



Town of Adams

Massachusetts 01220

Board of Health Department

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Adams Board of Health – Public Meeting Minutes

1st Floor Mahogany Room in-person only

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

BOH Members Present: Chairman Dr. David Rhoads, Co-Chair Dr. Amy Oberlin, Member Jess Wilson

Others Present: John Barrett – Water Dept, Erin Lenski and Rob Patterson – Wellness Initiative, Howard Rosenberg- Board of Selectman Member, Kilian Flynn – Casella Waste Management, John Duquette and Kayleigh Wandrei – Stanley Lumber, Michelle DeRose-Administrative Assistant, , Gerry Garner-Building Commissioner, Sarah Lesure- Code Enforcement Officer, Atty Edmund St. John – Town Counsel, Brian Rhodes – iBerkshires

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

Presentation: Public Water Supply; Superintendent John Barrett; Adams Fire District

Dr. Rhoads introduced Mr. Barrett to provide his presentation. Mr. Barrett noted that he was working on several projects, one of which updating the Source Water Protection Plan, last done in 2007, to better protect our water supply. Our water system is in Cheshire. Water sampling is ongoing with the Water Department following state guidelines for different elements as required, such as PFAS [per- and poly-fluorinated alkyl substances]. In fact, the department started testing for PFAS before the requirement went into effect. Due to undetectable levels, Adams received a waiver for PFAS testing through 2024. Adams has also been selected for UCMR5 [EPA Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 5], a fifth round of unregulated contaminant monitoring. It is an EPA operated program where they contact ground water facilities all over the country to assess emerging contaminants. This round includes 29 additional PFAS compounds, above the current regulation for 6 compounds. Lithium will be another contaminant that will be tested in public water supplies, specifically due to its use in electric cars as they become more popular.

The department also tested for trihaloacetic acids, which are carcinogenic by-products formed from organic materials in chlorinated water. The only detect was trihalomethane at 4.41 ppm, with 80 ppm as the acceptable limit. The chlorine injection is 0.3 ppm, at the lower end of the 0.2-4 ppm allowable range, which shows in the results for trihaloacetic acids. Mr. Barrett noted a significant increase in perchlorate, which can be from naturally occurring substances in groundwater as well as human sources, such as explosives, fireworks and gunpowder. This is his first encounter with detecting perchlorate, so he will be retesting and reviewing past records to determine the source of the increase. The level was 0.45 ppm with all 3 wells running (allowable level in 2 ppm). However, he judged this a substantial increase. He will retest each well in isolation to try to pinpoint the source. He speculated that our current significant drought could account for the increase, as the wells may be pulling from deeper sources than normal. He noted that the static water level was down about 2 feet but has recovered a bit with the recent rain.

Lead and Copper testing was performed with good results. We're now entering the current State/EPA push with the Lead and Copper Rule Revised (LCRR), to be rolled out in 2024. He will be publishing a Connection Service report soon. Currently there are 3,332 connections and he needs to determine what they are made of. They are looking for lead pipes or goose necks; Adams does not have any lead pipes or goosenecks in its system. His current estimate is that 70-75% connections have copper service lines, and the rest would be galvanized. Galvanized would only cause a problem if connected to a lead gooseneck so that's not a problem in Adams. Mr. Barrett is actively working with the schools because the new LCRR rules are more stringent on testing and allowable levels.

Mr. Barrett is also updating the district's Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Report, last done in 2002. He hopes to have the new SWAP plan available for the 2022 Consumer Confidence Report.

Dr. Rhoads asked about the status of Mr. Barrett's response to the issues raised in DEP's Sanitary Survey conducted last year. Mr. Barrett explained that these surveys are ongoing but that he was able to address all the concerns. The biggest issue is the presence of cross-connections. The Water Department is responsible for assessing cross-connections, even within a building. This responsibility exceeds their responsibility, which ends at the meter, and should be monitored by the building's plumber. However, the department has undertaken surveying commercial buildings; they are about 80% complete and should be done by December. If they find cross-connection, it is reported to the owner so that it can be addressed. If the owner does not comply, the water may be turned off. However, the good thing is that the Adams water system is closed, meaning that building water that may contain contaminants cannot backflow in the town system (this is not true of many municipalities). The department has found about 10 cross-connections so far. Mr. Barrett noted that his impetus was that he couldn't find any previous survey records, so he endeavored to conduct his own survey.

Dr. Oberlin asked for a clarification on cross connections. Mr. Barrett explained that a cross-connection is anything that can create a backflow or back pressure. Examples are:

- When you stop the water from a garden hose, the pressure backflows and sucks back into the house main. If there are bacteria in the hose, they could enter the household system and ultimately the town water main. Because the Town of Adams is 100% fully contained, this won't happen but can cause issue within the owner's building.
- In bars or convenient stores, any time you mix carbonation with syrup, if the carbonation goes back to the copper line, it can make people sick. [Carbonic acid reacts with copper to form copper carbonate, a soluble form that can cause copper poisoning if ingested.] So, they specifically check carbonation set-ups in bars and delis.
- The largest threat is hydrants. Permits are required to connect to a hydrant, so that the department can monitor and document usage. Hydrants should have a shut off in case it gets knocked over by a vehicle accident. However, Adams still has hydrants without a shut off. The department has an ongoing effort to replace our 1,900 hydrants and, in so doing, install shut offs (called isolation gates).

Mr. Rosenberg inquired due to the drought whether water could be coming from other locations. He asked if there is a map for where water might be coming from, such as a PCB [polychlorinated biphenyl] site. Mr. Barrett said that we do and is actively working on the SWAP plan and will upload the map to the Fire District website. The map will show protection zones 1, 2 and 3 [DEP-defined protection zones sequentially around public water supplies, in our case, the wells in Cheshire]. They look for any potential sources of

contamination, such as underground tanks. The trailer park [manufactured housing park] is also a concern for monitoring. Mr. Rosenberg asked if he saw any potential threats. Mr. Barrett said that they are particularly concerned with fill, as it may contain toxic materials depending on its source, such as a blasting. Another measure for water safety is the presence of nitrates and nitrites, often associated with sewage. Given that the trailer park [manufactured housing park] has a septic system, these compounds are closely monitored. Mr. Barrett further explained that Zone 2 overlies the aquifer, so water may be drawn from it, whereas Zone 3 serves as an extra zone of protection. Dr. Rhoads added that he learned from Mr. Barrett that our aquifer is an underground stream running parallel to the South Branch of the Hoosic River. Mr. Barrett said yes that we are part of the Hudson River watershed and that our water comes from New York (he has a 300+ page book describing this system).

Dr. Rhoads asked if lithium is toxic itself or an indicator of other potential contaminants? Mr. Barrett answered when lithium is disturbed, it can create issues. He spoke of when a fire breaks out, for example around an electric car, water is used to put the fire out which comes in contact with lithium which then goes to the catch basins and then where does the catch basins go? That is why the EPA now has lithium on their radar. EPA will test and determine how much is in the ground, then hopefully set regulations accordingly. Our next lithium tests will be during 2 months in 2024. Depending on the results nationally, the EPA will likely develop strategies to monitor and, possibly regulate, lithium release.

Dr. Rhoads thanked Mr. Barrett for his many efforts on behalf of our town water. Mr. Barrett appreciated the opportunity to keep us informed.

Public Comment:

none

Public Hearing: Revised Private Waste Hauler Regulations, re-instatement

Dr. Rhoads explained that the regulations are being updated based on the State mandates and Town guidance. Dr. Oberlin motioned to open the hearing, Ms. Wilson seconded. All voted Yes unanimously.

Mr. Kilian Flynn of Casella Waste Management commented that he has no issues with the proposed updates to the regulations. Currently, their process is to determine the average weight of what they pick up and drop off to the appropriate locations. He said that Berkshire County is in a disposal crisis due to closures and the Pittsfield site is yet to be up and running. Haulers are bringing recycling to other processing sites as there is not a local facility, so this will drive costs up.

Ms. Wilson asked why we don't have a [local] recycling site. Mr. Flynn answered most likely due to volume. Adams currently goes to Pownal. There are plans to design a Transfer Station in Pittsfield and once built, ideally the Berkshire towns will bring it there. Until then, the Berkshire County towns are split bringing it to Pownal or Springfield. The whole idea is to reduce cost in transportation. Ms. Wilson asked what the facilities are doing with the product? Are they creating end products? Mr. Flynn said he cannot answer but can say the material goes through the Springfield facility which is contracted through the State that run by Waste Management which is then brought to their facility in Albany. The material is processed there and make it into a product such as bales of cardboard, paper, plastic and then brought to mills. Ms. Wilson expressed concern with the new recycling mandates, how do we get Berkshire County to embrace the idea of recycling especially if a facility is closer. Mr. Flynn said, education still has to happen.

Dr. Rhoads thanked Mr. Flynn

Mr. Duquette asked Ms. Wilson to clarify what she meant as a local facility to bring the recycling. Ms. Wilson answered to have a local recycling processing plant to save on transportation to have to bring it to Springfield or other locations. Mr. Flynn you would have to quantify the market to see if it would make sense to build a local facility.

Ms. Wandrei asked about the permit requirements for dumpsters. Mr. Duquette said that they haul their dumpsters through their Stanley's Lumber and haul it to Pownal. They should have a permit if they are picking up and/or hauling through Adams and should keep track of waste that they are pick up.

Dr. Oberlin motioned to close the public hearing. Ms. Wilson seconded. All voted Yes unanimously.

The Private hauler representatives left the meeting while the Board deliberated and finalized the verbiage of the rules and regulations.

Old Business:

- **Consideration of revised Private Waste Hauler Regulations**

The Board reviewed each of the highlighted edited sections of the regulations. Changes noted as follows:

Page 2:

Operate definition was adjusted from:

***Operate** shall mean collect, transfer, or transport Solid Waste or Recyclables generated within Adams.*

to:

***Operate** shall mean collect, transfer, or transport Solid Waste or Recyclables through or within Adams.*

Private Hauler definition was adjusted from:

***Private Hauler** shall mean any person or entity providing collection of Solid Waste and/or Recyclables for hire within the Town of Adams.*

to:

***Private Hauler** shall mean any person or entity providing collection of Solid Waste and/or Recyclables for hire through or within the Town of Adams.*

Residential Customers/Generators definition was adjusted from:

***Residential Customers/Generators** shall mean property owners and occupants of single and multi-family dwellings, condominiums, public housing, and mobile homes within the Town of Adams*

to:

***Residential Customers/Generators** shall mean property owners and occupants of single and multi-family dwellings, condominiums, public housing, and pre-manufactured housing within the Town of Adams*

Dr. Rhoads mentioned that they will provide educational materials .

Dr. Rhoads requested a motion to accept the regulations as edited. Dr. Oberlin so moved, Ms. Wilson seconded. All voted YES unanimously. Dr. Rhoads will finalize the document and forward to the Town Clerk for posting on the website.

Approval of Minutes:

- **July 6**
- **August 3**

Dr Rhoads suggested to postpone approval until October so all the members have had a chance to review and vote

Code Enforcement Officer: Welcome to Sarah Lesure

Dr. Rhoads welcomed Sarah Lesure. Mrs. Lesure is 3 weeks into the position. Dr. Rhoads said that the Board is here to help her and vice versa.

Old Business, continued:

- **Review of board's coronavirus message (posted on town website)**
Dr. Rhoads did not change the message as of yet. He thought of removing it as there is a lot of information out there. Dr. Oberlin reviewed it and said that it can remain as is until the new vaccine comes out.
- **Promoting public health, tentatively *Adams Wellness Initiative 2023: Planning task force update***
Mr. Rosenberg said they are in their planning stage currently. He introduced Rob Patterson to help in the promotion and graphic arts. The plan is to start the program January of 2023, while people may be thinking of their New Year's resolutions. They are working with organizations to set up their own team and the teams would set their own goals ie: weight loss, counting steps, practicing yoga, and hold each other accountable. Peer support is one of the key things in behavior change. Even in the winter months, there are businesses that can be a resource for people's goals, such as Cutting Edge Fitness, massage. And there are hiking trails for snowshoeing, walking, cross country skiing. Ms. Wilson asked if there would be businesses that would host and provide space for the community to meet. Mr. Rosenberg said that is part of the initiative to find out what the resources will be. They are in the process of applying for the grant. , Erin Lenski who was here for the meeting, but had to leave. She is the Wellness Program Manager. Mr. Patterson is working on a logo. The name of the Wellness initiative is "Up & Adams!". They are looking for corporate sponsors as well. More details to follow.

New Business:

- **Any? none**

Local & County Updates:

- **988 suicide prevention call center has launched, available by phone or text (on BOH web page)**
Dr. Rhoads said that the 988 suicide prevention call center has launched. It is staffed locally. It is now noted on the Town website Board of Health page.
- **August 31: BOH 101 – Orientation for new members (comments?)**
The Board members and Mrs. Lesure were unable to attend due to other commitments
- **Other?**
None

Upcoming Events:

- **September 8: Drinking water seminar**

Dr. Rhoads has not signed up as of yet but plans to attend. It deals with public water and well water supplies. Mr. Garner clarified that the building code requires a well is dug and does not need to be potable water. The Board of Health requires permitting and testing and upon getting the results, sends to the Board of Health. Testing after that is the responsibility of the homeowner. The Board of Health would also get involved if a septic system is leaking and spreading.

- **September 14: Harm Reduction van**

Review Mail:

- **Public Health Excellence Grant Program: Capacity assessment (email 8/23/22)**

Dr. Rhoads had sent this to the Town Administrator, Jay Green. Since he had not heard, he will assume that he would be the Health Dept lead in terms of answering their initial questions about assessment. They had asked for some inspectional records and will reach out to Mr. Garner for information.

- **BCBOHA Calendar: Note upcoming conferences, meetings, etc.; funds available for attendance**

Dr. Rhoads shared the calendar on screen and had been emailed to the members. He will attend some of the events. He asked if there is money in the training fund. Mr. Garner said that budget is being used to train Mrs. Lesure.

For the Good of the Order

none

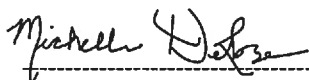
Schedule Next Meetings: October 12 (Thoughts on next informational session)

Dr. Rhoads will organize a booth for the Ramblefest event (12-5pm) which is October 9. Dr. Oberlin will not be available. Ms. Wilson will try to be there. Dr. Rhoads will invite Jim Wilusz regarding tobacco awareness to our next meeting for informational session. Ms. Wilson inquired about educational programs at the schools. Dr. Rhoads said there is something called 84.org he believes is the name of it. He explained that Ms. Brewer, a previous member of the Board, is an educator of tobacco and its ill effects. It is unclear if there are educational programs and the Board is not involved.

Adjournment:

Dr. Oberlin motioned to adjourn. Ms. Wilson seconded. All voted Yes unanimously. Adjourned at 6:03pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Michelle DeRose
Administrative Assistant

11/29/2022

Date