

**Minutes**  
**Northfield Board of Health**  
**November 29, 2023**  
**6:00 PM**  
**Northfield Town Hall**  
**69 Main Street, Northfield, MA**  
**Board of Health Office 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

**Call to Order:** 6:10

**Quorum Established:** David Balk, Kathie Bridges, Ali Wahlstrom, Karen Boudreau, Ruth Potee

Also in attendance – Bob McEwen, Pam Veith, Board Secretary, Ezra Cushing, Cushing

Well Drilling

**Business:**

- David reported that he had revised the job descriptions to reflect changes Board had discussed in previous meetings – Sent along to Town Administrator
- Bob McEwen updated the Board on current transfer station activity.
  - The Chair is acting as a liaison person between Board and Transfer station to create an even, consistent flow of information. Bob also suggested that Ruth and Ali meet with either Amy Donovan or Jan Ameen about some of their ideas to make positive changes at the Transfer Station. Some ideas floated were to enable Transfer Station users to be able to use a sticker on a grain bag in place of always using the Town's plastic trash bags.
  - Revenue from the State on specific trash/recycle items was discussed.
  - Bob states he would like a building for the attendant – Dave states that a request for that, even though the money has been put aside, would need to be included on our Fiscal Report as capitol improvement. Bob would additionally like the already available money to be used for improving both the Tool Lending Library and the Re-Use Shed. Ali strongly encouraged this idea. Ruth inquired whether for such small buildings solar and composting toilets could be incorporated – Kathy pointed out that even with composting toilets a sink would be necessary and so a small septic system – She advised that only a tight tank would be necessary for such minimal use. All ideas to continue discussion. David and Bob to meet and discuss how to enter these items into the report.
  - Ruth asked how the morale at the Transfer Station is currently. Bob reported that the newest hire, Jeff Loomis, has been welcomed and is picking up the responsibilities and routines quickly.
- Phoebe Walker to be asked to attend the Board meeting set for December 13, 2023.
- Last year's budget was reviewed by Board. Board was notified that the Cost of Living Adjustment for employees this year is "approximately 3.2%." That was not a final percentage – it was clarified that this is just an estimate and the Board will be notified when this increase has been finalized. The Board agreed that the budget would be far easier to manage and explain if broken into each line item.
- A Board member received a complaint from a Northfield resident of a squatter. Resident told to contact the local police. That matter was handled by the local police and deemed to be a trespass.
- Environmental Phase I Site Assessment request for information on five parcels of land. Information requested was for any hazardous waste spills, septic systems and wells. This information is being gathered and put together by David. David stated that well information is not very complete mostly due to address numbering changes and lot divisions.
- Board members all reviewed the sample By-Law submitted by Sarah Kerns on noise levels. The Board feels that the sample town has nothing in common with ours. The Board further feels that enforcement would be economically impossible. The Board doesn't feel that this is a health concern for our rural community at this time. Ali made a motion to dismiss further review of the sample by-law submitted to the Board for the purpose of creating a Noise By-Law. Kathie second. Vote was unanimous.

- 33 Lower Farms Road, Kathie Bridges abstained. New septic and well installed. David explained to the Board members that the Board is allowed to grant variances (and has in the past) on a case by case basis.
  - This property has vague lot lines. Engineer stated that there is only 98 feet from septic system and 20 feet from property line where the new well installation had begun. David reinspected and agreed with the engineer's assessment. Excavator explained how the misinformation came about as a stake had been placed for new well with 100 feet distance from septic and 30 feet distance from property line. Stake was removed by 3<sup>rd</sup> party delivering a dumpster to the property. Kathie Bridges was the engineer and Cushing Well Drilling was the well installer. Ezra Cushing, Cushing Well Drilling, stated that a swale in the ground made moving the location of the well very difficult. Cushing explained that all well piping was contamination sealed to prevent any leaking of septic contents into well water piping.
  - A motion was made by Ruth and second by Ali to allow a variance be granted for this well installation of closer by 2 feet to the septic system and closer to lot line by 10 feet. Vote by Board was unanimous to accept and grant this variance.
  - A Certificate of Compliance was signed for the newly installed septic system as all conditions have now been met.
  - Cushing to forward the Board a completed water test on the new well. Expected turnaround on this test is 5 to 7 business days.

#### Review and Approval of Minutes:

- November 8, 2023 Minutes- approved

#### Citizen's Concerns:

- None

#### Permit Applications:

- Food Permit – Pioneer Valley Regional High School - approved
- Food Permit – Northfield Elementary School - approved

#### Reports:

- Septic pumping reports – reviewed
- Title V Inspection Report – 1026 Millers Falls Road – David left a copy of the septic plan for this property at the property for the inspector. This property has been unoccupied for over a year. The sketch of the system and layout was unacceptable as it is incomplete. There is no water supply noted on the report or sketch. It is not noted on the report if there is a Distribution Box. David to write letter to inspector saying report was unacceptable and incomplete. The inspector is to resubmit a Title V report that is complete for the Board to review. Property has changed hands and new owners to receive a copy of the letter to the inspector.

#### Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair within 48 Hours:

- None

Adjourn: 7:31 pm

Next Meeting December 13, 2023

*Kathie Bridges* 12/13/23

*2 Potteen* 12/13/23

*David C. Ball* 12/13/23