

**HAMILTON BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2013**

**Present:** Board of Health members Lindle Willnow, Susan Wilfahrt and Karen Zagorski, Health Agent Leslie Whelan, Public Health Nurse Kim Paskalis and Board of Health Administrative Assistant Nancy Stevens.

**Meeting Opened:** Lindle Willnow called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. at Hamilton Town Hall

**Kim Paskalis – April 12<sup>th</sup> Resignation**

Public Health Nurse Kim Paskalis explained that she needed time off from work so she was resigning as of April 12th. The Board acknowledged the excellent work that Paskalis has done for the Town. She updated the Board on what her work involved in the position for the Health Department including response to threat of mosquitoes carrying disease such as Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus.

Paskalis referred to the flu clinics coordinated by the Health Department in collaboration with Wenham and how all of the vaccine received from the state by the Town was administered. She added that the school nurses were interested in vaccinating staff in house but not school children in school clinics. She noted when there was a spike in reported cases of influenza, school staff was not getting sick but children were ill, especially those in grades 7 and higher. She suggested that in the fall children could be vaccinated but not during school hours. Paskalis summarized the publicity done by the Health Department about WNV and seasonal flu with HW Chronicle and Patch.

In addition, she mentioned community health needs assessment done on Hamilton by Beverly Hospital. Paskalis said the information could be presented to director of Council on Aging and public safety officials.

She referred to Emergency Preparedness work where storm events precipitated contact with volunteers in case there was a need to open a shelter. Also, a meeting was held to conduct a walk through drill relative to setting up a shelter in Town. She added that a volunteer pool identified is drawn from local police and fire civilian academies. On a regional level she said drills are being done to

comply with requirements for grant money eligibility. She described how the Cape Ann Medical Reserve Corps is another resource for volunteers.

Discussion ensued about revolving account and reimbursement for flu clinics, if there was a need for a shingles vaccination clinic but that this would be reserved for residents that don't have access to vaccine in their physician's offices; also that whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine could be available from the state for a clinic. Paskalis noted that Merck that manufactures shingles vaccine does have a reimbursement program that could work with insurer and Town.

Paskalis revisited concept of developing a volunteer leadership shelter team and said that Fire Chief Phil Stevens could assume the coordination role rather than the next public health nurse.

Discussion ensued about the public health nurse job description that Paskalis had provided to the BOH Administrative Assistant Nancy Stevens that could be used to find and hire the next public health nurse. Paskalis said the timing of the job (7 hours a week) worked well for her and that more hours would be required if there was an active tuberculosis case. She added that emergency work would require additional hours (Emergency Preparedness funds could pay for this). The Board thanked Paskalis for her contribution to Hamilton.

Health Agent Leslie Whelan described how she had a meeting tomorrow with Town Manager Michael Lombardo to discuss hiring process to replace Paskalis with a 7-hour a week public health nurse and that there could always be more work in this position. Discussion ensued about job description provided by Paskalis and how Stevens will ask Paskalis to email it to the Health Department for email distribution and review by Board. In addition, Paskalis provided names of candidates that could replace her. Discussion addressed how the recruiting process has to follow normal procedure for posting and advertising position. Whelan noted that Lombardo and Board would agree on the job description and the job would be posted.

### **Update – Title 5 Supplement Regulation “Covers-at-Grade”**

Whelan summarized Board's meeting last month with Chuck Johnson where he described perceived problems with Board regulation about covers at grade from his engineering and customers' perspective. Whelan mentioned a subsequent meeting she had with Johnson where they discussed additional information such as weight of cast iron cover that was identified at 75 pounds per manufacturers'

specifications. She proposed that the definitions of covers in the regulation should change noting that she and Johnson are working on the language.

Discussion ensued about how the septic pumpers have received a revised pump form from Health Department that asks for conditions of covers at grade at resident properties. She added that a more detailed form is now being used to get more information from pumpers on this matter. Whelan said the Health Department is enforcing the part of the regulation related to pumpers and reiterated effort to get more data from pumpers.

She explained that regarding Title 5 reports the Health Department has not sent the form to the septic system inspectors to augment their process. Discussion ensued about how the clarification in regulation such as 90 pounds to 75 pounds cover weight will be an improvement as will incorporation of Johnson's description of covers.

Discussion addressed if light weight covers at grade could be acceptable if there was a mechanism to snap the covers in place if a bolt is not used, if medium weight covers should be the requirement or if safety grate would be required if a light weight cover is used. Whelan noted that prior to the Board's supplemental regulation Title 5 mandates cover at grade if there is an effluent filter or pump.

Discussion ensued about Health Department notifying pumpers that customers should be instructed to use and be sold a safety grate if light weight covers at grade exist. She added that at the time of septic system inspection home owners are informed of requirement to replace light weight covers with cast iron covers. She noted that no homeowners have been forced to do this yet. Discussion ensued about whether or not when a property is transferred that compliance with use of a cast iron cover at grade would be required as part of septic system passing inspection.

Also addressed was when a septic system is repaired would that be another time that cast iron covers would be required for regulation compliance. The Board discussed how as many as 70 septic systems or 2% of household septic systems are repaired or upgraded annually in Town. Whelan described how 95% of the time that there was a cover at grade it was cast iron especially if the system had a pump. The Board noted that a cast iron cover costs approximately \$300 due to cost of cover and rebuilding supportive riser.

Lindle Willnow reiterated his belief that when a property is being sold then compliant covers at grade should be enforced. As well as when repairs to a septic system are being done when property is not for sale then compliant covers should be used.

Discussion ensued about how the Board was not interested in changing the regulation substantially based on Johnson's recommendations. Whelan offered to edit regulation so it is more easily understood and said that she would work with Stevens to get the letters describing the regulation out to septic system inspectors. She added that two septic engineers have expressed their dissatisfaction with the supplemental regulation since it can result in greater expense for homeowners but she did not expect to hear this feedback from many engineers.

Whelan suggested a revision to regulation that describes how to use a medium such as sand or foam or pump vault to prevent anyone from falling into septic system thus making a light weight cover at grade acceptable. Whelan agreed to work related language into the regulation and update the Board.

### **Discussion – Review Mosquito Control Plan**

Whelan updated the Board on Mosquito Control talk she had attended noting that Hamilton needs to update its mosquito plan and specify what Mosquito Control should do for the Town. She suggested that the Mosquito Control could identify other areas where ditch digging could occur in Town to improve drainage (i.e., cleaning out culvert at Howard and Linden Streets at Highland Street that is occurring this year for an additional cost beyond the Mosquito Control's annual fee).

Whelan explained that the presentation included information about risks and benefits of using pesticides. Discussion ensued about how the greatest benefit is for people to personally protect themselves by taking precautions to avoid being bitten versus the risk of spraying pesticides that has the least benefit to prevent individuals from being bitten. Also addressed by Board was impact of standing water relative to mosquito control.

Discussion continued about need for Board to establish its position about spraying pesticide relative to threshold of disease carrying mosquitoes being identified in traps in Hamilton by Mosquito Control. Discussion addressed how

Connect CTY messages to residents should reinforce the importance of personal protection.

The Board discussed the types of larvacide that can be used by Mosquito Control with one that does not harm invertebrates who eat mosquito larva but may need to be applied more frequently and that this biological larvacide was less likely to contaminate water supply.

Whelan noted that chemicals used in the pesticide and larvacide can kill fish that eat mosquito larva. She added that Jack Card from Mosquito Control had expressed his belief in taking action to spray pesticide when disease carrying mosquitoes are identified and his frustration with waiting for Town boards to hold meetings to reach a decision on whether or not to spray. Whelan mentioned that Cape Cod mosquito control does not spray. Discussion ensued about how Pingree School has paid for mosquito control.

Discussion addressed how the DPW could offer an opinion on ditch digging that could occur for mosquito control and that there are 75 culverts in Town and that Mosquito Control would have more specificity especially about standing water. Discussion addressed how Mosquito Control as a state agency is allowed to do ditch digging projects without meeting requirements of Wetlands Protection Act.

Whelan offered to develop proposed changes to the Town's mosquito control plan and bring it to the Board for discussion. Susan Wilfahrt suggested the Board create a policy reflecting its position on spraying and/or larvacide use. She added that the policy should be publicized for public input and should describe the Board's reasoning for its position.

Board agreed that it was interested in Mosquito Control only using the less dangerous of the two larvacides (biological) in Hamilton. Whelan noted that WNV is affected by larvacide while EEE is not.

Whelan explained how state is going to change recommendations on outdoor activity bans that are typically focused on children since the elderly population is more likely to suffer from WNV and die. This could be different for EEE. Discussion ensued about how at times people can be bitten by mosquitoes and exposed to disease carrying viruses with lesser impact than severe illness or death.

In addition, Whelan mentioned that mosquitoes carrying WNV like to bite birds and effectiveness of pesticide and larvacide when these mosquitoes are inclined to be in trees. She described a conversation with a mosquito control official who recommended spraying for WNV when there are wetlands nearby.

Discussion ensued where Board members agreed that spraying would occur when there are unusual circumstances rather than in response to a small number of positive occurrence of disease carrying mosquitoes being identified in Town. Whelan said she would notify the Board of positive results and if the circumstances become severe enough the Board would hold a meeting to decide if it should change its position and revisit spraying.

Discussion ensued about how the Board of Health has authority to make decision about spraying but the importance of carrying out the majority of resident wish in the matter positive or negative towards spraying pesticide. Whelan reiterated the importance of personal protection to avoid mosquito bites. Also noted was that Stevens had put a notice in the local press about how residents can notify the Board of Health that they do not want their properties sprayed.

Discussion addressed use of resident property based propane systems that use carbon dioxide to kill mosquitoes. Willnow suggested the Health Department could provide educational information about mosquito control to the public on a monthly basis such as remove standing water and brush, keep grass short, don't go out during dusk and dawn, wear long clothing and use repellent.

Also mentioned was that mosquitoes are more likely to be disease carrying in July and August. The Board noted that the environment in Hamilton where there is a large percentage of wetlands makes it particularly difficult to control mosquitoes. Discussion addressed whether or not WNV and EEE affects dogs, it is thought not as defined by veterinarian at mosquito talk and that EEE does affect horses or other animals not native to North America.

### **Discussion – Health Agent Hours**

Discussion ensued about how Whelan needs additional hours a week to complete her work for Hamilton and that Town Manager Michael Lombardo wants a memo on the matter. She suggested that her hours be increased from 10 to 12 hours a week which she would be able to do. Whelan will write the memo and Willnow will sign it from the Board.

**Discussion – Spring Information for Residents**

Discussion ensued about how an insert would be included in property tax bill mailing to update residents about mosquitoes, compost trash, covers at grade. However, the bills do not go out until the end of June and the Health Department does not have any budget money to fund the insert. Discussion addressed how information could be provided to the Patch and put on the Town's website. The information included would address maggot control relative to the compost trash such as prevention and treating of barrels. Stevens will investigate putting the audio file from the mosquito talk on the website.

**Nomination – Inspector and Assistant Inspector of Animals Diane Katz and Anne Jackman**

Willnow nominated Diane Katz as Inspector of Animals and Anne Jackman as Assistant Inspector of Animals. Wilfahrt seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

**Review – Board of Health Minutes dated February 27, 2013**

The Board will provide comments on these minutes at its next meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Willnow moved at 8:47 p.m. to adjourn. Zagorski seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous. The Board's next meeting is on Thursday, May 16 at 7 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

cc: Selectmen, Planning Board, Town Clerk, Conservation