

Dudley Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2022

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Dudley Board of Health was called to order at 4:30PM by Jennifer Cournoyer, Chairman and the pledge was recited.

***Members present:*** Jennifer Cournoyer -Chairman, Roberta Johnson-Public Health Nurse, Lorri Ducharme

Also Present: Camille Griffin – Health Agent, John Vangos of 38 Old Southbridge Road, Paul Henry of 3 Dalessandro Ave, Douglas Denham of 3 Dalessandro Ave, Rick Saudelli & Jodi Brighenti from Tobacco Control Alliance, Brianna Berman – Regional Epidemiologist, Alyssa Price – Regional Public Health Nurse, Douglas Mercurio – Regional Public Health Agent.

**Septic Approval Request for 38 Old Southbridge Road**

Jennifer Cournoyer – The homeowner is looking to have the setback at 6 feet instead of 10 feet from the line of the property to the leech field. It’s a small parcel where the septic is going, and it can be done with a variance from the board. There really wasn’t a lot of area where they can put the leech field.

Lorri Ducharme – I make a motion to accept the plans for the septic with the variance from 10 feet to 6 feet.

Roberta Johnson – I second the motion

Board votes – Passes Unanimously

**Public Hearing for 3 Dalessandro Ave**

Camille Griffin – We received a housing complaint on February 28th for no heat. The occupant Paul Henry was living in a garage studio apartment. I went out on March 29th. When I arrived, it was a single-family home with an attached garage. The occupant had a living situation set up in the garage with no heat source, no bathroom facilities, no kitchen facilities, and no smoke detectors. I did explain to the occupant that to have a space that is considered habitable you need to have kitchen and bathroom facilities, as well as the basic functions for health and safety. This could lead to possible condemnation. I did not condemn it on the spot. I did issue an order to correct to the homeowner. I did speak to the homeowner Douglas Denham who says that the lease states the occupant is leasing 2 bedrooms in the house. This new information indicates that he has access to the common areas including the bathroom and kitchen facilities. The owner did install the smoke detectors so right now the outstanding item is the lack of heat source. There has been no correspondence as to what is being done about the heat source.

Paul Henry – Does the smoke detectors have to be hard wired?

Camille Griffin – I will check with the fire department on that.

Jennifer Cournoyer – Are you the one who filed the original complaint?

Paul Henry – Yes. The original agreement was 1700 a month for two rooms. HE was supposed to move out which he did not. He then told me he was moving me to the garage room and changing rent to 1000 a month. I’ve been asking him since then for a new lease for the garage. He has not done it. I don’t have keys to his house, and he locks me out. I asked him multiple times for a key and new lease and he’s not providing either.

Jennifer Cournoyer – Unfortunately the only documentation we have is the lease saying you are renting 2 rooms. What happened after that we have no documentation on.

Paul Henry – I am moving out next month. I have recently bought a house. In the meantime, I was just looking to be treated like a regular tenant and be provided heat. Since I called the board of health, I was served two eviction notices. One of them states for threatening to call the board of health.

Jennifer Cournoyer – Camille what is your recommendation?

Camille Griffin – As long as he is living in that space there must be heat provided. My recommendation is to continue enforcing the housing code, which must be done as long as someone is living there, even if it’s an illegal apartment.

Jennifer Cournoyer – You realize why we are limited in what we can do. Most of this is court related and must be settled in court. Camille’s job is to do what’s best for everyone involved. Camille, please keep us informed of what’s happening. Paul, good luck with everything.

**Tobacco Violation Hearing for West Main Liquors**

Rick Saudelli – On March 6, 2022, the Tobacco Control Alliance was out with our youth inspectors. At 1:13PM West Main Liquors sold cigars to an underage youth which generated the fine of $1000.00. Owner already paid the fine and is aware that the next violation will result in a $2000.00 fine and automatic 7-day suspension of permit to sell.

**Tobacco Violation Hearing for State Line Farms**

Rick Saudelli – On March 6, 2022, our youth inspector purchased cigars at 12:46PM. Owner paid fine already and is aware of future penalties if it happens again.

Camille Griffin – These are the only two establishments that requested to be heard by the board tonight so I would like to ask you to give an overview of the program since Dudley is new to this.

Rick Saudelli – We’re both here with Joan Hamlet in the program. We go out and do retail education. Including signage, the menthol bans and information on selling to underage youth. We go out with youth inspectors for checks. There are a total of 10 stores in Dudley that sell tobacco and we do regular checks on.

Jodi Brighenti – 02/12/2022 we did an educational visit with the merchants here in Dudley. We can leave you copies of the material we gave them at that time.

**Plastic Bags Initiative**

Jennifer Cournoyer – I just wanted to get information out there tonight. Last month Joseph came before the board requesting our support for a plastic bag ban in town. We talked with him about other ways we can get creative about this issue. A complete ban is not something we can support, and we do not have the staff to enforce it. Our agent is only 10 hours a week. We were going to get other people on board to help him with his initiative and he seemed ok with that idea. A week or so after the meeting Joseph got a citizen’s petition warrant article on the May town meeting that says this will be enforced by the Board of Health. This is not true. I wanted the public to know we do not believe a ban is the way to go. There are other more creative ways we can come up with to achieve a reduction in use of plastic bags. If this article goes through the Board of Health cannot and will not enforce anything to do with plastic bags.

**Discussion of Earth Day and Bike Rodeo**

Jennifer Cournoyer – We had about 40 people show up for Earth Day which is great. It was a beautiful day for it. The amount of trash was incredible. We want to thank everyone who came out. We also want to thank the highway department who helped with trash collection. We couldn’t do it without them. We have decided on a date for the bike rodeo this year. It will be held Saturday June 11th 1-3PM at Nichols College. We will have a fire truck, the safe house, and a police cruiser. Boston Children’s Hospital will be there for helmet fittings. It should be a fun day.

**Revisit of 3 Dalessandro Ave Public Hearing**

Camille Griffin – goes over the housing complaint again for the landlord of 3 Dalessandro Ave

Douglas Denham – I was hoping we can get it condemned I told the tenant not very far into the situation that this wasn’t going to work out and I was going to give him all his money back. He wanted to stay, and I told him he could go to the garage temporarily until he figured out what he was going to do. He loved it and thought it was great.

Jennifer Cournoyer – We cannot do anything about things that do not concern the board of health. We care about the housing code and strictly just the housing code. Do you realize you allowed him to move into an illegal living space?

Douglas Denham – Yes, I am.

Jennifer Cournoyer – Unfortunately the heat is an issue but is not a reason to condemn. We will advise you that in the future if you choose to rent to make sure it’s a legal living space.

**Approval of Minutes from March 15, 2022**

Lorri Ducharme – I make a motion to approve the minutes from March 15, 2022

Jennifer Cournoyer – I second the motion

Board Votes – Passes Unanimously

Roberta Johnson Abstains

**Public Health Nurse Report/Comments**

Camille Griffin – We have a regional epidemiologist Brianna Berman we also have Alyssa Price who is our Public Health Nurse for the region. This region includes Webster, Dudley, Oxford, and Southbridge.

Alyssa Price – Right now we are following up with every case of COVID that we get. We are telling them that we will not be calling their close contacts, but we are educating them about telling their close contacts. We ask about vaccines and give a lot of education.

Brianna Berman – goes over COVID Report that she completed.

Camille – with this regional grant we also have another grant we were given which is a little bit larger. It includes Webster, Dudley, Oxford, Southbridge, Auburn, and Brimfield. It’s a total of 6 communities, and this is the grant that we have Laurie Keefe through. We are thrilled to welcome Douglas Mercurio who just started yesterday as the Regional Health Inspector through this grant. He will be shadowing me in both Dudley and Webster.

Douglas introduces himself to the board. He was a housing inspector for Worcester for about 4 years before joining our regional team.

**Public Health Agent Report/Comments**

Camille Griffin – Jen, Amanda and I were able to take a tour of the Greatest Hits Cannabis. Their permit was issued and right now they are only operating as a dispensary with bigger plans for the future. We have also had a couple of housing complaints including the one we discussed tonight. There was also an emergency condemnation that was issued for a heavy content situation. We’ve had a lot of nuisance complaints as well since the last meeting that I’ve been out investigating. Some orders to correct have been issued while others are still pending investigation.

**Public/Board Comments**

None

**Adjourn**

Roberta Johnson – I make a motion to adjourn

Lorri Ducharme – I second the motion

Board Votes – Passes Unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 5:45PM

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Jacobson

Board of Health Clerk