

SPECIAL SESSION  
January 15, 2003

Board of Health Members Present:

Dr. Susan Horowitz, Chairman; Jodi Deuger; Matthew Waterman

Others Present:

Ben Cutone, Debra Butcher

Meeting Called to Order:

Chairman Horowitz called the meeting to order at 12:03pm.

Early Childhood Center at Boutwell School

Chairman Horowitz provided a recap of events and results. She stated that additional carbon monoxide detectors were installed over the weekend and showed no evidence of elevated readings. She said that the odor had dissipated as well. Chairman Horowitz assured the attendees that the school would remain closed until the Board of Health was confident that there was no longer any health risk to the children and staff.

Chairman Horowitz stated that she had spoken to the Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Assessment and was told that 9 ppm over 8 hours for carbon monoxide was the public safety standard from E.P.A. She also stated that the air quality problem in the building appears to be resolved and that there were no mechanical problems. She said that repairs were done by Covino and there were no detectable levels noted.

Health Agent Ben Cutone stated that he had completed his health and safety inspection with Charles Ramsey and all issues previously noted were corrected.

The School District stated that children have been moved to other buildings while the Boutwell School was closed.

The Board informed the audience that the exhausts were extended and the intake units were opened 25%.

Member Jodi Deuger asked whether Night Hawk detectors were installed in all rooms. PTA representative Phyllis Maynard stated that additional detectors were purchased but more were on order.

Chairman Horowitz stated that by Tuesday (January 21, 2003), all rooms should be installed with Night Hawks.

Member Matthew Waterman asked if the State's report had been completed. He was told that it would take approximately 2-3 weeks to provide it.

Chief Joseph Bosselait stated that he spoke with the State and got a verbal over the phone confirming data that was already known. He stated that the VOC report completed by the State would take 2-3 weeks.

Chairman Horowitz stated that the monitors would remain in the school over the weekend. Member Matthew Waterman stated that a monitoring program would be needed beyond the Night Hawk detectors for long range reporting.

Discussion continued regarding elevation levels and the safety of the building for children to return to school. Discussion also involved a possible evacuation plan if needed.

Resident Karen Lofgren asked about air quality and what the school needed to do if the Night Hawks alarmed during the school day. The School District suggested that opening the windows would help provide fresh air into the room.

Chairman Horowitz stated that she spoke with the School Nurse and that she had not received any further complaints. She recommended that further complaints be brought immediately to the nurse's attention.

Fire Chief Bosselait stated that he has been told by the OSHA representative that the School District had received two citations: one for poor ventilation and one to increase air by 20%. He stated that the air was actually increased by 25%.

Resident Kathy Osborne asked if an increase of 25% air flow could be handled by the vents. Member Matthew Waterman stated that licensed professionals did the modifications and would keep monitoring the equipment and flow.

Chairman Horowitz stated that the building rooms would also be balanced. It was suggested to the School Committee that the balancing occur during February school vacation. The School District agreed to contract someone during that time.

Resident Kathy Osborne asked why staff was working while the building was closed. Boutwell School principal Bonnie Dinsmore stated that no one was forced to work in the building. She stated that teachers continued to access the building obtaining school supplies from their classrooms. Member Matthew Waterman recommended that the School District remind staff that the building was closed.

The PTA representatives recognized all public officials who were involved in the process and acknowledged them during the meeting.

The School District discussed developing a school policy for any future situations that might occur and would like the Board of Health's input into it. Dr. Mary Jennings stated that the School District would be establishing a procedure/protocol for building monitoring and would be discussing it with the School Committee.

Member Waterman recommended that Covino remain in the building and invite them to the next Board of Health meeting on January 27, 2003. He stated that the Board should enforce "zero" tolerance on this.

Health Agent Ben Cutone stated that he would be monitoring the building daily and record daily logging results. Fire Chief Bosselait stated that he would monitor volatile compound testing results.

Member Jodi Deuger suggested that a long term monitoring program be established. Dr. Jennings agreed. She stated that short term programs would be established now and long term programs would be implemented.

Karen Lofgren asked if all the reports were public documents. The Board stated that all records were available for the public upon request.

Member Jodi Deuger made a motion to continue discussion on January 27, 2003 at 7:45pm. The motion was approved unanimously.

Member Jodi Deuger made a motion to adjourn at 1:43pm. The motion was approved unanimously.

GROTON BOARD OF HEALTH

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Dr. Susan Horowitz

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Jodi Deuger

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Matthew Waterman

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debra A. Butcher

