

Manchester Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Members present:

Peter Colarusso, Joan Cottler, Dr. Martin Hahn (by Zoom), Leah Peavey

Members absent:

None

Letter of Request Gloucester Public Health Excellence Grant

Ms. Hansbury asked the Board if they had any questions regarding the information she provided related to a regional public health excellence grant that Gloucester is interested in pursuing and would like Manchester to submit a letter of interest or intent for. She noted that a host administrative community would be chosen, and that community would do the base work for the grant.

Dr. Hahn asked if Manchester would have to apply for the grant. Ms. Hansbury explained the following grant information:

- the discovery of needs is the grant application
- Gloucester will be the lead agency and is questioning if Manchester is willing to look into it
- Ipswich has the same concerns as Manchester has
- First step is discovery, and the grant administrator will do that work
- Would only require Town BOH staff to do a couple of hours per month
- Work identified above would be done within the first fiscal year

Mr. Colarusso said there would be no change to the current staffing, that the grant would be different and additional work. Also, that the Board could withdraw in 30 days if the grant is not working and that the grant would have to be renewed.

Dr. Hahn brought up prior concerns including who allocates the money and how does Manchester prevent being just a name on the grant. He was concerned that there be equitable distribution.

It was noted that most communities are participating in the public health excellence grants. It was also repeated that Ipswich had the same grant concerns as Manchester has had.

Mr. Colarusso said the past concern was for the Manchester nurse and her hours. But if the new grant was for nursing, it would be additional, not replacing staff to save money.

Ms. Hansbury said she understands that a past grant proposal was poorly presented and late but pointed out that the map she provided showed that other towns were informed. She said the

money is free, clear money for public health to address the blueprint for public health 2015-2019 and further that the pandemic showed the public health needs. She said there are other needs including inspections, that public health has been underfunded since 2000, and that this money is the State saying municipalities are underfunded. She added that the State is funding the public health excellence grants and that how and who presented the past grant to this Board did so incorrectly. She added that Town Administrators and other entities were not meant to be spearheading these grants. She informed the board that this grant would be brand new, and that the Board can put in for whatever they need. Also, that the administrator is hired with grant money and hired by Gloucester using that grant money.

Mr. Colarusso made a motion to move ahead with a letter of interest/intent for the public health excellence grant with Gloucester. Ms. Colarusso seconded the grant. Members, by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Peavey, in favor

Director's Report

- Critical drought is the same as on the 12/12/24 director's report
- Utopia Farms
Ms. Hansbury has had discussion with operator J. Atherton and has also spoken to the Town Planner regarding farmstand requirements. An example, she provided was that 75% of farmstand product must come from Massachusetts farms, 50% of which is local and the remaining 25% can be from outside Massachusetts.
- Farmstand will be working with the ZBA
- Agricultural exemptions usually supersede other local regulations

Dr. Hahn asked if there were concerns regarding the utilities at the site, specifically asking if the planner cared. Ms. Hansbury replied that the planner is concerned with the zoning portion. Ms. Hansbury said if the farmstand complied with the farmstand rules, no ZBA application would be needed. And that the review would then go to public health to check on bathroom and handwash facilities, to make sure there was no food preparation or processing on site, with sale of whole fruits and vegetables only. She added that there is no processing allowed where there are no handwash or toilet facilities. She said that Mr. Atherton believed that the Cell Signaling Technologies project would bring sewer up to the area. Ms. Hansbury advised him to speak to Cell Signaling owner or request a variance from the requirements. Dr. Hahn asked if the farmstand had cold storage, Ms. Hansbury replied yes. She said that the existing well on site is connected to a portable handwashing unit. She felt that a variance to use a portable toilet was a big variance. Dr. Hahn asked if a composting toilet could be used, Ms. Hansbury said possibly. Mr. Colarusso said that sewer is going up to the Cell Signaling site and that the D.P.W. will allow the farmstand into that sewer line. Ms. Hansbury reminded that it is Mr. Atherton's responsibility to investigate that connection.

- Housing Complaints

M.H.A.

Housing complaints have been filed at the Manchester Housing Authority property, including complaints about temperatures. Ms. Hansbury said she was purchasing a temperature data logger unit, that will also take carbon dioxide, humidity and formaldehyde spot monitoring. Ms. Cottler asked if the complaint was about having no heat. Ms. Hansbury replied that it was about variable heat levels.

2 Desmond Avenue

Ms. Hansbury said she had seen lights on and that the Manchester Fire Department had asked if the property were empty do they have to go in, Ms. Hansbury replied no. Dr. Hahn reminded that the owner's son had agreed to start work by December 25th Ms. Hansbury replied that the Board had not been specific with time. Ms. Peavey asked if the Board should revisit. Mr. Colarusso reminded members that the property owners said they were going to Florida over the winter

Ms. Hansbury said the increase in housing complaints requires a lot of time.

- Covid test kits are still available in the office, Nurse Crehan doing a good job of keeping them in stock.
- State reporting on respiratory virus shows an increase in flu like illnesses

Minutes

Ms. Cottler made a motion to approve the minutes of October 24, 2024 as presented.

the Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Peavey, in favor

Ms. Cottler made a motion to approve the minutes of November 14, 2024 with the following

amendment: page 3 paragraph 2 change "can't keep the second floor" to "can't heat the second floor"

the Ms. Peavey seconded the motion. Members by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Peavey, in favor

Dr. Hahn made a motion to approve the minutes of December 12, 2024 as presented.

Ms. Peavey seconded the motion. Members by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Peavey, in favor

Title 5 Regulation Review

Members discussed a proposal for a subcommittee to review Title 5 regulations. Mr. Colarusso asked all members to if they were uncomfortable with any portion of the review to please monitor and listen to the subcommittee work anyway so that they could be prepared when the matter comes to the full board.

Ms. Cottler made a motion to form a subcommittee for review of the Manchester Addenda to Title 5. Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Peavey, in favor

Members agreed that the subcommittee would work on drafts by reviewing options. Ms. Hansbury said the subcommittee meetings would be posted public meetings that would allow for public knowledge of the process. Members agreed the time frame for completion of subcommittee work was unknown.

Ms. Hansbury provided an update on the application for 16 Highland Avenue in Manchester.

- Completed application was received as requested
- She has not reviewed that application, but will have it ready for the next meeting

Members said they have been having trouble with Adobe view for forwarded plans and can not look at the plans as a pdf attachment. Ms. Hansbury agreed to speak to IT regarding the problem.

200' Wetland Setback

Ms. Hansbury asked members for guidance regarding the 200' wetland setback for vernal pools. Dr. Hahn noted that the general by law does not have 200' anywhere. Ms. Hansbury and Ms. Peavey both read the by law to have a first 100' and a second 100' for a total of 200'. Members disagreed on the 100' vs. 200' setback. Ms. Hansbury said she asked ConCom Chair Steve Gang for comment and that his reply was that there is local jurisdiction over vernal pools. Ms. Hansbury noted a recent ConCom approval for a leach field in the resource area. She said she wants to make sure that there is accuracy, especially when there is construction within the 100' - 200' setback. Dr. Hahn requested that Town Counsel be asked to interpret the matter for the Board. He said that as the Boards addenda loops in another department's regulations, the Board would take that Boards interpretation. Mr. Colarusso said an interpretation is needed now, before the addenda review is completed. Dr. Hahn repeated his concern that the regulation does not say an additional 100' and therefore questioned the ConCom interpretation. Ms. Hansbury said she would go back to the Conservation Commission and ask them to defend their interpretation. Dr. Hahn repeated his request for Town Counsel comments. Mr. Colarusso, noting the Boards strength is consistency asked if it is also ConCom's strength. There was discussion on the history and communication with the Conservation Commission. It was agreed that Ms. Hansbury would go to the ConCom Chairperson to review. Members disagreed on the setback of 100' vs. 200'. Ms. Hansbury felt that the Board should not interpret either the general by law or other committee's regulations. She noted that the ConCom allows construction within the 100' setback and wanted to be sure the Board got the information correctly.

Ms. Hansbury informed members that the next board meeting on January 23, 2025 would have a lot of septic system plan reviews.

Members agreed that Ms. Hansbury would post a one-hour subcommittee meeting for January 16th at 8:30 a.m. Ms. Hansbury also shared that the Town will be trying AI minutes taking.

At 9:37 a.m. Ms. Cottler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion:

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Peavey, in favor

As submitted,

Ellen Lufkin

Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Board of Health on January 23, 2025