

Town of Topsfield Board of Health
Meeting of Thursday, February 28, 2013 ~ 7:30 pm
Town Hall, 8 West Common

Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Topsfield Board of Health, Thursday, February 28, 2013 at 7:30 pm in the Conference Room.

With a quorum present, in the absence of the Chair, Dr Guerra called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm

Board of Health Members present: Wade Goldman, P.E.; Vincent Guerra MD; Gerald Topping, P.E.

Not present: Chair William Hunt, Esq.; Vice Chair Sheryl Knutsen, RN

Also present: John Coulon, Health Agent; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary; Selectman Richard Gandt, Liaison to the Board of Health

Abbreviations

BOH Board of Health

RS Registered Sanitarian

PE Professional Engineer

Public Information

Agenda

In the absence of the Chair, Dr Guerra was unanimously voted to Chair the meeting.

I. APPOINTMENTS

- **VOTE:** George Annis: owner, Lot 9, 22 Hickory Lane: request to extend percolation test data validity
This appointment was canceled per Mr. Annis.

- **VOTE:** Charles Johnson, P.E., C G Johnson Engineering: 116 Perkins Row Local Upgrade Request to reduce distance from leach area to foundation from 20' to 15'

Present: Charles Johnson, P.E.

Mr. Johnson reviewed four draft septic plans for 116 Perkins Row.

This is a repair of a septic system for 5 bedroom home.

Mr. Johnson reviewed his system description, estimated cost and necessary variances with the Board as outlined in his letter dated Feb. 26, 2013. This letter is on file with the BOH Office

Re On-Site Wastewater Treatment and Dispersal System Upgrade Property 116 Perkins Row

The homeowners have decided on Waterloo Biofilter Treatment Unit with a 2000-gallon septic tank. This system requires annual maintenance. It has a bottomless sand filter that is set 5 feet above estimated seasonal high groundwater. The retaining wall is a half-inch plywood box that is lined with 6-inch high interlocking concrete blocks. The treated effluent will be into the ground water before it goes to the foundation. This is a full basement; the house is on the highest point of property.

VOTE: Mr. Topping moved to grant approval for Variance Request for 116 Perkins Street, to reduce the setback from 20 feet to 15 feet between the absorption system and the foundation wall, subject to the engineer submitting a approvable design plan to the Health Agent. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

- **VOTE:** Gordon Rogerson, R.S., request to extend percolation test data validity for 97 Ipswich Road

Present: Gordon Rogerson, R.S.

The agent confirmed there are no changes to the site. The original test data was done on July 2003.

There is a plan before Conservation Commission.

VOTE: Mr. Topping moved to extend the percolation test data validity for 97 Ipswich Road to July 17, 2015. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Rogerson questioned if the amendments made to the Regulations have been enacted. Mr. Coulon will confirm the status of the filing with the Town Clerk.

There was a side discussion to simplify the process of extending the perc data validity by delegating the Health Agent to confirm the data and bring the request to the Board of Health with a recommendation, and that the engineer/ homeowner would not need to be present. This will be on a future agenda for discussion.

II. **HEALTH AGENT'S REPORT**

- Recap of Advanced Public Information Officer Training in Alabama

The course was sponsored by FEMA, at no cost to the town. Mr. Coulon attended four days of instructional classes on how to hold an informative, professional public press conference with the Media.

This was Mr. Coulon's second training session with FEMA. He stated the training was very useful and talked about other training available to him during the next year.

- Mr. Coulon will be taking a soil evaluation course.

- Update Emergency Preparedness and TRMRC

Mr. Coulon will attend the National Seasonal Leadership and Training in June in Washington, DC at no cost to the town. The application period for TRMRC Coordinator closed today.

- Monthly Case Review

Regarding the design plan for the replacement of a system on Lockwood Lane, Mr. Coulon shared photographs from the Conservation Coordinator of rainwater overlapping the site of the next leach field that potentially will compromise the effective operation of the leach field. The Designer has been notified and responded that because it is not a permanent body of water and it is a rain event in the middle of winter with frozen soils, this will not pose a problem. The Board Members concurred.

Mr. Coulon was selected by the Fellows of the Local Public Health Institute for his demonstrated mastery of public health practice concepts, commitment to professional development, and willingness to act as stewards for public health practice in Massachusetts. Fellows were also chosen because of their immense commitment and dedication to their own professional development as well as to the public health mission. The Fellows induction ceremony is April 30, 2013.

Mr. Coulon asked the Board to review a Memo to the Town Administrator, requesting the Board of Selectmen consider the appointment of Sue Winslow as an Alternate Health Agent for Topsfield for the purpose of doing limited inspections in town and to represent the TBOH on limited occasions in the Health Agent's absence e.g. Topsfield Triad, and Tri Town Coalition. He went on to say that Ms. Winslow has taken specific inspection courses and grant money is available for additional training. The Board expressed their support of this appointment, recognizing her knowledge and demonstrated ability to take on a variety of responsibilities.

III. **NEW BUSINESS**

- **VOTE:** November 15, 2012, January 24, 2013 Minutes

*VOTE: Mr. Topping moved to accept the BOH meeting minutes of **November 15, 2012**. The motion was seconded carried unanimously.*

*VOTE: Mr. Goldman moved to accept the BOH meeting minutes of **January 24, 2013**. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.*

- **DISCUSSION:** Medical Marijuana Update

Mr. Coulon reported the Tri-town Coalition made a concerted effort to be sure the electorate was informed before voting on the Medical Marijuana Bill. Now that the voters have approved the Bill, the regulation is being drafted by the Department of Public Health (DPH). Municipalities will have the opportunity to make the state regulation more stringent in a local bylaw. Important questions are being considered and fully vetted.

- **DISCUSSION:** Geosphere: Private Well Database and Water Quality Assessment Study

Mr. Coulon reviewed the last meeting. This discussion was tabled as to include a full complement of the board. He said there are well water regulations in Topsfield and although the Town has these mapped, it is not known if the well owners are testing the water, how the testing is done, or what the report means. This assessment study provides a service in interpretations of well water reports. He cited high levels of sodium in local communities, which can be used as a base line. It was the consensus of those present to wait to discuss this with a full board.

IV. *OLD BUSINESS*

- **DISCUSSION AND VOTE:** Topsfield Regulations R 1.3 Relative to Stormwater Management

Mr. Topping reviewed that the 2012 Annual Town Meeting voted to revise the Topsfield Regulations. The BOH voted to Delete R1.3 citing this was a precursor to the bylaw and is now a redundant regulation within the governing bylaws of the Town.

VOTE: Mr. Topping move, to delete Topsfield Regulation R 1.3 - Stormwater Management. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

- **DISCUSSION:** Town Meeting Warrant Article Regarding Board of Health
Revolving Account

Mr. Coulon reported that he attended the Finance Committee Budget meeting and inquired making an amendment to the budget to include a revolving account citing the deficiency of services directly related to limitation of funds. He informed the Committee that 21% of Topsfield's population is considered elderly and vaccinations are a priority.

The Committee confirmed that amendments could be made. They are first submitted to the Selectmen. If approved, the amendment is brought before the Committee for consideration.

Mr. Coulon said that he did not pursue this course of action, pending support from the Board.

The Board took no action and the discussion was deferred for a full board.

V. *FINANCIALS*

- Review and **SIGN** Bill Warrant

The Board signed the Bill warrants.

VI. *COMMUNICATIONS*

Town Cable Committee - Mr. Coulon said that he had a lively discussion with the Cable Committee and conveyed the Board's unanimous consensus that the BOH and employees are responsible for the content of the web site and the Cable Committee for the design. One committee member will get in touch with the Health Agent to assist with the web site. Mr. Coulon will solicit her assistance to upgrade the BOH secretary's computer if necessary.

Mr. Gandt stressed the Town's policy that only allows links to other web sites, not embedding information linked to outside web sites.

VOTE: Mr. Topping moved to adjourn at 9:45 pm and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley