

Shutesbury Board of Health

June 7, 2023, 7 pm

Virtual meeting

Present: Catherine Hilton, chair; Norene Pease, Arleen Read, Garrett Simonsen, board members; Chris Elliott, Mary Lou Conca, town residents; Keren Rhodes, Jewish Community of Amherst; Doc Pruyne, press.

Minutes of May 17 approved.

Meeting schedule: next two meetings will be held on June 28 and July 12.

Report on progress of 56 Wendell Road accepted.

Valley Health Collaborative update:

Norene reported that Relevant software is being purchased by the VHC for use by all health agents. Cat must sign and return the contract.

Norene also said the VHC suggests that opioid settlement funds be pooled and used ultimately to hire someone. The total amount for the first year for the six towns combined is \$87,600. First they hope to enlist the UMass School of Public Health to help identify gaps in existing services in Franklin County. Unless the legislature changes existing procedures, we may need to establish a revolving fund for our share of the funds; this would have to be done at a special town meeting.

Arleen reported that Sarah Fisk will be the public health nurse for Shutesbury and Leverett. There is a problem finding space for her. Norene will attempt to organize a site visit with Sarah and others.

The Board agreed not to take the VHC up on an offer to hold a flu vaccination clinic in Shutesbury in fall 2023, but we might consider it for future years.

Mosquito Control District:

The Board voted unanimously to accept an offer of reduced services in FY24 (monitoring in summer of 2023) in exchange for a 50% reduction in cost (for this one year only). John Briggs is confident that he can manage the reduction in a way that is consistent with public health. Cat will ask the Finance Committee to pay the fee for FY23 (in part by using whatever is left in the BOH line item, about \$1500) before June 30. Payment for FY 22 will require a 9/10 vote on a bill of prior years article at a special town meeting after July 1. Future payments are now a recurring line item in the budget.

Jewish Cemetery:

The Board reviewed the survey submitted by JCA, which shows 100-foot well setbacks and exclusion zones for steep slope. According to Keren Rhodes, the survey results allow for 91 green burial plots in total. Conventional burials will continue, but more widely spaced to avoid the need for vaults to maintain structural integrity. JCA would like to have a document confirming that the Board's requirements have been met; this will be done after they develop and submit a cemetery plan showing the location of burial plots. Eastern abutter Chris Elliott asked many questions about the details and once again expressed concern that the Board of Health's ruling does not follow DEP guidelines for new cemeteries.

Adjourn 8:20