



BOARD OF HEALTH

~ MINUTES ~

Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 2025

Meeting Trailer Room A, 131 Pleasant, Nantucket MA, 02554

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

Called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Staff in attendance: Roque Miramontes, Director of Public Health; John Hedden, Chief Environmental Health Officer; Jerico Mele, Deputy Director of Health and Human Service,

Remote Staff: Tomeka Gary, Public Health Coordinator

Members attending: Ann Smith (chair), Meredith Lepore (Vice-chair) came in at 4:04 pm, Kerry McKenna, James Cooper, Thomas Dixon left at 4:58 pm

Remote Members:

Public Participant: Paul Santos, Don Bracken

I. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announced that this meeting is being audio and video recorded

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Discussion:

III. FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION OF SEPTIC SYSTEM

Discussion:

Current moratorium background and scope

- Moratorium implemented in **June 2025** prevents variances for nitrogen loading credits in two districts where variances are permitted
- Nantucket wellhead protection district and Hummock Pond protection district allow variances, while Nantucket Harbor and Madaket Harbor districts prohibit all variances
- Past year data showed **5** variances granted in Hummock Pond watershed and **9** variances granted in wellhead protection district for nitrogen loading
- The moratorium was needed because variance requests were "a constant thing over and over and over"

Protection district regulatory comparison

- Nantucket Harbor regulations implemented in **2015**, Massachusetts regulations in **2020**
- Hummock Pond area last examined in **2010**, wellhead area last evaluated in **1995**
- Wellhead Protection District serves **60-70%** of Nantucket's population for drinking water
- Approximately **70-80%** of Wellhead Protection District is on town sewer system
- Hummock Pond is eutrophicated with limited flushing, posing health risks for recreation and potential water supply contamination

Proposed regulatory harmonization across districts

- Board consensus to apply identical regulations from Nantucket Harbor and Madaket Harbor districts to the other two districts
- Proposed changes include requiring IA system upgrades when houses are sold, systems fail, or new construction occurs
- Would eliminate extra bedroom credits currently available in Hummock Pond and wellhead districts
- James C stated "if it's the same problem, the same solution" and "I don't see that the threat is a lesser threat for Hummock and the wellhead"

IA system performance standards

- Current standard systems (SeptiTech and MicroFAST) reduce nitrogen from **38 milligrams per liter** to **19 milligrams per liter**
- Best available nitrogen reducing technology targets **10 milligrams per liter** (drinking water standard)
- Two provisional systems achieving **10-11 milligrams per liter** are pending state approval
- NITREX system installed in Madaket shows **90%+ reduction** after one year of operation
- Falmouth and Bourne are requiring **10 milligram per liter** systems for new construction in nitrogen sensitive areas

Minutes – BOH September 10, 2025 Adopted October 16, 2025

	Public hearing process and timeline • Regulation changes require 3 consecutive weeks of newspaper notices before public hearing • Draft regulations must be completed by October 15th and sent to town council for legal review • First newspaper notice scheduled for October 30th, followed by November 6th and November 13th • Public hearing and final vote scheduled for November 20th Board of Health meeting • Paul Santos noted that regulation changes require scientific backing and proper public notice procedures Moratorium extension to 60 days • Board voted unanimously to extend current moratorium by 60 days from September 18th to November 11, 2025 • Extension provides time to complete regulatory drafting, town council review, and required public hearing process • Tom initially suggested allowing public input period before making decisions, but board proceeded with extension • Merdith Lepore emphasized urgency, stating "if we do nothing and just keep kicking the can down the road, we won't have to worry about affordable housing because no one will want to live here"
Action:	Motion to extend a moratorium on septic systems nitrogen loading credits for 60 days (Motion by: Cooper) (Seconded by: Lepore) Carried 4-0// Smith, Lepore, McKenna, Copper (Aye)

IV. ADJOURNMENT	
Action:	Motion to Adjourn at 5:26 pm. (Motion by: Lepore) (Seconded by: McKenna) Carried 4-0// Smith, Lepore, McKenna, Copper (Aye)

Submitted by: Tomeka Gary