

**TOWNSEND BOARD OF HEALTH**

272 Main Street

Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

***Christopher Nocella, Chairman James Le’Cuyer, Vice-Chairman Gavin Byars, Clerk***

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**October 12, 2021, at 6:00pm., EST**

**Board of Health members and staff will meet in the Selectmen’s Chamber at Memorial Hall**

# PRELIMINARIES

* 1. Roll Call
  2. Additions or Deletions not anticipated 48 hours in advance

APPOINTMENT/HEARINGS

* 1. Public Hearing: Shepherd Farm – location of a poultry processing facility at 3-Wheeler Road
  2. COVID Update – Library and Senior Center mask discussion

ADJOURNMENT

**The Board of Health meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.**

* 1. All members were present. Chairman Chris Nocella, Vice-Chairman James/Jim Le’Cuyer, Clerk Gavin Byars, Rick Metcalf, Carla Hitzenbuhler
     1. Others Present: Gary and Andrew Shepherd, Veronica Kell, Chaz Sexton-Diranian, Kevin Smith, James Deroian, Joan Savoy, Bill Cadogan, Ross Perry, Eric Chartrand, and others
  2. Chairman Nocella moved the COVID discussion before the public hearing to give a brief synopsis of how badly the positive rates are for Townsend relative to the County and state of Massachusetts. He would like to recommend the Board propose to the Selectmen to have masks worn in all town buildings until the State has changed. Vice-Chairman questions if people are vaccinated it will apply to which Chairman Nocella requested all people whether people are fully vaccinated or not. Rick Metcalf reminded the Board medical exemptions can be children under five to which the State recommends, as well as medical reasons do not need messages. **CN moved, JL 2nd.** Discussion Ross Perry recommends anyone who is in the office themselves would not need to wear a mask unless there are two or more people. Veronica Kell asked how the State recommended exactly. Rick Metcalf noted you cannot ask for medical cards stating a reason. Chair clarified the two selectmen present does not constitute a joint meeting as one is there for the Board liaison and the other is there as a resident. **The motion has been moved and a vote 3/0 all in favor.**
  3. **MOTION to open the Public Hearing at 6:07pm** for a poultry processing plant at 3-Wheeler Road. JL 2nd. Gary Shepherd reminds Chair the town will need to approve the location before the State can. Rick Metcalf refers to 2 MGL that must be approved. Section 151 which is what you are considering tonight. Section 143 has notification requirements and will be heard later. Rick Metcalf read Section 151 into record. Chris reminds the hearing they are there only to vote on the location. Jim Le’Cuyer asked if they would be doing any cattle or just poultry and if anyone is town can bring their birds there. Gary Shepherd stated yes but explained no cattle, but he has questions why a site plan review needs to be completed in a Right to Farm Town. Gary explained they are allowed to process up to 20,000 birds. He noted limited number of plants in the New England area and they in need process their farm animals and will include others that meet the criteria. It was asked if they will be a bigger plant in the future. Gary stated aims for a USDA stamp because they strive for sanitary, humane, and other conditions. They will be putting in a new water supply and septic with tight tanks. Rick and Gary debated the difference between tight tanks and industrial holding tanks. Joan Savoy asked about wastewater treatment approvals which is the State’s responsibility and not the Town of Townsend. Veronica Kell asked if this approval is for just the Town or a specific location. The Board was unsure, and the Building Inspector gave a discussion on what the Right to Farm means and how noise and smells will not be addressed. Veronica debated if this is an industrial facility as opposed to everyday farming use. Building Commissioner states no. Bill Cadogan asked if the building will be used as a retail traffic. Gary stated for 10 years he has been selling produce at his ice cream stand and there has been no traffic issues. 3,000 turkeys this fall will go to Rutland and Worcester and 1,000 are on Lunenburg Road. It is not a goal for retail.

**Chairman Nocella make a MOTION to approve the facility in Townsend** and that they send a letter to State so they can continue their process to get their facility up and running. Jim Le’Cuyer asked about year-round facility. Late spring summer fall will be quiet. The State license are up to 20,000 birds. **JL 2nd the MOTION Voting 3/0 all in favor.**

The Board decided to hold the public hearing for Section 143 on October 29th at 930am. They discussed the procedure of 300ft abutter notifications will need to be sent out. Rick reminded the Board the process is quite lengthy and distributed it to the Shepherds. Joan Savoy asked if the meeting at 930am meeting the laws to which it is. Veronica Kell requested a ZOOM link for those who cannot get there or are uncomfortable with the masks. Ross stated it was appropriate to have a ZOOM meeting and Ross would set it up. **GB made a MOTION to close the public hearing at 6:53pm. JL 2nd, Voting 3/0 all in favor.**

**A MOTION was made by JL and 2nd by CN to adjourn the meeting at 6:55pm. Voting 3/0 all in favor.**