



BOARD OF HEALTH

Joint Meeting with Select Board

Town of Nantucket
3 East Chestnut Street
Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554

www.nantucket-ma.gov

Commissioners: Stephen Visco (chair), Malcolm MacNab, MD, PHD (Vice chair), James Cooper, Meredith Lepore, Melissa Murphy Select Board

Staff: Roberto Santamaria, Artell Crowley, Kathy LaFavre, Anne Barrett, Madison Humphrey

~~ MINUTES ~~

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

This meeting was held via remote participation using ZOOM and YouTube,

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Regarding Open Meeting Law

Called to order the Select Board Meeting at 2:00 p.m. by Ms. Hill Holdgate

Announcements

Called to order the BOH Meeting at 2:04 p.m. by Mr. Visco

Staff: Libby Gibson, Town Manager; Gregg Tivnan, Assistant Town Manager; Roberto Santamaria, Health Director; Chuck Larson, Special Projects Manager; Erika Mooney, Operations Administrator; Mark Willet, Manager Wannacomet Water Company; Terry Norton, Minutes Taker

BOH Attendees: Stephen Visco, Chair; Malcolm MacNab, Vice chair; James Cooper; Melissa Murphy

BOH Absent: Meredith Lepore

Select Board Attendees: Dawn Hill Holdgate, Chair; Matt Fee; Jason Bridges; Melissa Murphy; Kristie Ferrantella

Speakers: Andy Miller, Project Manager CDM Smith; Erik Spargimino, CDM Smith; Dora Chang, CDM Smith; Melissa Harclerode, CDM Smith; Angela Gallagher, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Town Counsel: John Giorgio, K&P

Documents used: Agenda Item Summary re: PFAS; Updated Preliminary Assessment of PFAS Presence - Town-wide Planning Approach (PowerPoint); PFAS Risk Assessment Contract; Communication Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan Scope of Work; Meredith Lepore's written statement

Agenda adopted by unanimous consent

PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS)

a. Island-wide Risk Assessment Report

Discussion **Gibson** – In June 2020, the Select Board, BOH, and Airport Commission started working on ground contamination of PFAS at the airport and Island wide. In July, we hired our consultant, CDM Smith to do a Town-wide assessment of potential sources contributing to PFAS contamination. Information gathered from that assessment will help identify actions needed to meet regulatory guidelines, some of which have not yet been developed. The intent was to have a draft report for this meeting but that did not happen. Today we will receive an update on the Island-wide PFAS risk assessment.

Miller – PFAS is an emerging compound in the early stages of understanding its impact on human health, the environment, and how it migrates. As a result of its being a new science and as more data comes in, our recommendations could change.

PowerPoint® presentation: short- and long-term objectives; what the assessment objectives do not do; scope of work; PFAS cycle and transport; PFAS cycle at the Nantucket landfill; qualitative

assessment of concerns; public water testing status; Town compost testing status; Town-wide reduction and planning action items; challenges; and Town key messages.

PFAS are also in products we use in our homes and become waste in trash and sewage. There could be leachate in the unlined landfill cells and potentially going into the ground water. Airport and Fire Department fire-suppression foam is also a source. There are no PFAS concentrations in public water above the DEP safe-drinking water standards. Regulations regarding compost and biosolids don't exist yet. We have a lot to learn about PFAS on Nantucket as well as nation-wide. No negligent practices were identified during this process and PFAS loading appears to be limited to municipal solid waste generation and wastewater.

Bridges – Asked if there is a time frame for 2020 test results.

Miller – The sample of the co-compost was collected around 28 October; we just received the data and are currently interpreting it. We hope to provide the data and interpretation later this month.

Bruce Mandel – We understand nothing is currently happening that is generating PFAS; however, for decades, we've been using unlined cells at the Landfill; we never completed mining the unlined cells elements still remain. Every time it rains or snow melts, it leeches into the groundwater. He detected PFAS elements in his well. Asked what mitigation measures would be needed.

Miller – Unlined landfills were receptors of products containing PFAS, and that is a fair concern. He recommends landfill monitoring be extended to include PFAS; DEP regulations don't yet require landfill testing for PFAS. If Nantucket undertakes that testing, it will be one of the first municipalities to do that. Suggested further testing of down gradient wells.

Ayesha Khan – When we say we have a sole aquifer and there is no PFAS in it, she has trouble understanding where private wells are getting the PFAS.

Willett – We've studied this and the aquifer; about 80 feet down is a glacial confining unit; public water is drawn from below that. Most wells draw between 15 and 20 feet.

Meredith Lepore – Read her statement concerning the health of the Island and protecting the people from high levels of PFAS. Asked why it took over a year for a report to be released and in the interim why the landfill allowed people to continue taking contaminated compost, which people use for their vegetable gardens.

Miller – We recognize those concerns. It was in August of 2019 that the co-compost was no longer available to the public; that roughly coincides with the taking of samples.

Chang – PFAS has large molecules that don't dissolve easily in water. Science is still studying how PFAS moves from soil to water and gets taken up into plants. A good practice is to ensure you wash your vegetables carefully and be sure not to consume any of the compost.

Larson – There is no DEP standard for PFAS in compost material; DEP will use information gathered from Nantucket and other municipalities to set a standard. Data was collected in 2019 but the Town didn't get that data until October 2020. We were surprised as well that work was being done.

MacNab – There's a lot of concern in the delay. Asked why there was a delay. As a result, a lot of people think there was a cover up.

Larson – There was no DEP requirement for PFAS testing; the testing was something Waste Options took upon themselves to be proactive.

Miller – The data from a year ago came to light in October during our study and from asking questions. The problem is that sampling wasn't done using appropriate protocols so was questioned after the fact, and the lab used was not approved. As a result, that data is not verifiable. Samples collected October 28th were done using proper protocol and the lab testing the samples was approved in advance; that data will be used moving forward. Waste Options is required by DEP to sample quarterly; further testing of the landfill will be done.

Spargimino – The limit for PFAS in drinking water is not a fair comparison to PFAS concentrations found in soil or compost. DEP is now looking at the science available to consider concentration thresholds in biosolids to protect human health.

Emily Molden, Nantucket Land Council – Noticed on the source chart, that it wasn't consistent how comprehensive the media impact was. Receptors were not listed for sources like leachate, from compost and septic, reaching surface water with fish and shellfish.

Miller – We can look at that closer. We were looking at the immediate or connected pathways. Long Pond and wetlands are within overland flow from the landfill. Discharge from septic around other ponds would enter ground water and flow into surface water bodies with fish and shellfish.

Molden – Glad the Town is taking these steps forward. Asked about the report.

Miller – In the past week, we received comments from various Town departments. There is now a lot of information to go through. We hope to issue the report in January and set up a plan for a sampling program to be initiated next year.

Larson – We'd like to get something sooner rather than later; he'd like to get a report out by the end of this month.

Visco – The State is going through well and water testing and published a list of towns that will receive free testing funds. Nantucket wasn't on that list. Asked what Nantucket's ratio is since there is funding available for testing.

Gallagher – All BOHs should have received a letter. Nantucket was not on the list but that doesn't mean Nantucket won't be sampled. You can go to a website and request sampling. She reached out to Mr. Larson for a map of the Town to review the water distribution system; Nantucket has a lot of private wells. She will provide a link in the chat for interested residents to sign up for testing.

Visco – We have Town water all over the place; but people fight to keep their private wells. If Town water is in front of you, you should hook up.

Murphy – Asked the Town's timeline regarding the next step when we get an update on progress.

Larson – We'd like to get the final draft report out and circulated then have another joint meeting sometime in January.

Murphy – When the report comes out, asked if it will have recommendations in addition to the findings.

Larson – It should have recommendations as well as findings.

Miller – The recommendations will focus on data gaps. It will be hard to decide the best control efforts.

Leslie Forbes – About the compost, asked if compost is currently available.

Larson – When we talk about compost at the landfill, there are many different types. Co-compost includes sewer biosolids; that is regulated under the AOS permit and has not been distributed since August 2019 to the public. There are four other compost materials available: leaf and yard waste, mulch, top-soil, and sand. PFAS testing for MassDEP is only required for co-compost product. Some of the mulch was not available due to limitations of getting the equipment to the Island used to grind up the product.

Forbes – Asked if the piled-up windrows is co-compost.

Larson – We can sort that out. There are several windrows for the different material.

Forbes – Asked if there is information about PFAS in commercially available fertilizer.

Larson – He has to look into that. In time, we might sample some of those products.

Khan – Asked if there are plans to test the sewer plant leach field. She thinks as a community, we have a potential to make a big impact with lots of eyes on us; coming together like that could make an impact on other towns. Asked if we could start looking into commercial packaging to reduce PFAS in the landfill.

Miller – Surfside Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) residuals are in sludge taken to the landfill for use in compost. Liquid effluent in the infiltration beds, which are right on the coast and flow is in that direction; the ocean is so vast it isn't as much a concern, so he doesn't think the WWTP is impacting ground water. Recommends the two wells nearest the WWTP be tested for PFAS.

Larson – We have an opportunity to make an impact, this is a long-term project to reduce the levels and sources of PFAS on the island. This has to be community effort and we have multiple groups,

departments, and people working together on this. We have the PFAS@nantucket-ma.gov website for information.

Lepore – Urged the Town and everyone to be more transparent. Asked if the evaluations are looking at deer; we have a lot of hunters, and she saw studies where deer within a certain radius of military bases showed high levels of PFAS.

Miller – We have not specifically looked at wildlife. The cycle we presented talks in general about natural receptors but not about wildlife that could be consumed. He would recommend that testing sometime down the road. Moving forward, we can identify what impacts there might be.

Larson – Seeing written comments from Public Works Director Rob McNeil who says they are considering gathering samples from deer; also, he said deer carcasses are fed into the composter. It would be nice to see in writing what that sampling would look like; there are no standards available at this time.

Lepore – She has names of labs that would do testing on deer livers.

Mandel – Mr. Miller mentioned sampling fish; he recalls there was some benthic study for Long Pond around where it intersects with Hither Creek and Madaket Ditch to see how the pond is responding to nitrogen loading; that study talked about the growing population of small fish. Asked if that study can that be expanded to touch on PFAS.

Larson – Need to put that study on the follow-up list. The Nantucket Land Council took fish tissue samples for the testing over a year ago. That is an area Mr. McNeil might be more familiar with.

Visco – Suggested checking with Natural Resources; it was part of the estuaries study.

Gibson – This is the Town Administration's number one activity and we are trying to be as transparent as possible.

Hill Holdgate – We appreciate the work that's been done on this and the Town making it a top priority.

Motion to adjourn the BOH meeting 3:35 p.m. (made by: Murphy) (second)

Roll-call vote: Carried unanimously//Cooper, MacNab, Murphy, and Visco-aye

Motion to adjourn the Select Board meeting 3:35 p.m. (made by: Murphy) (second)

Roll-call vote: Carried unanimously//Murphy, Bridges, Ferrantella, Fee, and Holdgate-aye

Submitted by:

Terry L. Norton