

Manchester Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

Town Hall, Room #7

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By Zoom

Members present:

Paula Filias, Peter Colarusso, Joan Cottler, Dr. Martin Hahn, Dr. Tonya Colpitts

Ms. Colpitts left the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Members absent:

None

Board member resignation

Ms. Filias noted that Dr. Colpitts had given her resignation from the Board.

Members thanked Dr. Colpitts for her service to the Town.

Dr. Colpitts thanked the Board for their work and clarified that this would be her last meeting.

CEMP

Ms. Filias stated that Police Chief Fitzgerald has asked the Board to review and sign the Town's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan "CEMP". Ms. Hansbury said the plan was complete, but items the Chief said were included were not. The addenda she was looking for are identified in her email to the chief. She said that some of the items were not there, and some were not complete. Further that the plan needed to be completed and signed by various Town departments. She said there were a lot of signatures that she needs. She asked the Board if they wanted to sign the document with the items missing. Ms. Filias asked if the Board could invite Chief Fitzgerald to an upcoming Board meeting to see how he feels about the requests made by Ms. Hansbury.

Mr. Colarusso noted his concern about the blanks. Dr. Hahn said he had sent email comments regarding the plan. His items included supplies and identifying where to get them when needed.

Ms. Hansbury said she was surprised Chief Fitzgerald was looking to wrap up the plan without this information. She said that her experience found that sometimes a signed plan is required for grant funding. Ms. Hansbury suggested inviting the Chief to the first March meeting. Ms. Filias, who felt that the February 26 hearing on the animal regulations may not take a large amount of time, asked that Chief

Fitzgerald be invited to and placed on the agenda for that February 26 meeting. Dr. Hahn said only ten or fifteen minutes would be needed, however if the Chief responded to the questions that meeting may not even be necessary. Ms. Hansbury asked if that meeting could begin at 6:00 p.m., rather than 6:30 p.m. Mr. Colarusso agreed with Dr. Hahn that the Chief may answer the questions ahead of the meeting and as a result only a few minutes of his time would be needed.

Black Earth

Ms. Filias noted that Black Earth would be capping/closing their existing facility on School Street and opening a new facility.

Ms. Hansbury identified the closed landfill at Pine Street. She said that the Board of Health has a high level jurisdictional oversight over the landfill. Further that the Board should be reviewing reporting including for gas leaks. She noted that the D.P.W. then oversees the day-to-day operations at the landfill. She explained that because of a change in what is happening at the site, a permit is needed and the decision here is the operations portion of it being sent out for public comment.

Ms. Filias asked if DEP has approved. Ms. Hansbury said no, that they are allowing public comment.

She felt that they seemed to have considered everything and asked the Board if there is anything not included. Mr. Colarusso noted that the business portion is a Zoning part. Ms. Hansbury said to consider it an operation that the Board has oversight of, asking if it meets health and safety standards.

Mr. Colarusso shared that in the fall, people were asking him what the PFA's are at the site. After asking the DPW, he said he replied that the School Street Black Earth site has PFA's that are under limits.

When he asked about the new Black Earth site, the DPW replied that there are less contaminants in the new site. When he contacted the EPA about the new PFA limit levels coming, they would not comment, but did say to note 2ppm PFO and 4 ppm PFA. Dr. Hahn asked if they gave any treatment advise. Mr. Colarusso said that carbonated charcoal was his understanding, but did not know how that affects Black Earth. Dr. Hahn noted there are many different things put in at this site, materials that could make their way to groundwater. (If you purchase, you have no information)

Mr. Colarusso said that two feet from the landfill the PFA's are 200ppm. He said that the issue can be addressed either by the following: isolation and containment by concrete or by converting the water treatment plant to use activated charcoal. If so, pretreatment doesn't matter for Black Earth.

Dr. Hahn noted that the Black Earth facility has a biofilter in their proposed new facility.

Mr. Colarusso said that Black Earth and the Town are doing everything they can, other than the water treatment plant converting to use activated charcoal, which is tens of thousands of dollars compared to many millions on the Lincoln Street well. He said that no where on in the document does it say the water supply is nearby. He said there is 80 feet from the site to the water source. Ms. Hansbury said the original site assessment would have addressed this. Ms. Filias suggested looking at that original site assessment. Mr. Colarusso said there is recent support to activate round pond #2, mentioning that it may help with future water supply. Dr. Hahn made a motion to send a letter to Mass Dep asking if they

took into consideration the adjacent water supply. Ms. Hansbury noted that if regulations change it is written that they will have to comply including testing and remediation.

Public Health Nurse Report

Nurse Crehan reported the following Covid update

Total cases to date: 907

February cases to date: 1

Current active cases: 1

Manchester % positivity: 4.2%

Essex County % positivity: 8.4%

Vaccination status: 37.7% up to date

(note the up to date now means primary series and bivalent booster)

Nurse Crehan notes that snow birds who have residency in Florida or have their vaccination in Florida will not be part of the immunization numbers.

At 9:00 a.m. DPW Director Chuck Dam joined the meeting by Zoom.

Black Earth

Ms. Filias noted that the Board has been asked to comment on the Black Earth operations. She noted that the operations plan has no information on the water supply and Black Earth. Ms. Hansbury asked if that was in the original site assessment. Mr. Dam replied that there is biannual sampling for the landfill and that testing has shown that the groundwater on the site is going to the Northwest, away from Gravelly Pond. He said he was not here when the landfill was capped so unsure how water vs. capping was handled at the time. He added that the leachate does not enter the groundwater itself, as there is stormwater retention which routes to the Northwest and heavy rain would also go in that direction. He said the original permit has already been given to Black Earth to operate at the capped landfill. Ms. Filias asked if were redundant for the Board to ask questions regarding water runoff not being in this draft decision. Mr. Dam replied that it is o.k. if the Board gives comment, but that he was also available to answer any questions that the Board may have. He noted that the Water Quality Task Force has already looked at the groundwater influence on Gravelly Pond. Ms. Filias, noting there was no need to comment on the landfill, asked members if comments were needed for the Black Earth project.

Mr. Dam said that Town Consultant Engineers CMA had drafted plans for the Town's RFP for the site. He said it is a moot point as the building is on top of the closed landfill. Further, that the landfill itself is much more front of mind. He said the issues were addressed prior to the project. Mr. Colarusso asked if the finished product, when stored on site, would have runoff from it. Mr. Dam replied that the first inch is absorbed and any heavy rain goes to the Northeast, away from Gravelly Pond. Mr. Colarusso,

noting the plans in place, felt that any comment from the Board would be redundant. Mr. Dam noted that there are already permits in place for the project and that the current public comment period is related only to the Black Earth operations. At this time, Dr. Hahn withdrew his motion.

Public Health Nurse Report Continued

Mr. Colarusso asked Nurse Crehan if the vaccinations from CVS and Walgreen are reported to the Town.

Nurse Crehan replied they are reported if they are Massachusetts residents.

Nurse Crehan asked the Board for their support in moving forward with the following:

- one Covid vaccination clinic per month
- a monthly blood pressure clinic
- a diaper and baby wipes drive in April

Mr. Colarusso asked if the Covid boosters could be on demand, Nurse Crehan replied no, as she does not keep vaccine in the office. She did advise that she does provide vaccine for anyone who walks into the clinic without preregistering. Dr. Hahn supported monthly Covid clinics, but asked Nurse Crehan to not stop promoting the vaccine as it is necessary, people are getting over complacent and Covid is not over.

He also supported the blood pressure screening and diaper drive. He asked if the drive includes baby food. Nurse Crehan replied that although discussed, it does not due to handling and expiration dates.

Ms. Cottler asked about including adult diapers in the collection, due to cost and the aging population in Manchester. Nurse Crehan said this collection was specifically for children as April is child abuse prevention month.

Ms. Cottler shared that she wanted to bring up the issue of mental health. She said that members must be aware of recent shootings, postpartum depression, and mental health. She asked what the status of mental health in Manchester. She asked if she could speak to the Manchester Police Department to learn how many of the Manchester Police Department calls are related to mental health. She encouraged the Board to work on compiling information for residents to include places they could go for assistance when having issues like seasonal affective disorder. She suggested a conversation with the Manchester schools related to mental health.

Dr. Hahn said that you can not collect and add up the numbers, as the reporting has overlap – but that the numbers could be compared to numbers from years past.

Ms. Hansbury said that they youth risk behavior survey for 2022 is out and available. Both Ms. Cottler and Nurse Crehan asked for a copy of the survey.

Mr. Colarusso said that a new Massachusetts mental health program was rolling out. Ms. Cottler shared that she was encouraged by a new mental health unit being opened in Massachusetts. Mr. Colarusso suggested the Board publicize available resources. Ms. Hansbury said that that Elder Service has documents that are helpful. Further, that the Town of Essex is interested in engaging Manchester in school health. She suggested that Health Administrator Erin Kirchner may wish a collaboration or meeting to discuss.

She asked members if they were o.k. with the diaper box, member replied yes.

She asked Nurse Crehan if she was doing a wellness clinic, Nurse Crehan replied yes and added that she will amend her scheduling. She said she would also look for mental health information for residents.

Ms. Filias asked the nurse if performing this additional work would put her over her scheduled hours. Nurse Crehan replied no. Mr. Colarusso asked her to please include the Manchester Cricket in advertising the new information, encouraging weekly notices.

Ms. Filias informed Ms. Crehan that regarding the shift to less Covid, that the Board members are her point people, her guidance. Further, asking the nurse to provide them with a schedule, so that they see everything coming up. Ms. Filias said that Ms. Hansbury's needs assessment did not include nursing and public health. As such she asked Nurse Crehan to do her own needs assessment and roll it up to Ms. Hansbury. She suggested a nice annual calendar. Further noting that the Board is evolving, all going through the changes together.

GCACC Finance Officer

Ms. Hansbury referred to information sent to members prior, noting she was not aware that this information was not in their meeting packet. She informed the Board that GCACC, the regional vaccination group, is in need of a new fiscal agent. She said that Ipswich is not going to do it anymore due to a change in staffing. She said that percentage of the vaccine reimbursement funds would go to Manchester if they became the fiscal agent. Further, that becoming the fiscal agent makes no changes to the Town's existing vaccine reimbursement. Dr. Hahn shared that he had issues as expressed in his prior email to Ms. Hansbury. He noted the committed 10% being paid to UMass Medical is crazy, as 4-6% is normal for medical. He asked how much the consultant charges and if the numbers for Ipswich had been looked at. Ms. Hansbury replied that the consultant is paid per hour. Dr. Hahn felt that is could be a terrible deal with vaccination numbers dropping. Ms. Hansbury replied that vaccination decreases would mean less work for the consultant who had been working 10 hours per month and 16 hours during quarterly billing. Ms. Filias interjected stating that the Board had things to iron out before taking on another commitment. She was concerned and overwhelmed by the work. Ms. Hansbury said that the Town Administrator, Town Treasurer and Town Accountant would deal with the matter.

Ms. Filias asked if Ms. Hansbury was asked for Manchester to become the fiscal agent. Ms. Hansbury replied that she was asked because she is friends with the person who was out trying to find a new fiscal agent. Dr. Hahn asked why the Town of Ipswich was stepping back and how much of the general fund money goes to the agent. He stated that it still cost money and felt it may not be feasible. Ms. Hansbury replied that 20% goes to the agent and that when it is not profitable, that is the Town Administrators problem. She noted that Ipswich no longer wants to run clinics as that they have a separate working relationship with a local pharmacy, a new Town Administrator and a new Town Accountant.

Ms. Filias asked Ms. Hansbury again if someone came to her to ask about a new fiscal agent. Ms. Hansbury replied yes. Ms. Colarusso noted the Board is looking to set up a vaccine revolving fund. Dr. Hahn was concerned that any costs, should it go under, may be allocated by the Town Administrator to the Board of Health budget. Ms. Hansbury replied that the Board could push back if that happened.

Ms. Filias, noting that Town Administrator Federspiel had already been sent an email regarding this matter, asked Ms. Hansbury if he had replied. Ms. Hansbury stated no. Dr. Hahn said that if it all works, the Town will get money, adding that he did not think the budget was a concern. Mr. Colarusso said if expense is involved it could become difficult. Further, that if it becomes an expense, the Board of Health has no responsibility for profit or loss.

Ms. Filias instructed Ms. Hansbury to include information in her emails to the Board, even if the emails are just fyi. She asked that the Board be informed if action is needed or not needed. She asked that Ms. Hansbury continue to bring information to the Board's attention, noting the volume is overwhelming but the Board will get used to it.

Health Director Administrative Update

- food inspections ongoing in a timely way
- Brookwood camp for students will be running
- Couple of housing issues
- Coalition 3D Deliverable – Tabletop Exercise coming up in Haverhill

Ms. Hansbury explained deliverables, call down drills and tabletop exercises to the Board members.

Ms. Hansbury was asked to add outside deliverables to her needs assessment.

In response to Ms. Filias question on various emergency plans (Town, BOH, Coalition) Ms. Hansbury replied that coordinating a discussion was her idea, then corrected herself to say that it was the Town's idea to coordinate emergency plans locally and then expand to regionally.

Ms. Cottler noted that the Town was lucky to have a full pharmacy in Town.

Ms. Hansbury noted pharmacies may be part of a federal pharmacy program. Then questioned if those pharmacies want to work with local stakeholders.

Ms. Filias said that she saw that Allen's was on Chief Fitzgerald's plan.

Ms. Hansbury asked if Allen's knows that they are on the plan, meant to identify.

Mr. Colarusso asked if flood waters were on the plan.

Ms. Filias asked Ms. Hansbury if the Coalition meetings are on her Wednesday workday.

Ms. Hansbury replied that one is Wednesday 1:30-3:30, others are on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

She said that she was reviewing the Coalition charter, which now states that members must attend 3 out of every 4 meetings. She said she would be asking for a change to 4 out of 5. She noted that it is cumbersome for our department to show up once a month to these meetings. Mr. Colarusso noted that office coverage is wanted.

Ms. Hansbury stated that Sweeney Park was going to open their concession.

Members discussed the status of the complaint regarding the pickleball courts at Sweeney Park.

Ms. Hansbury was asked to get an update from Parks and Recreation on the pickleball courts.

Ms. Filias asked about the level of septic system work in the office right now. She also advised that when she talked to the Finance Committee, she would be suggesting that the Board work on the existing private well regulations. Ms. Hansbury replied that she would be giving the members an email on same.

Mr. Colarusso shared that there was an issue or question floating around Town related to private well water. Specifically, if the water from private wells can be metered. Ms. Hansbury replied that private well water rights are difficult. She informed the Board that there had been four private well applications in the past two months. Further, that while we all draw from the same groundwater, the State considers well draw to be negligible. Mr. Colarusso stated that the task force would be recommending that all water meters be replaced for free, with the new meters being satellite read, which requires no drive by for readings. He noted that the wells still draw from the water supply source.

Ms. Cottler asked if irrigation wells are different from domestic wells. Ms. Hansbury replied that there is no difference between the two, but differences in depth, some 30 feet some up to 300 feet. She said a well needs assessment would need to be done. Ms. Cottler asked if they were technically different. Mr. Colarusso stated that private wells are important as a rate redo will result in an increase in private wells. Ms. Hansbury said she would put together an email to the Board.

Ms. Filias asked that the Board focus their attention on the existing well regulations.

Ms. Hansbury asked the Board if they wanted her to ask Town Counsel if possible to put a moratorium on well installations. Mr. Colarusso felt that was unnecessary. He suggested that the Board work to try and be in concert with the timing of the water task force. Ms. Hansbury suggested a moratorium that would only allow for drinking water wells. Ms. Cottler asked why there is a separate permit for the wells, Ms. Hansbury replied it is the same purpose but identifies different purposes. Dr. Hahn felt a moratorium was a good idea. It was clarified that the discussion was mainly about people who are already on Town water, but may install a well for watering.

Minutes

Ms. Filias made a motion to approve the minutes of January 26, 2023 as presented.

Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members, by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Ms. Filias, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

At 10:15 a.m. Ms. Filias made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members, by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Ms. Filias, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

As submitted,

Ellen D. Lufkin

Administrative Assistant