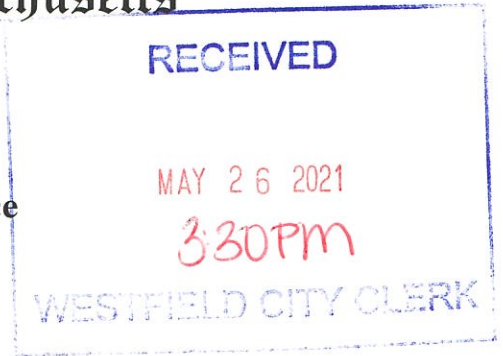


# City of Westfield, Massachusetts

## Health Department

### Board of Health Meeting Via Zoom video conference

April 14, 2021  
6:00 PM



Present: Juanita Carnes, Chair Margaret Doody

Ms. Carnes opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m. There was no one present wishing to speak during public participation. Minutes from the March 10, 2021 meeting were reviewed and accepted as printed. A motion was made and seconded to approve the March 10, 2021 meeting minutes.

*The vote was as follows:*

Carnes	–	Yes
Doody	–	Yes

All in favor, the Motion was declared passed.

Signature Authority for Assistant Health Director: Mr. Rouse requested that the Board vote to give the Assistant Health Director, Debra Mulvenna, authority to sign, in his absence, all invoices, hours and payroll registers, and all other documents being forwarded to the Auditor's office for processing. A motion was made and seconded to give Debra Mulvenna authority to sign, in the absence of Director Joseph Rouse, all documents previously stated.

*The vote was as follows:*

Carnes	–	Yes
Doody	–	Yes

All in favor, the Motion was declared passed.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH:**

COVID-19 Update and Discussion: The Covid numbers are down from last week. There were 47 new cases and 62 in isolation, down from 68 new cases and 99 in isolation last week. The state's numbers are going down as well. This may change, however, as a result of school vacations. City Hall is scheduled to re-open on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

C.O.R.E. Update: Kathi Cotugno introduced Liz Whynott, Director of Harm Reduction Programs at Tapestry Health. Recently, Tapestry Health sponsored a Narcan training zoom meeting in which 15 residents attended. Ms. Whynott described the function of Tapestry Health and provided a Power Point presentation of the many services offered, one of which is a needle exchange program. She indicated that they are in possession of a van which would bring this program and other services to Westfield if approved. Currently, approximately 250 individuals from Westfield are seen in other communities because there is no program offered in Westfield. Ms. Cotugno indicated that the police are onboard with this program. She also stated that, since January, there have been 14 non-fatal overdoses, 2 confirmed deaths, and 2 pending deaths. It was noted that the children of Westfield rank higher than the national average in their use of alcohol, marijuana and tobacco;

and they are experiencing a mental health fall-out as well due to Covid. Ms. Carnes noted that the goal of the Board is the health of the community and she believes this program would be an asset. Mr. Rouse stated that, although the Board may be the approving authority, the City Council would need to be notified prior to implementation. He also believed that this program should be done in steps and further discussions had as there may be controversy among residents. Ms. Whynott explained the procedures needed to implement this program and the types of services to be offered (i.e. syringe distribution, HIV and HepC testing and counselling, overdose prevention through education, distribution of Narcan, referral to substance use treatment and medical care) . A motion was made and seconded to allow Tapestry Health to serve the citizens of Westfield by providing syringe distribution, testing, education and other services which may be helpful for residents.

*The vote was as follows:*

Carnes	–	Yes
Doody	–	Yes

All in favor, the Motion was declared passed.

Ms. Cotugno advised the Board that she has submitted an application for the Noble grant and should know by May 1<sup>st</sup> whether or not Westfield is qualified.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:**

#### **Septic Variance Requests for 234 Granville Rd. and 215 Belanger Rd.:**

215 Belanger Rd.: Inspector Thomas Hibert indicated that a plan had been submitted and a request for a septic variance made. Although the property receives its water from Southampton, the parcel is located in Westfield. This is a 2-bedroom dwelling with the original existing system closer to the pond side. The neighboring well located at 216 Belanger Rd. is 51' away and the well at 210 Belanger Rd. is 69' away. The normal setback is 100'. The code allows for a variance of 50'-100' usually with routine testing of those wells. The septic tank at 214 Belanger Rd. is 8' away (normal setback 10') and its leach field is 5' (normal setback 10'). Mr. Hibert read Title 5 regulations to the Board and indicated that he had spoken with DEP. Neither Mr. Hibert nor DEP are comfortable with the plan as submitted. It was suggested that an effluent T filter be added. The homeowner and Barry Searle, installer, described in detail the proposed system to be installed and what they are doing to protect neighboring wells. It was noted that adjacent property owners were notified and the green cards have been signed and returned. Present at this meeting were James Mooney, owner of 215 Belanger Rd. and Barry Searle, septic installer. Neighbors who were notified but were not present were: Lori Ann Jones and Daniel Jones of 216B Belanger Rd. (card signed on March 24), Gerald Houle and Mary Houle of 214B Belanger Rd. (card signed on March 24), and Brian Card of 210 Belanger Rd. (card signed and stamped March 25). It was verified that there were no technical difficulties which would have prevented these people from attending this evening's meeting. Mr. Hibert suggested that a written statement be provided which would indicate what is being done to reach maximum feasible compliance including whether there are any other options which would make this safer for neighboring wells, any secondary treatment or IA technology which could be of use; as well as demonstrate how a fully-compliant system would be manifestly unjust (i.e. not economically feasible). It should also be documented that a pre-treatment system was considered and determined not to be required as it would be economically

unfeasible. It was also suggested that the neighboring wells' water quality be tested with the results received and approved prior to construction, and, based on those results, retested after six months of the system being in use and then once again after one year.

A motion was made and seconded to grant the variance at 215 Belanger Rd. for the current design of the septic system as submitted to the Health Department with the conditions that are outlined in these minutes to the satisfaction of the department.

*The vote was as follows:*

Carnes	–	Yes
Doody	–	Yes

All in favor, the Motion was declared passed.

Ms. Carnes suggested that a letter be drafted detailing all of the provisions requested, which Mr. Searle indicated would be very helpful. Mr. Rouse and Mr. Hibert both agreed to provide Mr. Searle with that letter.

234 Granville Rd.: Mr. Thomas Hatton, son of the current owner of the property, was introduced to the Board. Thomas Hibert addressed the Board stating that the current septic system at this address was the original system installed in 1964. It contains a 900 gallon tank with a seepage pit. It is a flag lot with two homes set back 200'-300' from the road with a shared driveway. It has failed a Title 5 inspection and, based on current regulations, a new system would need to be connected to the City sewer. This request for a variance is being made based on economic hardship. An estimate of \$35,000 was provided by Berry Construction to include a 300' trench to the road and a pump which would be required to hook in to city sewer. A new septic system would offer an equivalent level of protection and cost at least \$15,000 less than the sewer connection. There are no wells or wetlands in the area. The soil conditions are known and well drained with no high ground water. A motion was made and seconded to grant the septic variance at 234 Granville Road, due to financial hardship, to not be required to hook up to city sewer but rather install a new septic system at this property.

*The vote was as follows:*

Carnes	–	Yes
Doody	–	Yes

All in favor, the Motion was declared passed.

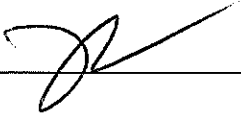
### **INSPECTIONAL SERVICES:**

Proposal to Develop a Westfield Apiary Regulation: Mr. Rouse has been communicating with Councilor Onyski regarding his constituents concerns with beekeeping at private homes. It was believed among the Board members that no permit or fee would be necessary and that anyone wishing to keep bees should follow and comply with a professional association's guidelines. In addition, abutters should be notified as well as the City. The City would keep a registry of those beekeepers and, should it be determined that those individuals are not in compliance with the guidelines set forth, the Health Department could step in and declare it to be a nuisance. Mr. Rouse will draft and bring the proposed regulation to the Board for their review.

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With no further items on the agenda to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Minutes approved by:



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*Next anticipated meeting date: May 12, 2021*