

JESSICA COLLINS, Chair  
TONY JUDGE, Vice-Chair  
KAREN WALSH PIO, LICSW, LADC 1, Clerk  
CHRISTINA REMIE, RN  
JOHANNA RAVENHURST, MSPH

SHARON D. HART, Public Health Director

## Board of Health Minutes

March 9, 2021

As Approved – May 11, 2021

Present: Jessica Collins, Chair; Tony Judge, Vice-Chair, Karen Walsh Pio, Clerk; Johanna Ravenhurst, Board of Health Member; Sharon Hart, Public Health Director; Jennifer Jernigan, Assistant Public Health Director, Monasia Ceasar, Health Compliance Specialist; Brian Winner, Esq. Town Counsel; Kip Foley, Closure Management; Mark Kauffman, McLane Environmental LLC.; James Montague, McLane Environmental LLC.; Mike Siddall, Chicopee Concrete Attorney

*The Board of Health Meeting was called to order at 4:37 p.m. by Chair Collins.*

### 1: Acceptance of Minutes:

Chair Collins stated she would accept a motion to approve the minutes for the November 16, 2021 and November 18, 2021 meetings.

Judge made the motion to approve the minutes and Ravenhurst seconded the motion. A roll call was then taken:

Judge: Aye  
Ravenhurst: Aye  
Collins: Aye

Chair Collins accepted a motion to approve the minutes for the February 9, 2021 meeting.

Judge made the motion to approve the minutes and Ravenhurst seconded the motion. A roll call was then taken:

Collins: Aye  
Judge: Aye  
Ravenhurst: Aye

### 2: Announcements and Open Forum:

Johanna Ravenhurst suggested considering adding the topic of tick borne and mosquito borne diseases to the next agenda, as warmer weather is approaching. She was also interested in learning about South Hadley's relationship with the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District.

Sharon Hart mentioned the department's distribution of press releases and informative signs for these diseases as well as the possibility of discussing this matter further at the next meeting.

Tony Judge asked for consideration of adding Eversource as an Agenda item for the next meeting. Eversource is currently planning a project with the intent of applying Ground Up to related areas. Eversource may need to be reminded of the town's regulation prohibiting the application of such substances on town land.

### **3: New Business**

#### **COVID Update:**

Sharon Hart provided the overall numbers of COVID occurrences over the past month. There has been an overall downward trend of occurrences with the case numbers being 69, 43, 30, and 34. These case numbers include confirmed cases, close contacts, probable, and suspect cases. The positivity rates are less than 1% and can be attributed to the testing at Mt. Holyoke. She has also been working the regional clinic (Northampton location) on Saturdays. They are still operating while receiving a limited supply.

Jessica Collins asked if there is any possibility of holding a local COVID vaccine clinic.

Sharon confirmed there are no plans for a local vaccine. A new vaccine site was approved at the Knights of Columbus in Chicopee, MA. This site will service Chicopee, Holyoke, and South Hadley residents.

Johanna Ravenhurst questioned if Big Y is administering vaccines as they are listed as a vaccine site on the town's website.

Sharon Hart confirms Big Y as a site, but also states they receive a very limited supply and can only administer one vaccine at a time. The regional sites at the Amherst and Northampton locations should be the main site for vaccines. The council of aging is compiling a list of those interested in receiving the vaccine. These residents are then contacted and registered for appointments as they become available by the Health Director. Residents who are deemed home bound by the state will also be administered the vaccine through a mobile service.

Johanna Ravenhurst asked if there are any preparations in place for anticipated St. Patrick's day events.

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Sharon Hart discussed that most events are restaurant based and they must submit a plan to the Department to be reviewed by Monasia. The proposed events and performances must meet the current guidelines outlined by the state.

### **Closure Management Regarding Proposed Soil Processing Facility at South Hadley Landfill:**

Kip Foley presented an informational presentation on reopening the South Hadley landfill as a dedicated construction soil facility. The town would receive payment of 5\$ per ton of soil accepted by the facility (with a minimum payment of 1,000,000 dollars). Closure Management would be responsible for all project related costs. The site would receive an average of 11 trucks per day. The site would utilize 10% of the land in the southeastern corner of the landfill. Construction soils are nonhazardous excess soils in project sites that cannot be used onsite. If tested, the soil will show detectable levels of contaminants from human activities.

Tony Judge asked if a future meeting would be possible for further questions.

Karen Walsh Pio asked if it would be possible to hear from other towns who have done projects with Closure Management to receive insight on their experience.

Johanna Ravenhurst asked to receive additional information on the soil and its specifications, as she has concerns about its toxicity and hazardous potential.

Kip Foley agreed to answer all concerns mentioned at a later date.

### **Summary of Supplemental Hydrogeologic Analyses – McLane Environmental LLC**

Brian Winner outlined the connection between the Board of Health's process and the Planning Board's process of review for the current Subdivision project at hand. The Planning Board is set to make a decision on March 26, 2021. That tentative date should not interfere with the Board of Health's review timeline, as they are two separate steps in the process.

Mark Kauffman the Senior Project Manager at McLane Environmental LLC. presented the data and research regarding the potential impact to groundwater quality with the Subdivision project at North Pole Estates. The research focused on the impact of household cleaners, nitrate deposits (from septic systems and lawns), and sodium concentrations (from snow removal practices) on the nearby groundwater source. Hypothetical analyses were created to address the following concerns: increase of diesel fuel, increase of nitrogen loading, release of household cleaners, and impacts associated with

snow removal, and potential effects on aquifer recharge, groundwater flow and capture. After running the hypothetical simulations, the results showed little to no impact on the Dry Brook Well. There was minimum effect on the aquifer recharge and groundwater flow conditions. The contaminant levels were relatively low with the nitrate concentration being approximately 0.04 mg/L and the sodium levels displaying a range of 0.8-6.9 mg/L. There was no toluene and PFAS concentration detected while using the model. Mark also stated that it is very unlikely that benzene could reach the Dry Brook Supply Well. He attributed the unlikeliness to the large volume of free product that would be trapped by sand, dispersion would decrease the concentration, and the well would draw out clean water.

James Montague presented additional analyses that were done to represent changes in the system. The velocity was increased to 472 gpm. With the velocity increase, travel time was decreased, benzene was still the only constituent present, an increase in BTEX, and a decrease concentration of sodium and PFAS.

Jessica Collins began the facilitation of questions from the Board on the hydrogeological study. She explained the Board of Health's approach to reviewing the proposal. The approach is based on protective and risk assessment. She referred to the disapproval letter sent out to the Planning Board that highlighted removing the natural protective layer and increasing the risk of contaminant exposure.

Karen Walsh Pio questioned if any changes were made to removing 470 cubic yards of material, as this would limit the protection level to just 100 ft in some areas. If not, could they attest to the water supply not being put at risk? She also expressed concern about the possibility of uncapped, unseal, and improperly decommissioned wells that could be found on site.

Mark Kauffman reiterated that risks will always exist. It is up to the developers to mitigate a plan to manage the risks as they arise, as well as to address those wells.

Tony Judge asked why would the Board of Health consider introducing benzene (a known carcinogenic) into a water source?

Mr. Kaufman mentioned that fuel spill risks exist without the development and that a car accident fuel could reach the well.

Sharon Hart observed that the contaminants used in the models were aqueous and wondered why a DNAPL was not used. DNAPLs are commonly found in households and are difficult to get out of water. These contaminants could be found in lacquers, cleaning materials, and paint thinners. She felt as though it would be difficult to assess the full scope of hazards associated with the well without having those contaminant levels.

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The consultants said there was limited options for contaminants and that the Planning Board requested certain category of contaminants to be used in the study.

Johanna Ravenhurst highlighted that the study did not include the impact of the unconfirmed wells being present on site acting as a conduit, and the effect it would have contaminant levels. Why was this not considered?

The consultants assumed the wells would be properly sealed and decommissioned prior to moving forward with the project. However one of the studies did include the presence of a conduit with the chemicals seeping directly on the water table.

Jessica Collins introduced her questions on the hydrogeological study and stated they are broken up into two categories: risk and protection. She questioned if the developers were aware of the town's bylaws associated with earth removal, as this poses a threat to the community (and increases the risks of the project). She also highlighted that the model only takes into account 7 homes, when there are plans to put up to 70 units on the site. How would this increase in units impact the results from the model, Does the model reflect long term effects or just a snapshot in time, and what lawn dimensions per unit were used to determine the nitrate analysis?

James Montague expressed that the duration of exposure was dependent upon the model used. The fuel release study was a one-time calculation, while the nitrate, PFAS, and sodium chloride was on continuous release. Mr. Coughlin mentioned that the MA DEP recommendation of 5,000 square feet (of lawn space) was used to calculate the nitrate concentration. This number could be increased to reflect the actual lawn size. He also hypothesized that this increase should not impact the results very much.

Jessica Collins then provided an opportunity for community members, residents, and professionals to speak on their concerns, questions, and/or findings on the project proposal. During this time, several concerns and clarifying questions were vocalized. A local geologist questioned why the pump rate was set to 300 gal/min for the study, when the well can be permitted up to a pump rate of 472 gal/min. The town could also ask the state to increase the pump's settings to meet the demand of the area. If done, how would increasing the pump rate impact the contaminant levels. It was also mentioned that the fuel release study only accounted for a 95-gallon diesel fuel tank, when in fact a fuel delivery truck can house thousands of gallons of fuel. The dramatic spike could increase the original contaminant levels up to ten times more. Residents expressed their clear disapproval of the project and urged the Board of Health to put the integrity of the well and resident's health first when considering such a project. Community members asked if the consultants created a base model without excavation to compare what the impact of having a protective layer is; and how travel time, dilution, and other parameters would be affected.

There were concerns surrounding onsite equipment failures and if the consultants were familiar with cleaning aquifer practices. Some one asked if there were any instances where the consultants advised not to move forward with a project as the risks associated with it were too hazardous. An experienced geological surveyor found it be troubling that a known carcinogenic may reach the Dry Broom Well at nine times the maximum limit. Based on his calculations, it would take 95 days to pump out .76 kg of benzene. As the contaminated water moves through the aquifer, degradation and loss of mass would take place and dilution would not occur.

James Montague responded by saying increasing the pump rate of the wells would likely decrease the amount of time it would take to reach the well. Dilution would take place, lowering the benzene concentration. The lingering concentration would have to be addressed. There was a model introduced that included a project site with sand and one without it. There was a major difference in time of arrival at the wellhead, the percentage of degradation that takes place, and the increase in concentration levels. The study did not cover personal care products as one of the contaminant categories. The consultants clarified that they did not calculate risk factors. Their focus was on analyzing hazards under time constraints. They were only able to do limited runs. They are willing to do runs on the model if requested.

Attorney Siddall mentioned that the proposal is a piece of a whole, as suggested by the Planning Board.

Jessica Collins thanked all the participants and efforts made in preparation for the meeting,

Attorney Siddall questioned what the next steps would be from the Board of Health, any additional information needed from the consultants, and an overall timeline of responsive actions.

Jessica Collins expressed there was a lot of missing information from the McLane report. The report did not incorporate risk assessments, although that is one of the main objectives of the Board of Health. The risks mentioned in the project include but are not limited to removing the protective layer, introducing benzene to a water supply, miscalculation of lawn, not including common household contaminants, etc. The review process would have to be prolonged to receive and analyze more data.

Karen Walsh Pio and Tony Judge agreed and said interpretation of the information reported raised more question and concerns. The best interests of the residents need to be the main concern. The risks associated with the project are far too great to ignore.

Attorney Winner advised the board of the need to address and respond to the new interaction and information presented by the applicant. If the stance on the matter has not changed, the Board must state so and why. The letter should clearly state the deficiencies of the report and provide an outline

pathway for the applicant to respond and address the missing information. The applicant will have the opportunity to reform their submission to address the concerns mentioned in the letter.

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Jessica expressed that all voting parties must approve of the letter outline to be sent to the Planning Board. The areas of concern will include benzene risks, lack of risk analysis, minimal choosing of contaminants, and missing parameters. There was also no guarantee that more excavation won't happen with the implementation of more units. This would lead to an increase of risks on site.

Jessica accepts a motion to create a letter of disapproval with listed reasons. Karen Pi Walsh made the motion and Tony Judge seconded it. A roll call was then taken:

Jessica Collins: Aye  
Karen Pio Walsh: Aye  
Tony Judge: Aye

**The next Board of Health Meeting was set to April 8, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom.**

#### **5. Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m. by Chair Collins and all were in agreement.

Respectfully submitted,

Monasia Ceasar  
Health Compliance Specialist

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**ATTACHMENT A**

**DOCUMENT**

**RECORD LOCATION**

March 12, 2021 Letter from BOH to Planning Board

BOH File

Summary of Supplemental Hydrogeologic Analyses  
(3-2-21)

BOH File