

CHILMARK BOARD OF HEALTH

Minutes

February 16, 2022

5 pm

via zoom

Present: Katie Carroll, Matt Poole, Dick Johnson, Patrick Roden-Reynolds, Celena Guimaraes, Ebba Hierta, Cody Coutinho

Absent: Jan Buhrman

Draft Minutes, February 2, 2022 were **approved**.

Introduction of PHE hires: Dick Johnson summarized the history of the tick-borne illness prevention program on the island, and introduced Patrick Roden-Reynolds, who has been hired under a 7-town Public Health Excellence grant for shared services to continue this and other vector-borne illness public health initiatives after Dick's imminent retirement. Patrick stated that he looks forward to working with the Board and getting to know Chilmark's tick "hot-spots." Celena Guimaraes has been hired under the Public Health Excellence program to add much-needed inspection-capacity to the wide range of inspections required to be conducted by island health departments, from swimming pools to septic systems to dairy pasteurization to lead exposure, housing sanitation and, of course, food establishments. She will shadow town inspectors and undergo state training for these inspection responsibilities. The Board welcomed Celena and Patrick to island public health work, and confirmed its approval of their respective public health mandates working on behalf of all six island towns and Nantucket.

49 Squibnocket Farm Road (35-1.28) Cody Coutinho came to the Board to ask for a hearing for a proposed septic system upgrade in Squibnocket. The upgrade will replace an existing Recirculating Sand Filter with a Nitroex system. The property is highly restricted by wetlands, and, as it juts out into Squibnocket Pond, is in a sensitive area requiring strong environmental protection. There are no variances greater than those approved for the previous system. The Board set the hearing date for its regularly scheduled meeting on March 2, 2022 at 5:30pm to review the proposed septic upgrade.

Ameen, 458 North Road (26-55) The Board noted that its requested inspection of the condition of the existing leach field has not yet been done. Cody assured the Board that it can be done before the next meeting. The Board decided that, in light of a full agenda on March 2nd, if the existing system is in good shape, this agenda item can be taken up on March 2nd, otherwise, it is preferable to hear it at the March 16th meeting.

Dengler, 12 South Road (6-5) Marina Lent presented a well permit application for a replacement well prepared by Doug Cooper. The well location requires only one variance to BOH Regulations, in that it is 20' instead of 30' from the property line. The Board **approved** the application, pending receipt of a letter from the affected abutter indicating awareness of the proposed variance.

Chilmark School Library Program The Board had asked for a discussion regarding the question of when and how to resume the Library school program inside the Library building. Chilmark Library Director Ebba Hierta noted that she had sent correspondence to Chilmark School Superintendent Susan Stevens stating that, if cases continue to decline after the extreme rates of COVID transmission experienced in January, she would like to discuss reopening the program and how to accomplish this in as safe a manner as possible. Unfortunately, that discussion has yet to take place. The Board noted that the matter is to be resolved between the school and the library.

Chilmark Indoor Mask Mandate: The Board discussed the existing town indoor mask mandate which has been in effect since the outset of the pandemic, March 2020. In light of recent signs of recovery from the intensive surge in case numbers due to the omicron variant, it is important to revisit the need for the order, balancing risks and benefits of strict, across-the-board requirements. While individual businesses, events and establishments are encouraged to assess risk levels of their clients and participants and create their own requirements as appropriate, the Board will consider at what point, and how, town-wide mitigations are to be discontinued, and under what circumstances they may need to be re-established. The Board also noted that, with the lifting of the school mask mandate at the State level, island schools are looking to Boards of Health to re-evaluate their town-wide mask mandates so as to be in a position to choose whether, when and how it is appropriate for island schools to follow suit. The Board noted that island-wide coordination among towns throughout the pandemic has been essential to creating an orderly, logical mitigation strategy, and that, although decisions are taken at the town level, it is very important to maintain clear and strong coordination among towns for the island as a whole. The Board supported holding an all-Island Board of Health meeting as soon as possible to facilitate a review of indoor mask mandates on Martha's Vineyard.

Chilmark School, 8 State Road (30-95) The Board noted that septic system repair work had been undertaken at the Chilmark School without notification of the department or an approved permit, following a backup in the system into the school toilets on January 13, 2022. The repair work, which had been left open for inspection, was visually inspected by Board members Matt Poole and Katie Carroll. A subsequent inspection by Doug Cooper confirmed that the repairs could be expected to carry the system through the remainder of the school year. The Board welcomed recommendations made by Doug Cooper for a more thorough review of the system over the summer, and asked Marina Lent to write a letter to pumper Troy Maciel, regarding unpermitted work to ensure that a proper permit and description of work completed is furnished to the Board.

Marina Vacation The Board approved vacation time for Marina Lent from 22-25 February next week; she intends to spend a half-day total 10am to 11:30am Weds, and 4:30pm to 6pm Thursday, when rapid tests are available for distribution at Town Hall.