

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Board of Health
Minutes of the Meeting
October 4, 2012
CATA Training Room
3 Pond Road
Gloucester, MA 01930

Board members present: Joe Rosa; Fred Cowan, and Robert Harris. Present from the Health Department: Public Health Director: Noreen Burke; Manager of Environmental Health: Max Schenk; Sanitarian: Jason Dustin; Public Health Nurse: Chassea Robinson. Absent: Chairperson: Claudia Schweitzer and Vice-Chairperson: Dr. Richard Sagall.

In the absence of Chairperson Schweitzer, Joe Rosa acted as Chairperson.

PUBLIC ORAL COMMUNICATION

There was no "Public Oral Communication".

The board continued the approval of the Minutes of the September meeting, since there was not a quorum of attendees from the September meeting.

MANAGER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR,
& PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE REPORTS

Presented by Noreen Burke, Max Schenk & Chassea Robinson

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS - *Ms. Burke* thanked board members, Chairperson Schweitzer, Dr. Sagall, and Mr. Harris, for attending the recent City Council meetings.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION- *Ms. Burke* asked board members to review their contact information for accuracy for emergency preparedness purposes.

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETINGS- *Ms. Burke* stated that Chairperson Schweitzer and Mr. Cowan will not be present at the November meeting. She stated that the Tobacco Regulations will be on the agenda for the December meeting.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT MEETING- *Ms. Burke* stated that there will be a Community Health Assessment rollout meeting on Tuesday, October 9, 2012 at 5:30 at the Gloucester House. She invited board members to attend.

COYOTE CONCERNS- *Mr. Schenk* stated that Councilman Whynott was inquiring about the increasing coyote population in Gloucester at the City Council meeting. He stated that the Health Department, the Animal Control Officer, and the Police Department will be meeting to have a preliminary discussion regarding coyotes in Gloucester to present their findings to the City Council.

FLU CLINICS- *Ms. Robinson* stated that they have given out approximately 2000 flu vaccines this season. She stated that there are still clinics to be held at NOAA, Bank Gloucester, Gorton's, and a possible Vote and Vax clinic on November 6, 2012 pending city approval.

HEPATITIS C- *Ms. Robinson* stated that Rapid Hep C testing has begun at the Action Shelter and will continue on most Wednesday mornings at that location. She stated that they have started a Service Learning project (overseen by the Gloucester Public Health Nurse) between Salem State nursing students and the Action Shelter. She stated that a conversation about a more formal Healthcare for the Homeless project is ongoing between the shelter, the Health Department, and Gloucester Family Health Center. She stated that CAB is offering free HIV tests on the first Wednesday of every month as well.

MOSQUITO RELATED ILLNESSES- *Ms. Burke* stated that the Department of Public Health is encouraging local Health Departments to do some community education around best practices to prevent mosquito borne illnesses. She stated that the State is also encouraging Health Departments to talk to the Northeast Mosquito Control. She stated that Gloucester is one of only four other communities in Essex County that is not part of the Northeast Mosquito Control Project. She welcomed Jack Card, Director of the Northeast Mosquito Control.

Jack Card, Director of Northeast Mosquito Control appeared before the board. He stated that towns enter the project voluntarily and can leave at any time. He stated that towns enter the project by a vote of City Council and there is a formula that dictates how much cost is involved to each community. He stated that when new towns join the project they set up a surveillance program with a number of traps to assist in the surveillance. He stated that they look to find where the breeding places are, such as: rock pools, fresh water wetlands, gutters, pools that are not maintained, tires, catch basins, salt marshes, man-made structures, retention and detention basins, and vacant houses. He stated that the first year is really designed to assess and learn about the community.

Mr. Card stated that they do a Best Management Plan for all towns which is specific to each town. He stated that towns can alter the plan at any time. He stated that they give towns information regarding what types of mosquitoes are prevalent in the town and what types of treatment might be best, but it is just a guide and can be changed at any time by the town.

Mr. Card stated that a few years ago mosquitoes were considered a nuisance and EEE was more prevalent on the South Shore and the Northeast didn't have issues with viruses. He stated that two years ago there were only two or three towns that tested positive for West Nile virus and last year there were only three or four towns that did not test positive for the virus. He stated that they also have EEE this year for the first time ever. He stated that the birds are more difficult to test, which are the host to the mosquito viruses. He stated that EEE used to cycle and peak every ten years but now it does not, it comes back every year and they are not sure why. He stated that the viruses are constantly changing and evolving. He stated that they are now finding mosquitoes that did not carry the virus years ago that are now carrying the virus.

Mr. Card discussed the different type of traps that the program uses to test mosquitoes for the virus. He stated that they collect twice a week from the trap locations and all the mosquitoes have to be identified and sorted into pools, then samples are sent to the Department of Public Health for testing. He stated that Fridays are the days they hear from the State if any of the communities have mosquitoes that tested positive. If any of the communities test positive for virus, they contact the local Health Department and discuss a plan of action. He stated that mosquitoes that typically carry West Nile virus don't like natural wetlands, they like to breed in man-made structures, such as gutters. He stated that Gloucester has many salt marshes and the salt marsh mosquito breeds in those marshes. He stated that in an area the size of a pie plate he has collected 3,000 mosquitoes, half of them females. He stated that those mosquitoes bite during the day in full sunlight and can travel up to 20 miles. He stated that years ago the Salt Water Marsh mosquito was the most prevalent in all the traps. He stated that the Salt Water Marsh mosquito is now found in 1% of all the traps. He stated that the salt marshes are an area where Gloucester would want to focus on and monitor.

MOSQUITO RELATED ILLNESSES. CON'T- *Mr. Card* stated that after the first year of monitoring then they will start figuring out what they can do and how they could do it. He stated that some things they could do are: larviciding, treating the catch basins in the street, spraying the salt marches by aerial or by hand, or truck spraying. He stated that they could spray a targeted area or the whole town. He stated that the only way to control the mosquito is by spraying them while they are in the air.

Mr. Card stated that there are communities that do not like pesticides. He stated that all the pesticides they use are licensed in Massachusetts. He stated that they do have sprays that are safe for fish and marine life. He stated that they also spray during a certain time to prevent any hazards to bees.

Mr. Card stated that all the materials they use go through the EPA and the State board. He stated that in some situations, spraying is the only option that they have left. He stated that they have to apply the spray when the mosquitoes are active which is at sunset. He stated that they are not spraying now for nuisance, they are spraying for virus.

Mr. Rosa asked if the fee to join the program is inclusive of all prevention options. *Mr. Card* responded that the fee to enter the program covers everything.

Mr. Cowan asked how they gain access to private property. *Mr. Card* stated that cities set up how private properties are sprayed through the cities management plan.

Mr. Card stated that they have isolated viruses within the Salt Water Marsh mosquito but they do not consider them a vector at this point. He stated that they typically bite birds, but they will bite humans. *Mr. Harris* asked if certain breeds have dominated over other breeds in the past years. *Mr. Card* responded that they have seen different changes in the different types of mosquitoes.

Mr. Schenk asked if they receive many health complaints about spraying. *Mr. Card* responded that there has not been any direct confirmed health issues from spraying. *Mr. Cowan* asked if residents could spray their own properties with the insecticide. *Mr. Card* responded that they do get calls and they advise them as to what materials they can spray themselves. *Mr. Cowan* asked if they spray in other communities with water sheds. *Mr. Card* responded that they do spray in other communities such as Haverhill, where there are water sheds.

Mr. Cowan asked if spraying affects Green Head Flies. *Mr. Card* responded that the spray does not affect Green Heads. *Mr. Cowan* asked if spraying affects clam beds. *Mr. Card* responded that the spray is very specific and only affects black flies and mosquitoes. He stated that .62 ounces of spray is dispersed over one acre of land.

Ms. Robinson asked about the surveillance of the mosquitoes. *Mr. Card* responded that there is no way to get an accurate reading on the mosquitoes that they trap. He stated that some days there are not many mosquitoes in a particular trap and two days later there may be hundreds. He stated that if a trap tests positive for a virus then they can spray the area around the trap.

Ms. Robinson asked if there were any communities that just use the program as a surveillance measure but not for prevention. *Mr. Card* responded that they do have some communities that only use the surveillance portion of the program, but the fee for the program does not change.

Mr. Rosa stated that it is clear that mosquitoes are no longer just a nuisance; they have become a public health threat. He stated that the health threat is not likely to go away and could get worse in the future. He stated that the health issue is clear, he stated that there are two things that they need to consider: one is the assessment piece that the program offers, knowing what is going on with the mosquitoes in Gloucester, assessing them and asking if the community is at risk.

MOSQUITO RELATED ILLNESSES, CON'T- *Mr. Rosa* stated that leaving money issues aside, it would be irresponsible for the board not to try to attain that information. The second concern is more problematic and that is treating the issue and spraying, which is not something they need to establish now. The board agreed with *Mr. Rosa's* statements. *Mr. Card* stated that the management plan is just a guide and can be altered at anytime, so communities can state in the plan that they do not want spraying to occur but then have many traps test positive for virus and alter the management plan as needed.

Mr. Schenk asked when communities need to inquire in order to start a management plan. *Mr. Card* responded that their contract year is July to July but if a community decided to utilize their services they would come in before July to set up traps and start assessing the area. He stated that they will not eliminate all the mosquitoes but they will minimize the risk.

The board thanked *Mr. Card* for attending the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

43 YE OLDE COUNTY ROAD-
Reaney McGilvray, Owner

Map 232, Lot 13
Gateway Consultants, Engineer

Request permission to replace the failed septic system with a holding tank with the following variance:

1. To situate a septic tank within 50 feet of a wetland, 13' provided due to ledge constraints; 310 CMR 15.211

Mr. Dustin stated that *John Judd*, Engineer with Gateway Consultants, had to leave the meeting to attend a Planning meeting. .

Mr. Rosa asked if there was anyone in the audience that would like to speak for or in opposition of the variances requested. There was no one.

Mr. Dustin stated that the Health Department recommends approval of the tight tank for 43 Ye Olde County Road.

MOTION by *Mr. Cowan* that Gloucester Board of Health grant the variance request to install a holding tank for 43 Ye Olde County Road as enumerated on the agenda. **Seconded** by *Mr. Harris*. **CARRIED**.

5 FULLER STREET -
Brendan Lacey, Owner

Map 166, Lot 42
Gateway Consultants, Engineer

Request permission to upgrade the failed septic system with the following variances:

1. To situate a leaching facility where less than 4 feet of natural soil exists (Singular remedial use approval); Credit for pretreatment
2. To provide a 3 foot separation between bottom of leaching facility and seasonal high water table, 5' normally required for <2 minute perc rate; 310 CMR 15.405 (1)(h)
3. To allow a 10 foot separation between leaching field and foundation, where 20 feet is required; 310 CMR 15.405 (1)(b)

John Judd, Engineer with Gateway Consultants, appeared before the board on behalf of the owner. He gave a brief overview of the variances requested.

5 FULLER STREET, CON'T –

Mr. Cowan asked if the impermeable barrier could be extended in the plan to surround the top of the leach field to divert runoff from the driveway. *Mr. Judd* responded that they would extend the barrier.

Mr. Rosa asked if there was anyone in the audience that would like to speak for or in opposition of the variances requested. There was no one.

The board recognized that the agenda listed the address as 5 Fuller Street, however the variance requested is for 5 Fuller Road.

MOTION by Mr. Harris that Gloucester Board of Health grant the request for variances as written for 5 Fuller Road with the addition that the barrier is extended around the top of the leach field. **Seconded** by Mr. Cowan. **CARRIED.**

REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES-

There were no "Reports of Subcommittees".

CONCERNS OF BOARD MEMBERS

NOAA FLU CLINIC- *Mr. Harris* asked what the date was for the NOAA flu vaccine clinic. *Ms. Robinson* responded that the date for the flu clinic is October 11, 2012. *Mr. Harris* stated that he was going to try to attend that clinic to assist the Public Health Nurse.

ROLE OF BOARD OF HEALTH- *Mr. Cowan* stated that he would like a continuing discussion regarding houseboat wastewater. *Mr. Schenk* responded that Jason Dustin, Sanitarian of the Gloucester Health Department and the Shellfish Constable, Dave Sargent have been discussing their concerns regarding wastewater from house boats in the Annisquam River and Jones Creek. He stated that they are looking into creating a regulation to prevent wastewater pollution coming from house boats. He stated that he asked the Shellfish Advisory Commission's permission to have Dave Sargent attend an upcoming Board of Health meeting. He stated that Mr. Sargent will most likely attend a meeting after December.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT WEBSITE- *Mr. Cowan* asked if there could be mosquito information on the Health Department's home page of the City of Gloucester website addressing the mosquito issues in more detail. He stated that the State website mentions that all repellents should include DEET, but Gloucester's website does not mention DEET. He stated that residents that walk their dogs should also be targeted. He stated that the website should be more personalized. *Mr. Schenk* stated that Ms. Robinson, the Health Department, and the DPW have been working together to get signage up in town especially in ball parks and areas where people walk their dogs.

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING- *Mr. Rosa* stated that the next meeting is on November 1, 2012 at 6:15 at the CATA Training Room.

MOTION by Mr. Harris to adjourn.
Seconded by Mr. Cowan. **CARRIED.**
MEETING ADJOURNED – 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobbi Orlando

Accepted by:

Joe Rosa, Board of Health Member