

TOWN OF HARWICH



BOARD OF HEALTH

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**TOWN OF HARWICH BOARD OF HEALTH  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023- 6:30 P.M.  
HARWICH TOWN HALL – DONN B. GRIFFIN ROOM  
MEETING MINUTES**

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairwoman Sharon Pflieger, M.S., Vice Chairwoman Pamela Howell, R.N., Clerk Ronald Dowgiallo, D.M.D., Member Kevin DuPont, R.N. & Member Matt Antoine

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Health Director Carrie Schoener, Executive Assistant Stephanie Johnson, and Senior Health Agent Meredith Ballinger

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Richard Waystack and Michael MacAskill

**ONLINE:** N/A

As required by law, the Town may audio or video record this meeting. Any person intending to either audio or video record this open session is required to inform the Chair.

**REORGANIZAION OF THE BOARD**

Mr. Dowgiallo motioned to keep the structure of the Board as it currently is.

Seconded by Mr. Antoine

Vote 5-0-0

**I CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Pflieger called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was heard.

**III      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Regular Meeting Minutes)**

April 19, 2023, meeting minutes

**Motion:** Mr. Dowgiallo motioned to accept the April 19, 2023, minutes.

**Seconded:** Mr. DuPont

**Vote** 5-0-0

May 18, 2023, meeting minutes

**Motion:** Mr. Dowgiallo motioned to accept the May 18, 2023, meeting minutes.

**Seconded:** Mr. DuPont

**Vote** 3-0-2

June 21, 2023, meeting minutes

**Motion:** Mr. Dowgiallo motioned to accept the June 21, 2023, meeting minutes.

**Seconded:** Mrs. Howell

**Vote** 4-0-1

July 18, 2023, meeting minutes

**Motion:** Mr. Dowgiallo motioned to accept the July 18, 2023, meeting minutes.

**Seconded:** Mrs. Howell

**Vote** 4-0-1

Exhibits:

April 19, 2023, meeting minutes

May 18, 2023, meeting minutes

June 21, 2023, meeting minutes

July 18, 2023, meeting minutes

**IV      OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS- None**

**V        NEW BUSINESS- None**

**VI       REPORT OF THE HEALTH DIRECTOR- Health Director Report for August 2023**

Carrie Schoener presented the Health Director's report as provided in the packet. No actions were taken.

Exhibits: Report of the Health Director

**VII      CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. Schoener provided the following handouts (Exhibit B) to the board regarding potential resources.

Exhibits:

- Executive Office of Health and Human Services- Healey-Driscoll Administration Announces Second Family Welcoming Center to Further Expand Services for Families Experiences Homelessness.
- Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs- Healy-Driscoll Administration Designates Three Western Massachusetts Towns as Green Communities.
- United States Department of Agriculture- Single Family Housing Repair Loans and Grants.

**VIII PERMITS**

<b>FILING DEADLINE 9/6/23 (MEETING 9/19/23)</b>		
<b>ESTABLISHMENT</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>TYPE</b>
<b>FOOD SERVICE</b>		
Andale on Wheels	671 Rt 28	Single Event
Bella Cannoli	100 Oak St	Single Event
Bittersweet Herb Farm	100 Oak St	Single Event
*Bubba's Bistro	6 Cross St	Single Event
*Capeside Kitchen (New Owners)	537 Route 28	Food Service: 91 Seats
Chocolate Cafe	100 Oak St	Single Event
*Coutts Specialty Foods	Shirley, MA	Year-Round Events
Deepwater Dogs	Oak St	Single Event
Dennis Public Market	100 Oak St	Single Event
*Encore Food Truck	Orleans	Year-Round Events
Harwich Cape Verdean Festival	1 Oak St. Harwich	Single Event
Lewis Brothers Homemade Ice Cream	100 Oak St. Harwich	Single Event
Mini Donut Bites/D&L Concessions	100 Oak St	Single Event (X2)
*Moose Mountain Maple	100 Oak St	Single Event
*Muddy Mary's Bloody Mary Mud	100 Oak St	Single Event
*Paige's Polenta Pies LLC	Dennis	Year-Round Events
*Puckerbrush	100 Oak St	Single Event
Pugfest	1 Oak St. Harwich	Single Event
*Wild Game Sausage Man	Oak St	Single Event
The Wine Slushie Guy	100 Oak St. Harwich	Single Event
<b>SEPTIC INSTALLER</b>		
*Chris Cummings/Cedarville Excavation	Plymouth	

**Motion: Mr. Dowgiallo moved to accept all permits as printed.**

**Second: Mr. Antoine seconded the motion.**

**Vote: Approved 5-0-0.**

**IX OTHER**



Mr. Dowgiallo asked if there have been any migrant families that have arrived in the Town. Ms. Schoener stated that typically once the families have arrived then we would be notified. Ms. Schoener has investigated a few locations that could be used if/when migrant families arrive in Harwich to prepare for any services they may need.

**Motion: Chairwoman Pfleger motioned to close the hearing and open the work session.**

**Second: Mrs. Howell seconded the motion.**

**Vote: Approved 5-0-0.**

**X      BOARD OF HEALTH WORK SESSION**

- A. BOARD GUIDELINES FOR SEWER CONNECTION WAIVERS- *Continued Discussion from July 18, 2023***
- B. DISCUSSION WITH CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF ASSESORS**

**Chairwoman Pfleger motioned to continue the board guidelines for sewer connection waivers and open work session for a discussion with Chair of the Board of Assessors.**

Mr. Waystack presented on behalf of the Board of Assessors and provided insight on available programs for eligible residents that could be used to alleviate financial constraints for sewer connection costs. Mr. Waystack provided a brief overview of these applications which are provided by the Department of Revenue and reviewed by the Board of Assessors. These applications entail a review of resident taxpayers' assets as well as their income and other additional information that the Board of Assessors may request. Mr. Waystack proposed to present this case at the Annual Town Meeting to potentially create a local Aquifund to encourage connections to the wastewater program, but that there would need to be a mechanism in place for residents to utilize it. Mr. Waystack provided information based on an individual taxpayer whose gross income with exclusion is \$44,700 and their assets (which do not include their home) amounts to \$66,800.00. With that in mind Mr. Waystack mentioned that residents would qualify for a senior tax credit which would in essence give residents an automatic \$1500 off of their tax bill that can be used towards connection costs.

Mr. Dowgiallo questioned the approximate costs of installing a new septic system versus connecting to municipal sewer. Mr. Waystack stated that one property connection costs including engineering were approximately \$4000. For a new septic including engineering would cost approximately \$15,000 - \$20,000. Mr. Waystack stressed that the burden comes when a resident has installed a septic system in the last two-three years and is now tasked with connecting to sewer. He added that legislation would work but would take some time to pass.

Chairwoman Pfleger questioned if individuals who are requesting an extension due to financial hardships, should they first be redirected to Barnstable County's Aquifund, Cape Cod Housing

Authority, and HUD. Do a pre-screening and if financial, automatically refer to the applicant to other available resources.

Mr. Waystack suggested that for individuals experiencing financial hardships, they be directed to the county's Aquifund as they do offer 0% interest rates. There was further discussion regarding the best policy and process for screening of applicants. The Board of Health felt that defining a hardship was complicated and the Board of Health had no experience to review financial documents. Mr. Waystack said that the review of financial documents should be left to the Board of Assessors. He further suggested that Ms. Schoener meet with the Towns Assessor to create the processes and procedures for the applications.

Mr. MacAskill provided some clarifying numbers provided by the Wastewater Superintendent regarding the number of sewer connections and approximate connection costs. \$7500 - \$12,000 average hookup, \$1000- \$2000 for engineering\* (\*\$1000 more likely depending on the lot size). Some discussion was held over the cost of sewer connection versus septic installations.

Mr. Waystack suggested that for residents who are waiting to connect be granted a six month to one year extension to allow time for the Board of Assessor applications to be reviewed. Mr. Waystack stressed that these programs are not accepted year-round and that there are application deadlines.

Mr. DuPont asked how many sewer extension requests have been submitted. Ms. Schoener responded that the department has been putting off these requests until a policy or guidelines have been set and that there are approximately half a dozen residents who have contacted the department for extensions.

Ms. Schoener started creating a policy for extensions based on a case-by-case basis to be reviewed within the department. Extensions could be granted based on the age of the system; other extension requests could be applied for with a general Board of Health filing application for sewer extensions.

Further discussion and review need to be had by the Board to finalize the sewer connection extension process. A joint meeting with the water/wastewater commission will be needed to approve a blanket extension.

### **C. PROPOSAL TO EXTEND ORDER TO UPGRADE FOR FAILED SEPTIC AND RET TRANSFER**

A discussion was held over the timeframe for real estate transfers who are currently under order to connect to sewer and are transferring their property. The responsibility of a connection date is transferring to the buyer. The Health Department has received pushback from the public that connecting within 45 days after closing is unreasonable in today's world.

Chairwoman Pfleger asked if the buyer should take on the same connection time from the original connection letter. Ms. Schoener supported the statement that with acknowledgement of the waiver, the buyer assumes financial responsibility after the transfer of real estate for connection costs and unforeseen costs if the system beings to pose a public health threat. Therefore, the buyer is to comply with the original sewer connection order in the timeframe set forth in the original connection order.

**XI     ADJOURN**

**Motion: Mr. Dowgiallo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 pm.**

**Second: Mr. DuPont seconded the motion.**

**Vote: Approved 5-0-0.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

***Stephanie Johnson***

**Next meeting is Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.**