

Summary for Island Selectmen

The Island's Boards of Health Are Prepared to Lead an Island-Wide Effort to Reduce the Incidence and Severity of On-Island Tick-Borne Illnesses

The Island's Boards of Health are collectively prepared to develop a Recommended Plan detailing how best to mitigate the on-Island disease burden from tick-borne diseases. The Boards are coming together on this as these diseases threaten all of us, recognize no town borders and can only be mitigated in a coordinated, Island-wide manner, one that leaves no disease sanctuary. The Boards of Health believe this to be an important public health issue and are prepared to lead the endeavor from recommendation development through implementation.

We are requesting upfront support of all Island Selectmen for two principal reasons. First, the final recommendations will only have value if they can be reviewed, debated, modified and ultimately implemented. As such, the Boards of Health are proposing that the final recommendations be reviewed in a process that is jointly managed by the Boards of Health and by the Selectmen. Your support of the attached resolution charges the Boards of Health with the necessary tasks and lays the foundation for the subsequent consensus building and implementation processes.

Second, federal funds from the CDC and NIH may be helpful to the roll out and implementation of these recommendations. Presently, while islands such as Block Island and Nantucket are eligible and have sought CDC funding specific to on-island Lyme disease eradication programs, our Island cannot compete for them as the CDC requires that eradication programs be led by an Island-wide body that is either appointed by the Selectmen, or elected. Your support of the attached resolution would enable the Boards of Health to be that Island-wide body and to seek outside federal funding in support of any final, agreed plan. A second round of CDC funding requests is expected in two years.

To advance the program the Boards of Health will also be seeking funds this year from the Martha's Vineyard Community Health Initiative (MVCHI). The MVCHI funds, provided through Martha's Vineyard Hospital, are available for periods of up to 5 years and in annual amounts of up to \$60,000. Islanders have identified Lyme disease as one of the Island's significant, preventable, unmet health needs. The Board of Health grant request will seek to consolidate and build upon a range of already existing on-Island and off-Island data and recommendations. Specifically, the grant program will:

- Incorporate, and as necessary modify, the report of the Nantucket Tick-Borne Disease Committee to the Nantucket Selectmen, dated December 13, 2009; Dr. Sam Telford III of Tufts, who served on the Nantucket Committee, will be working as well with the Island Boards of Health.
- Incorporate the on-Island data of Mr. David Simser of the Barnstable County Cooperative Extension, who has for the last 4 years worked on our Island to measure the effects of the USDA's 4-poster bait stations on deer-tick census
- Collect a range of baseline data on the Island's deer tick and deer populations, and on Islander's Lyme disease incidence and prevalence rates. The latter work on actual disease rates will be coordinated with and gathered from the Wampanoag Tribe and Martha's Vineyard Hospital, both of whom have been active in disease monitoring.
- Collect Lyme antibody data on a sample of current Elizabeth Island residents and vacationers to compare with corresponding data collected in 1987 when their local deer census numbers were more than 5 times higher.
- Explore the current status, suitability and availability of the Lyme disease vaccine previously marketed by GlaxoSmithKline.
- Explore the potential of using Chappaquiddick as a pilot island to more economically field test the various recommendations.
- Enhance Islander communications around strategies for disease avoidance and the importance of early disease recognition and treatment. This work will be coordinated through the Martha's Vineyard Lyme Disease Association and the Martha's Vineyard Hospital.

The above work will take two, possibly three years, depending on the potential and advisability of doing a Chappaquiddick pilot. Most importantly however, the MVCHI funds would support the first two to three years of an Island-wide implementation program, with the exact start date dependent principally on whether, and hopefully when, an all-Island consensus is obtained.

In summary, the Island Boards of Health are proposing to bring together data and efforts already under way from a variety of sources, to supplement this with new data and new efforts as necessary, and to coalesce this collected work into a coordinated set of recommendations, and ultimately actions. Islanders have long seen this to be essential. Tick-borne illnesses have too long burdened our Island and are preventable. With your support of the attached resolution, the Island Boards of Health are prepared to treat tick-borne illnesses as an important public health issue and to take the lead in addressing it.

Harold Zadek
Edgartown BoH

West Tisbury BoH

Oak Bluffs BoH

Herb Custer
Tisbury BoH

Chilmark BoH

Acquinnah BoH

Chilmark Board of Selectmen Resolution

It is resolved that the Chilmark Board of Selectmen encourage the Chilmark Board of Health to work together with the other Island Boards of Health to reduce the incidence and severity of on-Island tick-borne illnesses. Further resolved, that the Selectmen are prepared to conduct joint meetings with the Chilmark Board of Health to assess and reach agreement on a Recommended Plan of Action, with a view to gaining town consensus around the Recommended Plan. It is understood that the Recommended Plan is expected on or before December 31, 2012, with implementation to commence on or before January 1, 2014, pending approval.

Warren Doty,
Chairman



Tick Control Project Proposal Michael Loberg, member of the Tisbury Board of Health, came before the Board to introduce an initiative to address the problem of tick-borne illnesses on Martha's Vineyard. He cited a Nantucket study containing recommendations for disease management, and observed that, while data have been collected on Martha's Vineyard, they have so far not been organized and analyzed to yield a course of action that would address the problem.

He is working with scientists who have collected data in order to address any remaining knowledge gaps and formulate recommendations for review by Islanders at Town Meetings, so that concerted and effective action can be taken. He estimated that two years would be needed to formulate recommendations. He pointed out that Center for Disease Control grant funding exists specifically for islands to address these issues, but that, unless a single entity approaches the agency, the funding cannot be made available to Martha's Vineyard.

Mike Renahan noted that the County would not be the appropriate single entity to manage the project, citing past experience with a mosquito-control project which he felt had not lived up to its potential.

Jan Buhrman noted the importance of educating medical care providers and the public, and improving recognition and treatment of tick-borne illnesses by Island providers. Mike Loberg agreed that all angles should be addressed to mitigate the effects of tick-borne illnesses on the Island.

The Board thanked Michael Loberg for his presentation, and indicated its interest in participating in joint MV Board of Health efforts to address this important public health issue.

Matschullat, 34 Flanders Lane (26-28) George Sourati presented a proposed sewage disposal system plan revision for a seven-bedroom system that was built four years ago. There are plans to build an addition to the house, which will require moving the septic tank. The Board **approved** the proposed plan.

The Board also reviewed current house plans for the proposed addition, and confirmed that with the conversion of one bedroom into a walk-through study, and the addition of another bedroom, the house remains at the permitted seven-bedroom limit.

Cole, 30 South Road (11-18) The Board noted that an Emergency Septic Repair permit has been issued to VLS&E to repair a leaking septic tank. The sale and transfer inspection of roughly one-and-a-half years ago is not on file, and the Board asked Reid Silva to supply a copy of the inspection report.

Weddings at the Keith Farm Mike Renahan pointed out that properties in Chilmark are only allowed to host a total of five weddings per season, and that the Keith Farm seems to have