



Town of Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts
BOARD OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 1327
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Patricia Bergeron, Chm
William White
James Butterick

Ade Solarin
Health Agent

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BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

February 21, 2017: Minutes

Members Present: Patricia Bergeron, James Butterick, William White

Others Present: Robert Whritenour, Mark Barbadoro, Tom Zinno

APPOINTMENTS:

10:15: Minute approval for 2/14/17

Member Bergeron declined to approve minutes for 2/14 due to status of meeting as an emergency

10:17 Discuss plans for ongoing office operations and delegation of soil inspections

- **Member Bergeron:** Stated that the purpose of this meeting is to clarify a plan for ongoing operations of the Health Department in light of the resignation of Ade Solarin. It was suggested by Mr. Solarin that the Board contact either Shirley Fauteux, former Health Agent for Oak Bluffs or John Powers, former Health Agent for West Tisbury to see if one of them would be able to assist the department. We need to determine the amount of money that is in the budget and see how much time they would be able to devote to filling in.
- **Robert Whritenour:** Suggested that it be determined how much is left in the salary account. Recommended that once Alexandra Kral, the administrative assistant for the Board, returns on March 6th, Meegan Lancaster is brought on full-time. Ms. Lancaster and Ms. Kral can manage the day-to-day operations of the department with the advice of the board and additional technical assistance as needed while a candidate search is undertaken.
- **Member White:** Inquired about the number of Title V inspections that are in the process of being reviewed by Mr. Solarin as well as how many could be reasonably expected to come into the office in the near future so workload could be determined.
- **Meegan Lancaster:** Stated that there are about ten septic applications that are under current review but it is difficult to say how many will come into the office in the near future because there are many projects in different phases of the permitting process as well as the potential for new submissions.
- **Member Butterick:** Wanted to ensure that the person who is going to be responsible for the Title V inspections will be able to attend the regularly scheduled meetings to assist the Board with reviewing plans from the engineers.



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- **Member Bergeron:** Made a recommendation that the Temporary Health agent commit to a certain number of hours per week instead of calling them up on a task by task basis.
- **Mark Barbadoro:** Suggested looking at the tasks that the current staff can complete and then determine what tasks will require outside assistance. Stated that Matt Poole, Health Agent for Edgartown, would be able to assist Oak Bluffs. Additionally suggested establishing a reciprocity agreement with other towns on the island so that mutual aid could be given when needed.
- **Member Bergeron:** Stated that the Oak Bluffs Board of Health has a memorandum of understanding with the other Health departments on the Island. Stated that the hiring of a new health agent could take some time and that even upon hire, additional time may be required for the new Agent to obtain all of the necessary certifications to do the job independently.
- **Member White:** Stated that Ms. Lancaster is scheduled to take the Soil Evaluation class in the spring and recommended John Powers could help the Board with septic permits in the near future pending confirmation of his availability and sources of funding. Expressed concern with the number of possible applicants, based on past history, as well as the willingness of non-island residents to relocate or commute. It was noted that in the past candidates in the final stages of interviewing did not accept the position due to the costs associated with housing and commuting.
- **Robert Whritenour:** Confirmed that the temporary Health agent could be paid out of the monies that remain in the budget from Mr. Solarin's salary. Mr. Whritenour addressed the difficulty of recruiting for technical jobs in the town. He expressed concern that candidates from the mainland may have the skills that are desired for the position but it is difficult for them to relocate because of the costs of housing and difficulty commuting. He suggested that we explore additional training and professional development for local candidates that have some technical expertise but not all of the required certifications. He suggested that this could lead to more staffing stability going forward and could be a good long-term investment in the town.
- **Member Bergeron:** Agreed with Mr. Whritenour's assertion that growing internal candidates would be beneficial to the town and further suggested that using experienced external consultants to train strong internal candidates would be a good way to proceed since some of the required certifications can be time consuming to procure.
- **Robert Whritenour:** Addressed a suggestion from the Human Resources department that Ms. Kral, the administrative assistant, was being underutilized and that with the addition of more skills she would perhaps be able to have a job reclassification with a higher pay-rate. The Board stated that the issue had never been brought to them directly. The Board recommended that going forward these types of questions be addressed to them.



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- **Member Butterick:** Expressed confidence in the ability of Ms. Lancaster, performing the restaurant inspections, and Mr. Powers performing the septic inspections that the work flow of the department should be able to proceed without difficulty.
- **Tom Zinno:** Raised the question of why the Board did not allow Engineers to perform the inspections on their own projects without Board oversight. The Board replied that the State requires the Board to have oversight over inspections.
- **Mark Barbadoro:** Recommended that inspections continue with Board oversight citing his professional experience with seeing engineered plans through from drawings to completion. He stated that mistakes are not uncommon and that it is in the best interest of the town to have an inspector from the town performing an oversight function.
- **Member White:** Stated that he had personally attended inspections and found that the plans and the installation differed.
- **Tom Zinno:** Reiterated his opinion that the engineers are qualified to perform the installation inspections. He stated that if the installation differed from the initial plan due to unique qualities of the installation site that an as-built plan would suffice for compliance. He suggested that as long as the restaurant inspections were covered it might be easier for the town to allow the Engineers to perform their own compliance.
- **Member White:** Made the assertion that the issue of engineers performing their own compliance check has been brought before the Board on multiple occasions throughout the years. The Board felt strongly that oversight is necessary so that proper compliance is achieved.
- **Member Bergeron:** Confirmed that the restaurant inspections were covered and that the engineers would not be allowed to perform their own percolation tests or other inspections throughout the building process.
- **Meegan Lancaster:** Stated that she is already enrolled in a Soil Evaluation class, which starts in April and will conclude in May.
- **Member Bergeron:** Recommended that Mr. Powers be contacted. She suggested that the Board ask him to perform five hours of work a week to start and then add additional hours as deemed necessary.
- **Robert Whritenour:** Agreed to contact Human Resources in order to confirm the hiring process for Mr. Powers.



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- **Member Butterick:** Raised concerns about the hours being sufficient to cover the time needed to present plans to the board at meetings. Suggested making the position a minimum of five and a maximum of ten hours.
- **Tom Zinno:** Raised concerns about insurance and whether or not Mr. Powers would have to carry his own liability insurance since he would be hired as a contractor.
- **Robert Whritenour:** Confirmed that Mr. Powers would not need to procure his own liability insurance.
- **Member Bergeron:** Stated that she would contact Mr. Powers to confirm his interest in the position.

10:30 Discuss plans for seasonal restaurant inspections

- **Meegan Lancaster:** Stated that Mr. Solarin, the departing Health Agent, has expressed concerns about the number of re-inspections that needed to be performed in the past. Ms. Lancaster inquired as to whether or not regulation 9.2, which pertains to food establishment re-inspection fees, is still valid. Ms. Lancaster was assured by the board that the policy is still in effect.
- **Member Bergeron:** Addressed the issue of re-inspection by stating that there are likely to be a few re-inspections but that multiple visits to most establishments would most likely not be necessary as the establishments were likely to come into compliance prior to a third visit being necessitated.
- **Meegan Lancaster:** Asked for clarification as to who will be signing the Food Establishment permits for the upcoming season. Member White offered to be a signatory. It was suggested that Mr. Powers could be a signatory as well.

10:45 Discuss plans for online certification of food handlers

- The board discussed the possibility of food handlers taking their recertification exams online. The board agreed unanimously that if the current procedures outlined in the policy are followed they are amenable to the idea of recertification being done digitally.

Member White Motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Member Butterick.

*Respectfully submitted by Meegan Lancaster
Temporary Administrative Assistant*