



**TOWN OF GROTON
Board of Health
173 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450**

**MEETING MINUTES
March 3, 2014**

Board of Health Members Present:

Jason Weber, Chairman
Robert Fleischer, Member
Susan Horowitz, Member

Others Present:

Ira Grossman, Health Agent
Regina Beausoleil, Interdepartmental Assistant

Meeting Called to Order:

Chairman Weber called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm in the Town Hall.

Raw Milk – Helene Cahen

Ms. Cahene gave a brief history of herself. She stated she is 20 year resident that runs a state-inspected horse stable/camp on the property in which she obtained a special permit to do so in 2011. She also runs a CSA Program with goods produced on her property. She is looking to provide a self-sustainable homestead lifestyle. She stated she had a recent bout with an allergy to pasteurized cow milk, which prompted her to seek raw goats milk for consumption. In doing so, she noticed an increase in demand for raw goats milk which is what brings her before the Board this meeting. She let the Board know that she is familiar with how the state feels about goats milk and the handling raw milk. She would like to make a few quarts here and there available to her CSA customers. She stated she would follow any sanitary procedures for this milk as she would for herself.

Chairman Weber stated he wasn't sure the Board was ready tonight to offer a yes or no answer to Ms. Cahen, but they are prepared to listen with an open mind.

Member Horowitz stated she had no problem with a milking herd, the issue she is having as a member of the Board of Health is the milk being raw. She stated she would like to continue the discussion and get the states input.

Ms. Cahen stated she had submitted a letter of support from the Towns Economic Development Committee.

Member Fleischer stated that he would like more research. Chairman Weber asked if Ms. Cahen was allowed to sell the raw milk, what type of extra labeling, if any, should be mandated? He asked Ms. Cahen that she please provided resources to the Board regarding extra labeling.

Member Horowitz stated she would like to see what will be provided for milking and housing.

Member Horowitz moved to continue the meeting for 2 weeks. Member Fleischer seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Russell Burke from the Economic Development Committee (EDC) stated the consensus of the EDC is the importance of agriculture in town. He would like to recommend the Board be able to have any discussion regarding the topic with an open mind.

George Moore of the Agricultural Committee added that he inspects all the stables in town. He has inspected Helenes Stables since 1988 and would consider her to be somewhat of a model for other stables to follow.

11 Cedar Road – Doug Smith, Soil Systems

Doug Smith of Soil systems was present before the board to discuss an upgrade to a Presby system for a failed Title 5 septic system at 11 Cedar Road. The following variances were requested.

- 1) Regina to add variance
- 2) Regina to add variance
- 3) Regina to add variance

Mr. Smith stated this was a 2K gallon tank to service a 2 bedroom house. The pressure distribution cannot be used due to the Presby system. He stated the house conditionally passed when it was purchased by the Wojtas.

Mr. Grossman reminded everyone that Town water is available. There are already elevated levels of Nitrates. Granting the variance requested is not really protective of the homeowners and public health. Mr. Smith stated the well is upslope about 55 feet. He stated Mr. Wotjas did acquire bids to install town water and they ranged anywhere from 12K to 16K, then the cost of abandoning the well will bring it upwards to 18K. This is a hardship for the homeowners.

Mr. Grossman stated the Title 5 failure was essentially the water quality test and the well offset. If the homeowners connect to Town water they will have essentially solved the problem with the failure.

Member Horowitz stated she would be inclined to continue this until the next meeting so the homeowners can weigh their options. Chairman Weber agreed that easements can be their own headaches.

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Grossman a rough estimate of the cost of abandoning the well. Mr. Grossman answered it depends on the depth but roughly 3k.

Chairman Weber made a motion to continue to April 7th. Member Horowitz seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

87 Skyfields Drive – John & Nancy Bonenfant, Homeowners – Tom Orcutt, Water Superintendent

Mr. Orcutt stated the Bonenfants had met with the Water Commissioners since the last meeting and the Commissioners agreed the cost to tie-in to the municipal water supply was indeed excessive, and would not be economical.

Mr. Grossman told the board that he spoke with the Assessors and the final assessment for the Bonenfants would be around 800K. The state uses a 10% of assessment formula to consider a hardship.

Member Horowitz asked if there were any dangers to the neighbors if the Bonenfants put in their well. Mr. Grossman stated that he wouldn't anticipate anything. No one will know if the well is contaminated until the well is in. There is a 30% chance of Arsenic or Radon if the well is drilled.

Chairman Weber made sure the Bonenfants were aware of the risks they are asking to take. He stated they cannot come back before the board claiming ignorance. The Bonenfants assured Chairman Weber they were aware and also understood they were taking a risk. Chairman Weber also told them if the well showed contamination they would need a whole house system for remediation rather than a point of entry system. The Bonenfants agreed.

Mr. Grossman stated if a variance is granted and the well was contaminated, it shouldn't just be treated. He offered that the property would be required to connect to town water in the event of failure. The owner agreed, as noted by Dr. Horowitz.

Chairman Weber made a motion for the approval to move forward with the drilling of a well provided the owners have proper testing and if not okay the homeowners will then provide plans for remediation.

Chairman Weber then made a motion to amend the previous motion to state: If the well fails now or in the future, it must be connected to Town water. Member Fleischer seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Sewer Connection By-Law – Tom Orcutt, Sewer Commissioner

Mr. Orcutt stated there were 2 different versions of Chp 190 that he had submitted and they feel they are ready to move forward. Chairman Weber stated he had a conversation with Mr. Jim Gmeiner of the Sewer Commission and he seemed to be a very reasonable person. He stated he let Mr. Gmeiner know that the Board had drafted but not sent any letters regarding sewer hookup enforcement. He let him know that commercial properties were priority on the Boards list. Mr. Orcutt stated there were still some holes to fix such as timelines such as in the event of failure and testing requirements. He suggested the Board and/or a representative of the Board get together along with Mr. Grossman, Health Agent get together and discuss these points. Chairman Weber stated he will work with Mr. Grossman and Mr. Gmeiner of the Sewer Commission.

Mosquito Control – Rob Flynn, Park Commissioner

Mr. Flynn was before the Board to ask for the Boards support in identifying key Park lands/fields as priorities for mosquito control. He identified Cutler Field, Cow pond Field Town Field, and Woitowicz field. He asked if the Board had their own prioritized list. Member Horowitz stated that the fields haven't really been on the Boards radar but have no problem spraying. However, she informed Mr. Flynn the item may be pulled out of the budget due to the school crisis.

Member Horowitz made a motion to speak with Central Mass Mosquito Control CMMCP to identify the Park Commission playing fields as priority sites for the upcoming season. Member Fleischer seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Chairman Weber made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00PM. Member Horowitz seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted

Regina Beausoleil
Interdepartmental Assistant