmed noting that they did not just the one, but repaired two of the steps.

Ms. Baggi stated that the hot water temperature has also been corrected but was unable to provide any proof that the water temp was actually tested within the unit.

The Board requested that they provide updates to the office, specifically the start date for the heating system replacement as well as the name of the contractor.

Beaver Permit Application: The Board reviewed an application for an Emergency Beaver Permit for the DPW due to flooding conditions near 902 Quaker Street. The culvert under the roadway is being blocked due to beaver activity. It was noted that the application failed to provide the name of the PAC (Problem Animal Control) Agent.

Motion made by Mr. Cella to approve 10-day emergency beaver permit application subject to obtaining and verifying the name and license of the PAC Agent. Motion seconded by Ms. Meagher; the vote was all in favor.

Application for the Keeping of Farm Animals – 1316 Hill Street: Present for this meeting was Mr. Mustafa Harrati, applicant for a permit to keep farm animals at property located at 1316 Hill Street, Whitinsville.

The Board noted that Mr. Harrati previously had a permit to keep farm animals but that it has been revoked due to his failure to comply with the Board's regulations, specifically his failure to keep the animals on the property. The Board noted the recent escape of a Boer goat as well as a cow that ended up on a farm in Upton.

The Board asked Mr. Harrati what animals he intended to have on the farm. He responded chickens and sheep. When asked why he is seeking a permit to keep sheep and chickens there he responded that he wants them for his customers so that his customers can purchase and process on the farm property. (Process meaning slaughter)

Mr. Cella asked if the well has been drilled yet. Mr. Harrati responded that it has not. It was noted that well permits expire one-year from date of issuance.

Mr. Cella questioned how he provides water to the farm. Mr. Harrati stated that there is a water meter in the barn and he attaches a hose as needed. Ms. Criasia asked what he is using the water for. Mr. Harrati stated for cleaning and for water for the animals. Ms. Criasia asked if he had hot water – he responded that he does not. The Board questioned whether the Whitinsville Water Company was aware that he was using the water for slaughtering and whether there were preventive measures attached to that meter such as a backflow prevention device.

Ms. Criasia stated that his barn permit was revoked for many reasons. Mr. Harrati stated it was because an animal escaped. Ms. Criasia stated that he had a Boer goat get loose and then the cow got loose. There was discussion on how long the cow was missing before it arrived at the farm in Upton. Mr. Harrati stated that he is in court with the "lady in Upton" that has his cow – the Town considered it abandoned because she had it for a period greater than 7 days. Mr. Harrati stated that she made herself unavailable during those 7 days which is why he couldn't get his cow back. The matter is in court.

Mr. Harrati stated that something spooked the cow which is how it ran away – He stated he was alone at the farm that day and was unable to get the cow. He further stated that he installed new fencing around the barn. Mr. Cella asked to see pictures of that. Mr. Harrati did not bring any.

Mr. Cella asked where he intends to keep the 150 chickens he is asking to have on the property. Mr. Harrati stated that the barn is huge and that he also has an outdoor chicken coop. Mr. Cella noted that prior inspections determined that the chicken cart was not proper shelter. Mr. Harrati disagreed stating that the report said the sides needed to be closed but it wasn't cold enough at that time to wrap the cart – if he did there would be insufficient air for the chickens. He stated that he had hired someone to build that cart for him. Mr. Cella asked when the cart was built. Mr. Harrati stated it was either in 2014 or 2015.

Mr. Cella stated that he would like to see pictures of all the improvements he has made. He also asked for information on the construction of the chicken coop.

Mr. Harrati stated that he installed fencing on the inside using 2x4s and that outside there is an electric fence.

Mr. Cella questioned how the manure is handled. Mr. Harrati stated that it is spread on fields – he has a manure spreader. Mr. Cella asked if he had a written SOP for the management of manure. He stated he didn't – that it gets spread on the field right away. Ms. Meagher stated that you cannot

spread manure immediately – it has to compost and dry out first. Mr. Harrati disagreed saying that manure can be spread immediately onto the fields.

Ms. Criasia asked how many dogs he currently has. Mr. Harrati stated he has none at this time. Ms. Criasia stated that he has trouble with his own animals noting that his dogs also escaped from the property. Lost his goat, lost his cow – he has trouble keeping his animals healthy and safe.

Mr. Harrati stated that FSA allows customers to process the animals on his farm. He is applying for the slaughterhouse so that HE can do the processing. He stated that the blood and leftovers get composted at the farm. He noted an area of wood chips and how he spoke with other farmers and researched on-line the requirements for composting the blood noting he has a tarp under the wood chips along with different layers of soils.

Ms. Criasia asked how long he has owned the farm. He responded about 9 years. When asked how long he has allowed animals to be processed there he stated for about 4 years. He stated that as far as he knows he is not doing anything illegal. He noted that there is a farm in Millbury that allows you to slaughter the animal yourself.

The Board requested additional information such as pictures of repairs made, the fencing, and more information on the chicken cart. The Board will speak with the water company regarding the water connection concerns they have.

Mr. Cella questioned whether Mr. Harrati was current on taxes owed to the Town. Ms. Gniadek stated that he is not – she was informed by the Treasurer/Collector that he owes taxes for the past two quarters. Mr. Harrati stated he would pay them tomorrow.

Motion to table this matter was made by Mr. Cella and seconded by Mr. Garabedian; the vote was all in favor.

Tobacco Control Program – Vera’s Mini Mart: The Board reviewed a letter sent to Vera’s Mini Mart located at Plummers Corner noting the sale to a minor (17 year old) of a JUUL tobacco product. The store has until February 8th to request a hearing. They will be required to pay a \$1,000 fine and will have their tobacco sales permit suspended for a period of 3 days starting February 10, 2023. No action needed by the Board unless they request a hearing.

Title 5 – Variance Request – Set Hearing Date: Ms. Gniadek informed the Board that a Title 5 variance has been received for a repair of a septic system. A variance requires 10-day abutter notification. The Board agreed to meet again on February 27th at 5:30 PM to hear this variance request.

Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health: The Board reviewed the weekly reports from Daniel Markman and Danielle Edmands for the month of January.

Town Meeting Warrant: The Board reviewed anticipated expenditures from the Food Permit and Compost Site Revolver Accounts that will be seeking renewal at town meeting – no budget modifications to expected expenditure limits was deemed necessary.

The Board also discussed anticipated expenditures relating to the IRA at the Quaker Street Landfill. It was noted that past warrant articles requested \$25,000 – the Board deemed that this amount should be satisfactory for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2024.

Correspondence: The following correspondence was distributed to the Board:

- MassDEP Letter – Berkowitz Trucking re: Site Assignment Modification Review by MassDEP
- Central mass Mosquito Control Program – Budget Notification

There being no further business, motion to adjourn at 7:01 PM was made by Ms. Meagher and seconded by Mr. Cella – all in favor.

Attested by,

Jeanne M. Gniadek, Administrator

Next Meeting scheduled for: Monday, February 27, 2023 @ 5:30 PM

List of Documents utilized by Board of Health
Meeting Date: February 6, 2023

A. Approval of Minutes

- 1) January 9, 2023 DRAFT Meeting Minutes

B. Minimum Standards of Fitness for Human Habitation

- 2) 2171 Providence Road
 - a. Inspection Report (December 19, 2022)
 - b. Email (January 31, 2023)

C. Beaver Permit Application

- 3) DPW Permit Application for property located at 902 Quaker Street

D. Keeping of Farm Animals

- 4) Hill Street, 1316 – Applicant: Mustafa Harrati
 - a. Application for Permit to Keep farm Animals @ 1316 Hill Street
 - b. Board of Health Code of Regulations

E. Tobacco Control Program

- 5) Vera's Mini Mart – Notification letter from BOH Tobacco Control Alliance (January 23, 2023)

F. Title 5 sewage Disposal Systems

- 6) 807 Highland Street – Letter from HAWK Consulting requesting Title 5 Variance

G. Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health

- 7) Weekly Reports from D. Markman and D. Edmands (January 2023 reports)

H. Old & New Business

- 8) Spring Annual Town Meeting
 - a. Memo – Town Manager's Office
 - b. DRAFT Warrant
 - c. EnviroTrac Proposal for Environmental Services
 - d. Revolver Account Expenditures FY 2022 and 2023

I. Citizen's Forum

J. Correspondence

- MassDEP Letter – Berkowitz Trucking – Site Assignment Modification Review
- CMMCP – Proposed Budget Notification Letter