

Charlemont Board of Health Minutes

September 23, 2025

Zoom

Present: Doug Telling, Rob Lingle, Scott Randall, Star Atkeson - secretary

Guests: Kurt Schellenberg, Ashley Sparks

Lingle called the meeting to order at 6:05

**6:15 PM Ashley Sparks to present proposal for a bylaw that limits the use of herbicides near our private wells**

- Ashley wanted to speak about protecting the water that feeds shallow wells in town. Deerfield is Class B. Rivers with Class A designations have protections from pesticides and herbicides, with no spray zones. If Downtown was designated as a wellhead district it could adopt class A regulations. They could possibly pick and choose the relevant regulations to adopt.
- She spoke of a proposal to spray 2 acres of Japanese knotweed with Roundup with Woodlands Partnership funding at Hawlemont. She noted that right now there are no restrictions to doing that through Dept. of Ag., but they can restrict such activity by getting downtown designated as a wellhead district thereby following class A water regulations. There would be no spray zones on 400 feet either side of the river, railbed included.
- Lingle asked if she knows of evidence of pesticides in the wells, Ashley responded that she has read that it shows up in shallow wells as broken down into something else. Schellenberg said that the usual testing is for nitrates, fecal, ammonia and E. coli. To do a full chemical test would get expensive so isn't done as a matter of course.
- Lingle likes the idea of a wellhead district, suggests she look at private well regulations that are already in place.
- Wellfleet has a wellhead district, using State regulations. Lingle said it would need to be agreeable to people in town. They'd like to know what would be involved with having a wellhead district. Whether it would involve more septic and river

regulation. There would be some jurisdictional issues around roads and railroads and questions of interfacing with wastewater treatment and Title V.

- The Board spoke about the conversation with the Railroad they had had in the past and that it was pointed out that Roundup was the least egregious herbicide on the list of option according to the EPA attorney. Pan AM has a spray plan, Lingle can email it to Ashley.
- Ashley said that the Courts have recognized health issues around Roundup, there have been 11 billion in various settlements, paid out. It's used in the US, but Europe opposes it. The World Health organization has concerns about Roundup; she can send the information.
- There is MassDEP data on wells, public, private and depths. Schellenberg suggested testing a well before and after spraying. People are on sewer in the village center district, although not everyone is connected, there may be issues with septic repair under class A regulations.
- Randall would like to have some baseline data. Ashley thinks it would be good to get funding to have the wells tested. There was a state PFAS testing program a few years back so there is some existing data.
- Woodland Partnership may be able to help
- They suggest reviewing material and having a joint meeting with the Conservation Commission in January

**Action:**

Approval of the Minutes of 5/20/2025 and 7/15/2025

Lingle made a motion to accept the Minutes as written. Telling seconded the motion. Telling —yes, Lingle—yes.

**Discussion:**

1. Oxbow - Recent complaints (lack of heat - marijuana smoke) and present status.  
Lingle suggested saving Oxbow for next meeting. Travis DeCere sent an explanatory email which could be attached to the Minutes.

2. 119 Main - High street fencing and pavement

J.Ward described the situation, It was a road crew thing. There was an argument over some stone at the top floor's entranceway, and there is concern about regulation on dog waste. Crochier thinks it's a BOH issue. Where there are bathing beaches it's a state issue. Some Towns have a "pick up after your dog" rule. The Town Clerk told the person with the complaint to put in a petition about it.

3. Trailer park on Zoar road - abandoned cars piling up

Woodland Trailer Park, got a complaint from the neighbor that a lot of derelict cars and car parts are collecting, similar to the 8A situation, along Zoar road. Cars can leech chemicals into the water. Residents have been complaining about water and have been asking if the water has been tested.

The BOH reply to the water complaint was that it was a State issue, the DEP have visited a few times in the last year and are dealing with the brown water situation.

Rob remembers being on the Earth Removal Committee, there was a huge loader working in pit. The sides were steep; it could have had an impact on the water supply. Did DEP connect that? The Bureau of Mines is in charge and they do not distribute reports. It was into the ground water, loader went in, maybe didn't come out.

\*unforeseen within the last 48 hours. There was a dog bite, triggering a 10-day quarantine order. There have been 3 quarantines this year; 3 positives in the surrounding towns. In the past when there is a known rabid animal on the loose, it has gone up on the website. Telling will talk to Sarah about it.

**Recurring Topics:**

1. Health Agent Report

Schellenberg has been doing Title V's,

- 42 Burrington Road blew out their septic, there is a plan put in by Shawn Kimberley for heavy usage. The designer who designed the 2300-gallon system is not qualified to design over 2000. It's not allowed to be a gravity system; it exceeds the nitrogen loading threshold. They hope they find a new engineer; he's not a registered sanitarian; the system was in failure.

- Bill Coli has a new system going in on Warner Hill. He doesn't want to disturb the line of Maples and is using plastic poly instead of concrete.
- Health agents no longer need to review Hinata's septic as the sewer district took it over.
- There have been additional perc tests and Title v's

There is a Covid and Flu vaccine clinic happening on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of October, and a clinic coming to Hawlemont sponsored by Big Y.

The District annual meeting is on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday, with MDAR guest speaker.

Meeting was adjourned @7:00 pm

These minutes are not official until signed.

#### Documents Reviewed

- Agenda 9/23/2025
- Minutes 5/20/2025, 7/15/2025