



Town of Oak Bluffs
Board of Health
P.O. Box 1327
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557
508-693-3554 Ext. 127

William White
Chairman
James Butterick
Thomas Zinno
Board Members
Meegan Lancaster
Health Agent

**BOARD OF HEALTH
March 22, 2022 – MINUTES**

Members Present: William White, James Butterick, Thomas Zinno

Others Present: Garrett Albiston, Lorna Welch, Wendy Brough, Emma Green-Beach, Maura McGroarty, Rich Saltzberg

Mr. White called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION:

- **Discussion and possible vote on appointing Health Agent position**

Mr. White stated that they will be discussing the position of Health Agent and potential transition of Mr. Albiston from interim Health Agent to a permanent position. Mr. Albiston stated that he was looking forward to learning more and helping the town in a different way than he has in the past. Mr. Zinno read a set of interview questions to Mr. Albiston and the board heard his responses.

Mr. White expressed his concern of Mr. Albiston taking on the role of health agent and keeping the role of conservation agent and being able to handle all these responsibilities. Ms. Brough stated that they will start recruiting for a conservation administrator which will free up the conservation/health agent to do more of the management. They will also be recruiting for an assistant health agent.

Mr. Albiston stated that he thinks the public health comes first even over environmental stewardship and he feels that these two departments mesh in a lot of ways in terms of nitrogen and groundwater pollution and that having them combined allows us to strengthen our regulations and have a good outcome in terms of protecting the ponds.

Ms. Brough clarified that if Mr. Albiston is appointed the health agent, he also is in a temporary position of conservation agent until there is an official reorganization and vote. So, we have a trial period to see if this combination of department heads will work. If we find that is untenable, we can separate them again. She stated that having the one center department head creates a robust staffing pyramid and we don't lose a department head in one area.

Mr. Zinno agreed that if this can be done properly and efficiently it would be beneficial because they do cross over in many areas. Mr. White expressed his hesitation, and he is willing to see how the trial period goes.

Mr. White asked Selectboard member, Ms. Green-Beach if she had any questions. She stated that she was not there to ask questions but to listen and hear some discussion about the potential arrangement and how Mr. Albiston could handle both roles. She agreed with everything she heard and was just there to observe.

Mr. Salzberg asked if there could be any conflicts in decision making between the two departments. Mr. Albiston responded that he did not believe there to be any conflicts as there are several towns on the Cape that have merged the health and conservation departments and have one agent in both roles.

Mr. Zinno made a motion to appoint Mr. Albiston as the Oak Bluffs Board of Health full-time health agent. All in favor.

Ms. McGroarty asked questions which prompted further discussion regarding enhanced septic systems, nitrogen reduction and the potential regulation regarding PFAS and where it stands today. Mr. Albiston started that it would be on the agenda for a future meeting.

Mr. White congratulated Mr. Albiston and wished him great success and offered any assistance needed to help him make his job better and more efficient. Mr. Butterick and Mr. Zinno also gave their congratulations.

Mr. Butterick made a motion to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Lorna Welch, Administrative Assistant.