



Town of Adams ■ ***Massachusetts 01220***

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APPROVED

Adams Board of Health – Public Meeting Minutes 1st Floor Mahogany Room (in-person only) Wednesday, February 15, 2023

BOH Members Present: Chairman Dr. David Rhoads, Co-Chair Dr. Amy Oberlin, Ms. Jess Wilson
BOH Members Not Present: None
Others Present: Howard Rosenberg-Board of Selectman Member, Sarah Lesure-Code Enforcement Officer, John Pitroff-Owner of Second Chance Composting, Elias Masse-Administrative Assistant, Michelle DeRose-Administrative Assistant, Attorney St. John

Call to Order: Chairman Rhoads called the meeting to order at 4:00 and mentioned that it is being recorded.

Presentation: John Pitroff, Second Chance Composting (SCC):

Dr. Rhoads introduced John Pitroff, Owner of Second Chance Composting. Mr. Pitroff and his wife own the company. Mr. Pitroff just bought a house in Adams in October last year and has been in the process of turning it into a home office. They just recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the official opening of the business in Adams. The Adams location is for office use only. Second Chance Composting picks up, hauls, and offers a drop off service for food scraps and other organic material to be processed. The aim of the company is to operate on a commercial scale, picking up scraps from restaurants, hotels, supermarkets, businesses, and other events. SCC provides 35-gallon totes for commercial use. They then go and pick them up on a weekly basis, leaving behind a freshly rinsed out new tote for future use. After pick up they bring the scraps to their facility for processing.

There is also a residential program, that offered 5-gallon tote pickup exchange to individuals in which they are maintaining with their original customers. Any residential customers now, will be placed under their new program. The new program is where SCC has partnered with the Old Stone Mill "Zero Waste Maker Space" in Adams, All Saints Berkshires Episcopal Church in North Adams, and Wild Soul River on Cole Ave. in Williamstown. These partners offer space to store the totes. There is a 3-month minimum membership for residential use, to go and drop off any scraps at their convenience however they can get it there. The drop off times are 7 days a week during reasonable hours. Mr. Pitroff does all the work with the customers; all the partners do is offer the space. SCC also offers the partners a percentage of revenue to incentivize building a customer base and to promote composting within the community. The new Residential program is \$2.30 a week.

SCC has been reaching out to schools around the area for educational opportunities for the youth. As well as haul the material away for the school system. Mr. Pitroff has been in contact with Clarksburg School, however has been in minimal contact with the North Adams School District.

The types of food scraps that are taken and processed are any and all food scraps, meat, fish, dairy and bones. On the residential level, they take bagged leaves, yard clippings, and manure (chicken) as well as the food scraps. All of these are placed in the totes that are provided and taken to the property in Stamford VT to begin the processing. The scraps get mixed with other materials and then placed in piles called windrows and then get turned. Eventually, over a 3-month period, in ideal conditions and depending on the temperature, it becomes compost.

The company also offers a drop off and pick up service for woodchips, leaves, manure, hay and other organic matter that is in bulk. SCC is looking to partner with firewood, tree, and landscaping companies who are willing to drop this material off to them since they plan to discard of it anyway.

Mr. Pitroff is certified in the state of Vermont to operate the facility. 3 seasons out of the year the facility is open. Once snow reaches a certain level the facility closes, but SCC has partnered with Holly Brook Farm during the winter to bring the food scraps to them. Currently, Mr. Pitroff is looking into another facility that can be operated year-round.

Mr. Pitroff further explained the compost process. The scraps are mixed with a High Carbon Material such as woodchips, sawdust, brown leaves with a ratio of roughly 3-4-parts carbon to 1-part nitrogen. You then mix everything together and put a capping layer of carbon. The pile then heats up to target temperature of 131 to 160 degrees. When the temperature starts to drop, it's time to turn the pile, adding oxygen to increase microbial activity. That process repeats itself until the temperature is at a level state. Once it's in a level state, the pile goes to cure, letting it be for a few more months. After this process, compost is then sellable. SCC wants to do as much as possible for the community.

They worked the North Adams Farmers Market every week for free last year where they offered folks to drop off scraps. That was the first real exposure to the community. Mr. Pitroff is still trying to figure out if they will be at this year's Farmers Market or not. SCC also held the pumpkin smashing event in North Adams and hopes to make this a yearly event. SCC also composted the sunflowers that the North Adams Chamber of Commerce planted with the Mayor of North Adams.

Mr. Pitroff and his wife want to be involved with the community as much as possible. Currently, SCC does not sell the compost back and their plan is to have sellable product next year. This first year was more of a customer building year and next year the goal is to sell the compost, reliably, in 5-gallon bags or by the cubic yard by either pick up or delivery means.

The goal is to educate people of the difference between trash, recycling and compostable material. In the state of Vermont, it is illegal to throw your waste scraps in landfills. A 7-year plan was implemented starting at 1 ton of waste then reduced to a half a ton, then to a third of a ton until after a few years, outlawed at the residential level. Massachusetts is currently at the half ton limit and it has not been decided what the plan is except by 2030, there should be no scrap waste in the landfill.

SCC is advertised on Facebook.com and Instagram or search John Pitroff on Facebook as well. Additional information can be found on <https://secondchancecomposting.square.site/>. Michelle DeRose asked about the sorting process. Mr. Pitroff states that the most important and upfront way is to educate new

customers and give a list of what is acceptable and what is not. The company is small enough now that there is a hand-picking system in place to manually sort through scraps. As the company grows and expands, there are screening systems that can be purchased to make the sorting aspect faster and more effective. In the state of Vermont, manure, woodchips and other food scraps are considered feed stock and have to be processed the same as day it is delivered to reduce the likelihood of bugs or animals getting into it. Scraps such as bones and shellfish usually have to go through multiple rounds in order to break down effectively. The high temperature is what allows the scraps to break down faster.

At this current time, SCC does not go through apartment units but is in the realm of possibilities to grow the company.

During the summer time, SCC offers sawdust to the commercial accounts. Sawdust is considered as a high carbon material, and is used to reduce animals, bugs and smells of the compost. Most compost piles are unrecognizable due to the carbon capping of woodchips. There are no additives for the compost process, just the natural microbes.

Dr. Rhoads mentioned that Linda Cernik (Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District) is a good resource to go through to get more exposure throughout the community and school systems. Mr. Pitroff has been trying to get in touch with Lindsay McGinnis who set up a composting class with Hoosac Valley Highschool. Mr. Pitroff is to attend a business event through the high school tomorrow.

Dr. Rhoads brings up quality control when it is time to sell the compost. Mr. Pitroff hasn't looked too much into it for the state of Massachusetts as of yet. In Vermont, you have to get some of it tested and monitored. The piles have to reach a certain temperature within a timeframe. The company isn't at the selling point as of yet, so further research is needed when the time comes. Eventually, Mr. Pitroff wants a closer, more accessible facility for free drop off services on the residential level.

Public Comment: None

Public Hearing: None

Approval of Minutes: January 11: Dr. Oberlin motioned to approve with edits. Ms. Wilson seconded. All approved unanimously.

Code Enforcement Officer:

- **Report:** Sarah Lesure, Code Enforcement Officer stated that there are no new changes or updates.
- **FDA Food Safety training status (Standard 2 available in March; Saviski email 2/6/23)**
She attended a presentation of the housing code update last week which will be implemented on April 1. The presentation added some arachnids and scorpions to the pest list. The FDA certification training that is happening next month is a time requirement of each Tuesday in March which some of the times interfere with her training she is doing in Worcester. She will not be able to attend the upcoming meeting. She will follow up with the course director, Ned, for other courses to attend.

Old Business:

- **Review of board's web page: Note addition of the Cannabis page, others to be updated?**
Review of webpage, nothing to update at this time.
- **Program update Up and Adams Wellness Initiative 2023**
To be reviewed at a later date. Ms. Lenski could not attend this meeting. Mr. Rosenberg provided information in her absence. The course currently has 30 people with the initial thought of only 20 people. The program is currently filled up after the first 2 weeks of operating. This program has been one of the more successful programs. The school system and Adams Bank is very supportive in the initiative. The response from the people have been very enthusiastic and are very engaged. The first session last night was recorded and posted to the YouTube channel provided by Ms. Lenski. For professional courtesy and formality, the teachers need to give permission for their session to get posted. The YouTube channel could make its way to the Town of Adams webpage for more viewing. Dr. Rhoads wants to make a change to the flyer that was sent out regarding the course. He states it is not the Board of Health Alliance, instead it is the Berkshire Public Health Alliance. In order to participate in the courses on the calendar you have to be signed up and enrolled. Mr. Rosenberg will try and get Ms. Lenski for the March 15th meeting for further information on the initiative.
- **Budget needs (results of meeting with Building Commissioner Garner, TA Green & Auditor Wojcik)**
Dr. Rhoads states the budget meeting between Town Administrator Jay Green, Financial Director Crystal Wojcik and Building Commissioner Gerry Garner was very productive. A lot of the budget is tied up between the public health nursing contract, and trainings. Dr. Rhoads asked to increase the budget by \$1,000 to buy public health related items, promotions, brochure, travel to meetings. Per Mr. Green, travel is a different line item, so \$500 is directed for materials, promotions and \$500 for travel needs.
- **Status of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (improving waste disposal & recycling, volunteers)**
The status of solid waste committee still pending until April.
- **Recycling at apartment buildings; possible Public Hearing to elicit ideas to foster recycling (notice)**
On March 15, there will be a public hearing for recycling at apartment buildings and will be inviting apartment owners and managers and waste haulers. If there was a public notice posted on iBerkshires or Berkshire Eagle, it would require 7 days prior to the meeting. The budget may be an issue with posting in both or multiple times if done 7 days and 14 days prior. Attorney St. John mentions when he posts legal notices on iBerkshires it costs just under \$300 for a one-time notice. Instead of running 2 ads in The Berkshire Eagle, Dr. Oberlin suggested to run 1 ad in iBerkshires and 1 ad in the Berkshire Eagle to get a wider net of exposure. It was agreed to run both as suggested. The public notice would be scheduled to run 7 days ahead in The Berkshire Eagle and would investigate the timing of the iBerkshires notice.

New Business:

- **Report on meeting with members of the Governance Review Committee**

Dr. Rhoads met with the Government Review Committee a few weeks ago to try and understand the main issues of appointed vs. elected positions. A number of communities do appoint BOH's members. Dr. Rhoads stated he feels it's important for the Board of Health to remain independent of an appointed authority. Dr. Rhoads' vision is to expand the Board to 5 members for 2 reasons. 1: To expand the work capacity and 2: To allow 2 members to confer without violating Open Meeting Law. To increase to 5 members, there could be a possibility of a hybrid board of 3 elected members and 2 appointed members.

- **Public Health Nursing contract, level for FY24; possibility of a multiyear contract**

The Alliance is keeping the cost the same for the Public Health Nursing Contract, but are floating the idea of a 3-year contract with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission BRPC. The 3-year contract would be charged yearly.

The Alliance is a public health initiative of BRPC. Dr. Rhoads stated that The Town of Adams does not have anyone certified to do a Title 5 inspection, which are septic systems, so we go to the Alliance who then provides us with a certified inspector. There are 3 public health nurses between roughly 9-15 communities. Our Public nurse looks at the epidemiology reports every day, if there is a disease or an illness that the Board of Health should know about, they report it to the Board. She also arranges flu clinics, checks in with school nurses and works with the Council on Aging. The Board is supposed to receive general reports but we haven't been updated.

Local & County Updates:

- **Berkshire Vaccine Collaboratives' <https://getvaccinatedberkshires.org> portal still not launched**

The Berkshire Vaccine Collaborative online portal should be up and running in a week or two. The portal posts updates on the Flu and Covid cases.

Upcoming Events:

- **TBA: Town-wide kick-off event for Up & Adams Wellness Initiative 2023**

This event already occurred. There was a misunderstanding from the poster wording

Notice of National Grid project: On 2/27, there is a MEPA (Massachusetts Environment Preview Assessment). It is an environmental impact before the fact process and National Grid wants to upgrade towers running through here. A lot of the structures are still wooden and they want to upgrade them to metal. That won't start for a couple of years.

Dr. Rhoads also mentioned, there is a dinner on 3/30

- **3/31: Kick Butts Day (lobby at the State House)**

3/31 Kick Butts day Jim contacted Dr. Rhoads today to confirm attendance.

- **6/24: Adams Street Fair, Saturday Noon-6pm**

6/24 street fair is scheduled for Saturday 12pm-6pm

Also, 3/25 Thunderfest and will review in the next March 15th meeting
Faerie Fest was held 6/11 last year, 6/17 or 6/18 is the target date this year

Review Mail:

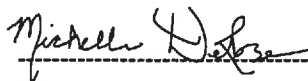
- **BCBOHA calendar for February:** calendar is out.

For the Good of the Order:

Dr. Rhoads is tasked with Annual Reports. There are no requirements to be a Board member, but you have to be able to think science, policy, governance, and have good people skills. The BOH members job as stated in the By-laws, is that the BOH make recommendations to improve public health within the Town of Adams. The Wellness Initiative is a great start to improving public health. Dr. Rhoads will have a draft of the report to review. Other improvements could be held at the Educational Center at the completed Greylock Glen along with other resources already in place. We might have volunteers to educate the population instead of looking to hire outside help.

Schedule Next Meeting: March 15 2023

Adjournment: Dr. Oberlin motioned to adjourn. Dr. Rhoads seconded. All members voted Yes unanimously. Adjourned at 5:42pm.



Michelle DeRose
Administrative Assistant

3/29/2023

Date