



**TOWN OF TISBURY**  
*office of*  
**THE BOARD OF HEALTH**  
PO Box 666, 66 High Point Lane  
Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts 02568

**MEETING MINUTES – September 12, 2023 – 4:00 PM**

The Board of Health (BOH) commissioners met at the Tisbury Town Hall Annex, 66 High Point Lane, on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 4:00 PM. The meeting was also available virtually by Zoom (meeting ID: 890 7509 2810, and passcode: 941074) or by phone at 646-876-9923.

Commissioners in attendance were Chairman Malcolm Boyd, Dr. Michael Loberg, Vice Chairman, and Jeff Pratt, Clerk, joined via ZOOM. Maura Valley, Health Agent, and Valerie Soushek, Administrative Secretary, were also in attendance. The Shared Services Inspector, Drew Belsky, also joined via ZOOM.

Chairman Boyd called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

In-person visitor(s) – Teri Bernert, (new) Real Estate Director for Island Housing Trust (IHT)

Virtual visitor(s) – John Stanwood, Island Housing Trust

MEETING MINUTES – N/A

APPOINTMENTS – N/A

4:00 Teri Bernert, Island Housing Trust  
re: Nitrogen credits from ARPA grants

As an MVC (Martha's Vineyard Commission) condition of approving two IHT affordable housing projects at Cat Hollow, a joint venture with Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA) for multi-family housing with 12 bedrooms, and 401 State Road in West Tisbury, 55+ rental housing with 11 bedrooms in the Tashmoo Watershed, IHT must install additional NitROE systems elsewhere to mitigate the new nitrogen they will be introducing in the Watershed. As such and due to project funding deficits, they are requesting credits for a portion of the ARPA systems installed for Tisbury residents. Such a workaround would, however, reduce the number of reimbursements available for Tisbury residents from the Town.



Commissioner Pratt motioned to approve IHT's request, conditional upon MVC's review and acceptance of their proposal. Commissioner Loberg and Chairman Boyd declined to second the motion to get as many NitROE systems installed as possible for Tisbury residents by the Town in addition to those that IHT must install with other funding sources yet to be determined.

Ms. Valley suggested that Ms. Bernert contact Martina Thornton of Dukes County and the West Tisbury BOH for other potential ARPA funding opportunities.

## HEALTH AGENT REPORT

### Targeted Wastewater Management Plan (standing agenda item)

There is a meeting on September 27th in Cotuit with the Conservation Law Foundation and various State and Cape Town officials. Scott Horsley asked Michael and Maura to attend for a discussion to show the State and Foundation what small Towns, including Truro, can do when they try to resolve septic issues on their own, i.e., pioneering denitrification as a public health issue, pilot studies and programs, etc.

### ARPA wastewater funding applications

The BOH office has received two applications that qualify for grant funding--one is for an upgrade of a failed system in the Tashmoo Watershed. The other is for an upgrade of an older system in the Lagoon Pond Watershed.

The commissioners voted unanimously to approve both applications.

One other application for replacing a single cesspool on Hines Point is pending receipt from the applicants.

Grant funding information has been sent to local engineers to share with their clients who may qualify for the program.

### Department transition update

Catie has moved over to her position with the Council on Aging, and Drew will continue to assist us with inspections as needed. The health agent job has been advertised. Applications are due by September 22nd. Once the application period ends, interviews will be scheduled, and hopefully, a job offer will be extended in early October. Once a health agent is hired, the assistant health agent position will be posted. This hiring sequence is necessary for the new health agent to be involved in the selection of the assistant.

### COVID After-Action Report

A meeting was held to discuss the Island's COVID response and put to paper the lessons learned should there be another pandemic. The resulting summary report was included with the agenda for the commissioners' review.

### Nitrogen regulations public hearing

Ms. Valley asked the commissioners to consider the effective date of any changes voted on at the September 26, 2023, hearing. Because the proposed changes will impact closing costs, and therefore mortgages, on property sales, Ms. Valley recommended an effective date of January 1, 2024, allowing property transfers already in process to be finalized without having to revise financing and give other potential buyers advance notice while they shop for mortgages. The commissioners concurred with her recommendation. Ms. Valley reminded the commissioners that the DEP will need to be notified of the revisions, and the new regulations will be advertised, for which the process will take about three weeks.



### Algae bloom response

A potential algae bloom was reported on Sunday, September 3rd. Tisbury natural resources officials responded, as did Malcolm and Ms. Valley. Bloom samples were determined to be a "rust tide," *Cochlodinium* or *Margalefidium*. Since this is not dangerous to humans or pets, the response was executed by the shellfish department and DMF. In response to a select board member's suggestion for a 24/7 response team, Ms. Valley confirmed that the current response protocol for such reports is appropriate but might need to be more robust in the future.

Ms. Valley stated that she will work with the new health agent to develop a budget of approximately \$5,000 for full participation in the MV Cyano committee. The funding will increase the areas and places tested regularly next summer.

### SHARED SERVICES INSPECTOR REPORT

#### Beach Road Festival report –

Drew worked at the festival for the Board of Health, conducting food service inspections and assisting with sound checks. There was one formal complaint during the initial sound checks. Drew worked with the organizer's reps to check decibels 3 or 4 times a day. Two spots behind the park were consistently over "80" and had to be reported directly to the festival director for resolution.

A water line clogged or broke on the first day, but all vendors had enough water, hand-washing areas, and gray water sinks. The water service was down for 2 hours at most.

On the last day, the gray water tanks weren't properly vented, causing puddles from the overflow and vendors dumping their gray water directly into the ground. Maciel & Sons fixed the problem, and the puddle was mostly gone by the end of the day. Otherwise, good hand-washing practices were noted.

Ms. Valley stated that an after-action meeting will be scheduled to discuss what went well and what didn't.

Drew's recommendations--the Board of Health should have wristbands available for staff access next year, as there were issues with gaining access. One or two 3-bay sinks attached to gray water receptacles for ease of dumping and an emergency wash bin should be considered for the future.

Drew is currently off-island for the soil evaluators course.

### DWA FOR BOARD APPROVAL

Raule & Deborah Espinoza / 76 Circuit Avenue / 15-B-3

A proposed NitROE system for upgrading a failed system in the Lagoon Pond Watershed – Approved.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Review of health department job descriptions

Ms. Valley is in the process of revising the Assistant Health Agent and Administrative Assistant job descriptions. They will be forwarded to the commissioners for review upon completion.



Additional item:

A wastewater spill occurred when the Tisbury pump-out boat was pumping into the municipal collection system at the MV Shipyard on the Lagoon side. There was a backup because the boat pump-outs release waste faster than residential waste. The release overloaded the system and caused a blown fuse and an overflow on the ground. The wastewater and shellfish departments responded. A mixture of bleach and soap was used to wash the waste (10-20 gallons) into a nearby storm drain. DMF (Department of Marine & Fisheries) conducted dilution testing and confirmed that the incident was handled properly; there was no danger to shellfish, and the closure area did not have to be expanded on the Lagoon.

To prevent this from occurring again, the wastewater department changed the pipe connection size(s), and the pump-out boat will dump the waste more slowly in the future.

**BILLS AND PERMITS FOR APPROVAL**

The next meeting will be held on September 26, 2023 at 4 PM.

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM.

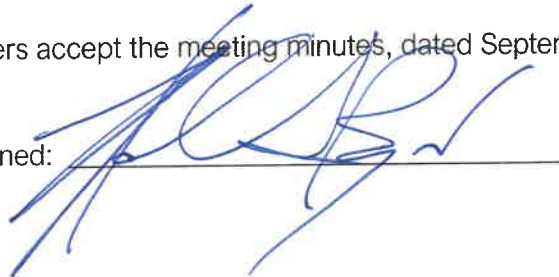
Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Soushek  
Administrative Secretary

Document(s)

The Board of Health commissioners accept the meeting minutes, dated September 12, 2023, as presented.

Date: 26 Sept 2023 Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. B.', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

