



BOARD OF HEALTH Meeting

Town of Nantucket
131 Pleasant Street
Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554

www.nantucket-ma.gov

Commissioners: Stephen Visco (chair), Malcolm MacNab, MD, PHD (Vice chair), James Cooper, Meredith Lepore, Melissa Murphy

Staff: Roberto Santamaria, Kathy LaFavre, John Hedden, Cathy Flynn, Anne Barrett

~~ MINUTES ~~

Thursday, November 18, 2021

This meeting was held via remote participation using ZOOM and YouTube,

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Regarding Open Meeting Law

Called to order at 3:30 pm by Mr. Visco

Staff in attendance: R. Santamaria, Health Director; T. Norton, Town Minutes Taker

Attending Members: Stephen Visco; Malcolm MacNab, MD, PHD; James Cooper; Meredith Lepore

Absent Members: Melissa Murphy, Select Board

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS – ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC MAY ADDRESS COMMISSIONERS AT THIS TIME

1. None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. October 21, 2021

Action **Motion to Approve as drafted.** (made by: Cooper) (seconded)

Roll-call vote Carried 3-0//Cooper, Lepore, and Visco-aye; MacNab abstain

IV. PFAS-CONTAMINATED WELL ABANDONMENT

Sitting Visco, MacNab, Cooper, Lepore

Documentation PFAS Policy

Discussion **Santamaria** – This policy is to start having the discussion. Preamble is from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website setting the PFAS level at 20 nanograms per liter (ng/l) or 20 parts per trillion (ppt). Ms. Murphy emailed him some comments and questions:

1. “Has the Sewer Department reviewed this? I assume we are OK capacity wise, but just want to make sure.”

The Sewer Department hasn’t reviewed this because we are only recommending connection to municipal water. Wannacomet Water Company (WWCo) ‘capacity is being expanded to the contaminated area near the Airport.

2. “What does “accessible” mean? (within so many feet/yards?)”

With septic, we required anything less than 500’; recommends the connection be within 500 feet of the septic.

3. “Should recommendation re: irrigation be stronger language, especially for those close to aquifer or harbor?”

He recommends not using stronger language until we know what the PFAS cycle is. We can alter the policy regarding use of a contaminated well for irrigation.

Ms Lepore must recuse on the vote but can discuss the policy.

Cooper – Asked about PFAS testing for new wells. Asked if all well drivers will have access to information on PFAS-known areas before driving a well.

Santamaria – If a property has access to municipal water, they must connect. If they don't, they must connect to a filter system. We are compiling a map of all wells that have tested positive and will make that available.

MacNab – Questioned enforceability of a policy versus a regulation.

Santamaria – Our permits are at BOH discretion. If we are going to enforce with tickets and going to court, it has to be a regulation. We are just trying to get ahead on this.

Lepore – She thinks people should be required to test more than once. People who didn't test above 20ppt might come up with a higher number on a second test. Also, the plume can move.

Visco – Asked what constitutes mandatory testing.

Santamaria – All testing is voluntary except in areas affected by use of the foam that infected the water. We will be requiring testing prior to driving a new well anywhere on the Island.

MacNab – We had a regulation requiring testing every 2 or 3 years; asked how that relates to PFAS. This feels wishy-washy and is confusing.

Santamaria – PFAS wasn't part of that regulation; it was the standard drinking water test for copper, iron, nitrogen, etc. Right now, we are in fact-finding mode; we would get new information when testing for a new well. PFAS tests can cost between \$500 and \$2,000 depending on the type of test. When we first started testing, only 3 labs in the country did it; now there are more labs, so the cost has gone down some.

Cooper – After all the testing and driving a well, you're looking at over \$12,000 to \$15,000 just to drive a new well.

Lepore – It's a lot of money but it's for the health of your family.

Visco – Feels we need a regulation that if Town water is available, you must hook up to it and wells are allowed only for irrigation.

Matt Peel – He's affected by this; the recommendation on the 4th bullet point is a bite point. He were told he could keep his well for irrigation; now he's being told he has to pay WWCo to water his grass. Asked where the scientific evidence is regarding contaminated wells being too dangerous for irrigation; he's not seeing the studies backing that up.

Santamaria – All those filters become hazardous waste and disposing of that is more expensive than paying the Town to water your lawn. Right now, it's just a recommendation.

MacNab – There has been discussion about a water testing lab on the Island; asked the progress on that and if an on-Island lab could reduce the cost of testing after investment in the machinery.

Santamaria – He will reach out for more information on that. If there are any suggestions for changes on the policy, we can do that now.

Visco – Suggested Bullet-point 1 be a recommendation.

Santamaria – Moved Point 1 down to Point 4 as a recommendation. Only Points 1 & 2 would be internal policy. For now, he recommends keeping it at a single test for new wells.

Lepore – Rain can affect the test results; suggested a 2nd test be 1 month from the 1st test.

Cooper – He doesn't think asking for 2 tests is unreasonable; he just doesn't know how far they should be spaced apart.

Santamaria – Under Point 2, he'll add 2 tests showing less than 20 ng/l at least 1 month apart prior to driving a well.

Cooper – Asked if a filtering system can keep track of the PFAS.

Santamaria – No; the water has to be tested after the pump.

Motion to Approve as written. (made by: Cooper) (seconded)

Carried 3-0//Cooper, MacNab, and Visco-aye

Action

Roll-call vote

VI. BOH BUSINESS

1. He'll post the policy on the website and let the well companies know.

2. Meeting Venue:

Cooper – He wants the next meeting to be live; we can be spaced 6' apart.

Lepore – She prefers the ZOOM meetings at this time.

Visco – He’s good either way.

3. COVID-19 Update:

Santamaria – The bio-concentration has jumped; we’re now at 69% up from 32%. Since we are past the 50% mark, we need to recommend masks again. The mandate, based upon our prior vote, automatically comes back into effect. We now know that mitigation standards work. He just really doesn't want to deal with the violence his staff faces in trying to enforce the mask mandate. He’ll let the Town Manager know.

Visco – Numbers are jumping everywhere else.

VII. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS USED

1. Draft BOH Minutes October 21, 2021

VIII. ADJOURN

Action **Motion to Adjourn at 4:10 pm.** (made by: MacNab) (seconded)

Roll-call vote Carried 4-0//Cooper, MacNab, Lepore, and Visco-aye

Submitted by:

Terry L. Norton