



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH BOARD OF HEALTH

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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Glenn French, Esq
Dilip Jain, M.D.
Theresa Capobianco, Esq
Lisa Bennett Johnson, DHSc, MPH, RDH, CPH, MCHES

TOWN: Kristin Black, PhD, MS, Health Director
Angie Sowden, Administrative Assistant
Michael Seager, Health Agent

OTHER: Lisa Maselli, Select Board Liaison
John Johnson, Resident

The Board of Health (BOH) met on **Tuesday, November 14, 2023**, in The Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room. The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chair, Glenn French.

1. **162 Whitney Street Geothermal Well Variance**

Summary of the project presented by Dr. Kristin Black

Kristin Black clarified that the homeowners plan to set up a closed loop geothermal system for heating their residence. Currently, the Town of Northborough lacks specific regulations for geothermal systems, with such installations falling under the umbrella of traditional well regulations. However, impending changes will bring all wells under state regulations rather than town-specific ones.

In Northborough's existing well regulations, the proposed geothermal system would necessitate a variance due to its proximity to the septic leaching pits, falling short of the required 100-foot distance. Conversely, the State's geothermal system regulations stipulate a 25-foot distance from wells to leaching pits, placing the proposed system within compliance at the state level. While Kristin Black isn't overly concerned about the distance from the geothermal wells to the septic leaching pits, her focus lies on the proximity of the wells to the town water line. She seeks clarification on a note in the plans indicating "cut/cap water service" and intends to request further explanation from the engineers involved.

Concerns were raised by Board Members and Abutter

John Johnson, an abutter to 162 Whitey Street, raised concerns regarding potential contaminants in the geothermal system should a leak occur.

Glenn French seeks a comprehensive understanding of the operational mechanics behind closed-loop geothermal systems.

Theresa Capobianco wishes to ascertain the distance between neighboring wells and the proposed geothermal system. Additionally, she expresses concern due to the property's location within a ground water overlay district, seeking clarification on any associated risks or concerns.

Conclusion

It was agreed that the ongoing discussion would resume during the next meeting, potentially with the attendance of the engineer and installer to address the raised concerns and queries. The board expressed a preference for relocating the wells farther away from both the leaching pits and the town water line.

This proposed adjustment would necessitate a single variance concerning the distance of the well from the property line. As per Town of Northborough well regulations, wells should maintain a 30-foot distance from the property line. However, by repositioning the wells away from the leaching pits and town water line, they would now be approximately 10 feet from the property line. While aligning with state regulations, this adjustment would not comply with the specifics of the Town of Northborough.

Angie Sowden has been tasked with generating a report detailing the number of other geothermal wells previously installed in Northborough.

2. Supporting Family and Youth Services Department – Presented by Dr. Kristin Black

June David-Fors, the director of Family and Youth Services, retired on September 30, 2023. The administrative professional and counselor have also transitioned out of the department. To fill the gap, the Health Department has temporarily provided support, but this is not a sustainable solution. Recognizing the interconnectedness between the Health Department and Family and Youth Services, Kristin Black is considering merging Health and Human Services, a move adopted by several other towns. Her aim is to propose the establishment of a combined Health and Human Services department and have it voted on at the next Town Meeting. This proposal would include the necessary staff to ensure the efficient operation of the merged department.

3. Drug Free Community Updates – Information Presented by Dr. Kristin Black

The grant is in place, and the funds are secure. Kristin Black clarified that they're currently in the interview phase. The interview panel includes Kristin Black, Mary Ellen Duggan, Southborough/Northborough School District Nurse Leader, and Shannon Kinayman, who serves as Southborough's Youth and Family Services Program Coordinator and chairs the Encompass program. The aim is to start interviews in December.

4. Flu Clinics – Updates Presented by Dr. Kristin Black

The flu clinics were a great success, especially with the new drive-through set up at the High School, which proved more efficient. Over 400 shots were given across locations like the High School, Senior Center, Town Hall, and the Shelter. A special acknowledgment goes to Wegman's for their partnership in providing the high-dose vaccine. Gratitude is extended to the Northborough DPW, the Northborough IT department, Isabella Caruso, Erin Couillard, Penny Giacobbi, and the Honor Society scribes for their invaluable contributions.

5. Emergency Assistance Shelter – Update Presented by Dr. Kristin Black

The site has been extended until March 30, 2024. Presently, we are accommodating 28 families, totaling 96 individuals, including 5 pregnancies. To enhance services, the State has increased transportation support. Thanks to the volunteered efforts of Kathy Dalglish, a retired Northborough Cable employee, we've established a dedicated kids' room. This space caters to 27 children under 4 years old who need a safe area for play and learning, especially as the weather changes. Both the YMCA and the library will be contributing programs to enrich the kids' room. We are seeking volunteers to help in two-hour increments to supervise the kid's room. Volunteers will need to have a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) on file.

6. Any Other Business to Come Before the Board

None

7. Approval of September 12, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Insufficient attendance for a quorum. Deferred to the next meeting.

8. Establish a Tentative Future Meeting Date: December 12, 2023

All board members unanimously agreed on scheduling a tentative future meeting date for December 12, 2023

MOTION: Glenn French made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:54pm.
Lisa Bennet Johnson Seconded, Motion Carried 4-0

Respectfully Submitted,
Angie Sowden
Administrative Assistant, Health Department