

**BOARD OF HEALTH  
Topsfield Town Hall  
MINUTES  
8 West Common Street, Topsfield, MA 01983  
\*\*\*VIDEO/TELE CONFERENCE\*\*\***

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, April 20, 2022
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**ATTENDANCE:**

<b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>	
Sheryl Knutsen RN Chair	Yes
Mark Rizza	Yes
William Hunt Esq.	Yes – joined meeting at 6:53 pm
Ellen Eaton RN	Yes
Amy Lischko MSPH, DSc	No

<b>STAFF MEMBERS</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>
Health Director Wendy Hansbury	Yes
Susan Winslow, Minutes Secretary	Yes

<b>VISITORS PRESENT:</b> Boxford/Topsfield Cable Television, Topsfield Finance Committee Member David Larson
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**OPENING**

The meeting of the Topsfield Board of Health was called to order at 6:31 pm on April 20, 2022 by Chair Sheryl Knutsen.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Sheryl Knutsen made the following announcements:

*Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting/public hearing will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to access the meeting may do so in the following manner: Zoom Meeting – see connection information below to join the meeting by Zoom videoconference or calling in by phone. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Topsfield Town Website, at <https://www.topsfield-ma.gov/>. You may also reach out to the Topsfield Board of Health at [health@topsfield-ma.gov](mailto:health@topsfield-ma.gov) or 978-887-1520 for information/assistance. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, and public participation in any public hearing conducted during this meeting shall be by remote means only.*

- The Recording Secretary is taking Meeting Minutes of this meeting and it is being recorded by ZOOM and Topsfield/Boxford Cable Television. No others wished to record the meeting.
- At the conclusion of the Meeting, the Board will enter into Executive Session and will not return to Open Session. The Board will adjourn the meeting in Executive Session.

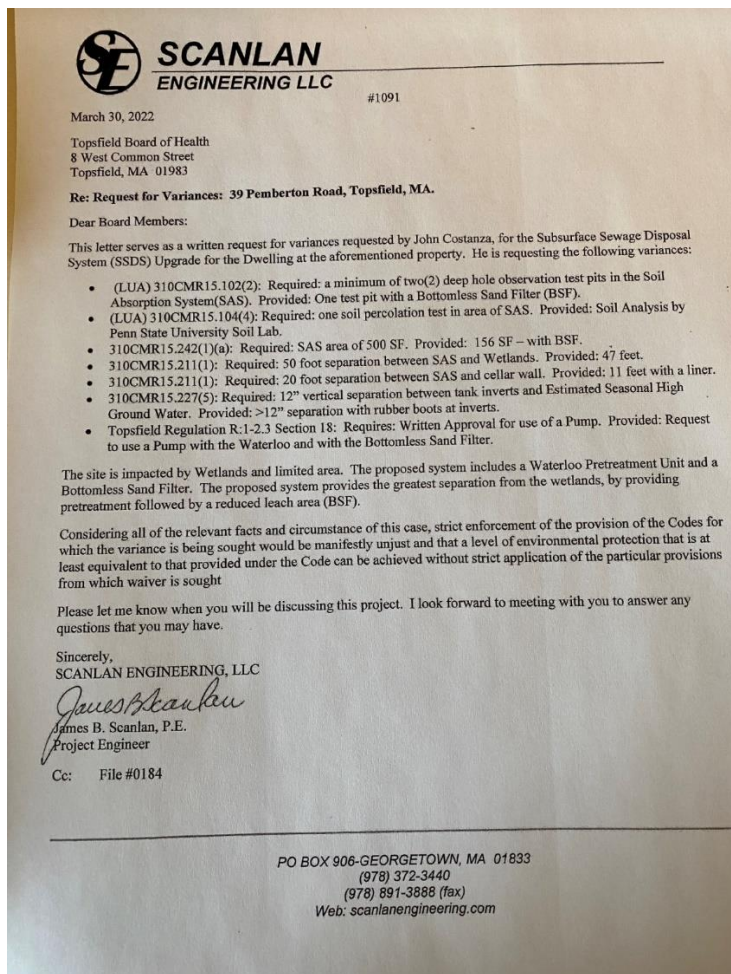
## MOMENT OF SILENCE

Chair Knutsen led the Board and Visitors in a moment of silence.

## APPOINTMENTS

### 39 Pemberton Road – Multiple Variance Requests

Health Director Wendy Hansbury explained to Board Members that, while she has been granted the authority to review and grant each of the individual variance requests listed on the letter submitted by James Scanlan PE dated March 30, 2022, representing homeowner John Costanza, due to the fact that there are seven (7) Variance Requests for this property, Ms. Hansbury wanted the Board Members to have the opportunity to review the requests. Ms. Hansbury pointed out that the final variance request in the list: Topsfield Regulation R:1-2.3 Section 18 is no longer required due to the March 16, 2022 change in the Topsfield Septic Regulations. Board Members reviewed the variance requests as outlined in the following letter:



Mr. Scanlan gave the Board a description of the property which is bordered by wetlands related to Cleveland Brook at the rear and side of the home. Due to the limitations on the property related to wetlands and a small front yard, Mr. Scanlan designed a tank pump vault to a Waterloo Biofilter and a Bottomless Sand Filter. In response to questions from Board Members, Mr. Scanlan explained the following:

- The plan is design to utilize the limited area on the property to repair the system while trying to stay as far from wetlands as possible.
- As additional protection from any potential leakage from the septic tank toward the house, a liner will be situated below grade halfway between the tank and the foundation and will run the length of the house and around the corner.
- Rubber boots will be used as additional protection from leakage.
- The Waterloo Biofilter requires a maintenance and service contract. A copy of this contract is kept at the Board of Health in the property file. Inspection Reports are also received by the Board of Health and archived in the property file..
- The Health Director informed the Board that the Board of Health is required to be notified by the company if a homeowner cancels a Maintenance and Service Contract. Further, if an inspection report indicates any anomaly, the Board of Health issues and letter and, if required, additional follow-up to ensure compliance.
- The Certificate of Compliance for the system repair will not be issued before the Board of Health receives a copy of the Maintenance and Service Contract.
- Waterloo Biofilter systems are recorded with the property documents at the Essex County Registry of Deeds.

Mr. Rizza suggested that the Board of Health develop a tickler file to monitor properties with this type of system to ensure that homeowners are not allowed to discontinue a Maintenance and Service contract.

VOTE: Mr. Rizza made a motion to approve the variance requests for 39 Pemberton Road in the letter from James Scanlan PE dated March 30, 2022. Seconded by Ms. Eaton. After determining that there was no further discussion, Chair Knutsen called for a roll-call vote:

Knutsen – yes

Rizza – yes

Hunt – abstain

Eaton – yes

The motion passed in a vote of 3-0-1.

## MEETING MINUTES

March 16, 2022

Chair Knutsen asked the Board Members if there were any corrections/comments/questions regarding the Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2022. There were none.

VOTE: Mr. Rizza made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2022 as written. Seconded by Mr. Hunt. After determining that there was no further discussion, Chair Knutsen called for a roll-call vote.

Knutsen – yes

Rizza –yes

Hunt - yes

*Eaton – yes*

*The motion was approved in a vote of 4-0.*

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Director Hansbury reported the following:

- Due to new variants, the COVID numbers are trending upward. In the two weeks ending April 9, 2022, there were 14 cases of COVID in Topsfield with a 3.15% positivity rate.
- MWRA Wastewater testing also indicates an upward trend in COVID findings.
- Because many positive cases indicated through home testing are not reported, the numbers may be higher.
- Currently, there are 500 people in Massachusetts hospitalized for COVID and 500 people are dying each day in the United States from the virus, so COVID is still a public health concern.
- Topsfield has a high vaccination rate: 93% have been vaccinated for COVID; 58% are up to date with at least one Booster.
- The fourth vaccine is now available at GCAC vaccine clinics: Topsfield will be hosting vaccine clinics on April 21, April 28 and May 19, 2022 at Town Hall. Tri-Town Public Health Nurse Julia Lobel will also be going to homebound residents following the clinic on April 28, 2022 to give fourth vaccinations.
- Registration for the vaccine clinics is available online and the Council on Aging has graciously offered to help Senior Citizens who are not computer literate.
- The Board of Health continues to urge mask wearing, especially in areas where there is poor ventilation or crowds are present.
- Health Director Hansbury expressed thanks to Sheryl Knutsen, Mark Rizza and Ellen Eaton for their generous assistance with the Vaccine Clinics.
- There is an influx of cases of Influenza A, stomach bugs and colds due to the end of mask mandates.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Financial Update**

- The Board of Health received \$3,292.00 in revenue since the March 16, 2022 meeting. Ms. Hansbury reminded Board Members that revenue received at the Board of Health goes directly into the Town's General Fund.
- The Board reviewed bills paid since the March 16, 2022 meeting.
- Mark Carleo has been hired as the Tri-Town Inspector, funded by the Public Health Excellence Grant. Mr. Carleo will be conducting food inspections at local venues as well as for temporary food permits issued.
- Topsfield has received funds as part of an Opioid Settlement. It is hoped that some of these funds may be used by Tri-Town Public Health Nurse Julia Lobel to conduct programming for teenagers and families.

### **ARPA Funds**

Topsfield has received \$1.9 million in Federal ARPA (American Rescue Plan) Funds. This is most likely a one-time distribution of funds, primarily focused on Public Health and recovery from the COVID pandemic. An ARPA Committee has been instituted including Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian, Town Accountant Catherine Gabriel, Purchasing Director Donna Rich, Topsfield Fire Chief Jenifer Collins Brown and Finance Committee Member David Larson. The function of this Committee is to identify eligible projects and determine the process of reporting on the chosen projects, focusing primarily on large projects such as capital projects to minimize

reporting requirements. Town employees, excluding schools, were given payments for extra effort during the COVID pandemic from ARPA funds.

Ms. Knutsen raised concerns that, as the signatory for the Board of Health, she was asked to sign off on two purchases using ARPA Funds for the Topsfield Fire Department. Ms. Hansbury explained that the items were related to public health. Ms. Hansbury requested that a Board of Health Member join the ARPA Committee to help oversee the disbursement of funds. Ms. Knutsen and Mr. Rizza will both make an effort to attend future ARPA Committee Meetings.

Finance Committee and ARPA Committee member David Larson gave the Board more in-depth information on the formation of the ARPA Committee, the decision to earmark \$100,000 for Public Health initiatives and the plan to use ARPA funds for capital expenditures in order to allow the Town to offset capital purchases/reduce debt and increase free cash and the stabilization fund. Mr. Larson informed the Board that the government has changed the parameters of the grant a few times, and the Committee looks to Town Accountant Catherine Gabriel for direction, as she has extensive knowledge about these funds. The Committee has established a 'wish list' and expenditures will be chosen after determining which projects are eligible under ARPA guidelines.

Ms. Knutsen and Mr. Rizza will make an effort to attend the upcoming ARPA Committee meetings. Ms. Hansbury will send links with information regarding ARPA eligibility including the Summary Report and Reporting Requirements documents to Ms. Knutsen and Mr. Rizza.

In answer to questions from Ms. Eaton, Mr. Larson indicated

- Eligible items must be earmarked by 2024 to be covered by ARPA funds and all expenditures must be completed by 2026.
- The Board of Health may ask the ARPA Committee for additional funds beyond the \$100,000 that was earmarked because that amount was an arbitrary figure determined by the ARPA Committee.

### FY23 Meeting Dates

The Board agreed to accept the following Meeting Dates for FY23:

July 20, 2022	January 18, 2023
August 17, 2022	February 15, 2023
September 21, 2022	March 15, 2023
October 19, 2022	April 19, 2023
November 16, 2022	May 17, 2023
December 21, 2022	June 21, 2023

### **HEALTH AGENT REPORT**

Health Director Hansbury reported the following:

- COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics will be held at Topsfield Town Hall April 21, 28 and May 19, 2022. Homebound residents will also receive vaccinations on those days.
- Inspector Mark Carleo will be conducting food inspections as part of the shared services with Boxford and Middleton through the Public Health Excellence grant.
- Thank you to Ellen Eaton who volunteered to hand out eggs at the Board of Health Office during the Spring Egg Hunt for children.

- Meetings re ARPA Funds.
- Meetings with 3A Coalition.
- Meetings with GCAC.
- Public Safety Committee Meetings.
- Department Head Meetings.
- Kevin Harutunian and Mark Carleo attended Soil Testing.
- Building Inspector Retiring Again at end of April – new Inspector has been hired to start in early May.
- Developed online payment system for Compost tickets and passes.
- Senior Tax Work-Off and 'Able' projects for Senior Citizens are underway in Board of Health office.
- Follow Up on late 2022 Permit and License Renewals.
- Building Permit Prerequisite Reviews.
- Responding to resident questions, concerns.
- Updating Website with current information re: COVID vaccine info, testing sites, vaccine availability.
- Soil Testing & New Construction Septic Installations well underway.
- New social media/website director Stephanie Bilotti has started, but BOH will maintain ownership of web pages, news items related to BOH issues.

## CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence for this meeting.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Knutsen read the following notice,

"The Board will meet in Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30 A, § 21 to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. The Board will adjourn the meeting in Executive Session and will not return to Open Session."

*VOTE: Mr. Hunt made a motion to enter into Executive Session and to adjourn the meeting at the end of Executive Session. Seconded by Ms. Eaton. After determining that there was no further discussion, Chair Knutsen called for a roll-call vote:*

*Knutsen – yes*

*Rizza – yes*

*Hunt - yes*

*Eaton – yes*

*The motion carried in a vote of 4-0 and the Board entered into Executive Session at 8:12 pm, with the meeting to adjourn at the close of Executive Session.*

Minutes submitted by Susan Winslow. These Minutes were reviewed and approved at the Board of Health Meeting.

Per the Open Meeting Law, the documents that were either distributed to the Board of Health before the meeting or introduced at the meeting were:

## Minutes April 20, 2022

1. REVISED Agenda April 20, 2022
2. 39 Pemberton Road Septic Design Plans (3 pages)
3. 39 Pemberton Road Variance Request Letter dated March 30, 2022
4. 39 Pemberton Road Soil Logs
5. 39 Pemberton Road Septic Repair Application
6. DRAFT Meeting Minutes – March 16, 2022
7. Revenue Sheet: March 11, 2022 to April 18, 2022
8. Bill Lists Processed: March 11, 2022 to April 18, 2022
9. Proposed Meeting Dates for FY23

*These Minutes were approved at the May 18, 2022 Board of Health Meeting.*

*Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Committee constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Committee as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.*