

**Easthampton Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2022
50 Payson Ave., Easthampton, MA 01027**

PRESENT: Maggie Hebert (MH); Aimee Petrosky (AP); Beth Rist (BR); Bri Eichstaedt (BE), Health Director, Brian Chapdelaine (BC), Health Inspector; Jackie Sienkiewicz (JS), Recorder.

Also Present: Megan Ward Harvey (MH), Bridget Diggins (BD), David Mintz (DM), George Demsick (GD).

Meeting held on Zoom and recorded.

Motions

A motion to open the meeting at 5:33 PM. was made by BR and seconded by MH. *All in favor – 3, Opposed – 0. Vote was taken by roll call.*

Public Speak Time: None

- **Hearing requested by Attorney David Mintz regarding an Order to Correct for 10 Grant St., issued to his client, George Demsick:** BE gave a brief overview of the situation at 10 Grant St. BE explained that she and BC have been to the property many times. BE stated that the relationship between the property owner and tenant is a tumultuous one. BE said that an Order to Correct, see attached, had been sent to GD and according to DM, most of the violations had already been corrected. BE expressed that although there are many factors involved in this case, as inspectors, BE & BC have to follow the code and respond to complaints as they come in, regardless of the history between the occupant and landlord.

DM wanted to make the BOH aware that his client has been a property owner for 20 years and rented to mostly otherwise homeless vets. DM stated that GD was trying to live up to the code. DM stated that GD had set traps and poison bait to curb the mice problem but that the tenant had responsibilities as well. Ed Brown, the occupant, has been told to not leave food out that would then attract more rodents. DM discussed the bathroom light fixture that had been cited. DM stated the Order cited the fan for not working; however, DM later submitted a letter to BE from a contractor stating that the vent component to this particular light fixture was never actually installed. BE explained that the fixture appeared to be a standard bathroom vent fixture, which is why it was cited as nonfunctional. DM stated that the order to clean the bathroom tub area was done with basic cleaning supplies. Again, DM stated that some of these issues or violations were due to the tenant not taking responsibility for basic tasks. DM stated that the violation related to the unfinished floor was due to the sink vanity being ripped out by the tenant and leaving the exposed floor.

AP discussed the practice of “cite what you see.” She explained that if an inspector goes into a bathroom and sees a light fixture that would normally also have an exhaust fan, then you cite that as a violation if it was not functioning. DM said that he would present to the BOH a letter from the contractor stating that this light never had an exhaust fan.

A motion was made by AP and seconded by BR to remove the violation from the Order to Correct, concerning the exhaust fan in the bathroom of 10 Grant St. The tenant will be instructed to open the bathroom window to allow proper ventilation. *All in favor: 3, opposed: 0. Vote taken by roll call.*

- **Discuss current COVID-19 case numbers, trends and metrics. To include update from contracted Epidemiologist Megan Ward Harvey & Public Health Nurse, Bridget Diggins:** MH gave a PowerPoint presentation, attached, to the BOH concerning the latest number and trend in Easthampton. MH discussed the “Flatten the Surge” concept and the use of higher-grade facemasks. BR and AP suggested using ARPA funds to obtain KN95 masks for residents. MH discussed the hospital capacity limits with the BOH. The BOH discussed using messaging boards placed throughout the City to promote the use of masks at this time. BD discussed COVID-19 transmission numbers were higher amongst work and at home.
- **Health Director General Update:** BE discussed with the BOH obtaining rapid at-home test kits that would be distributed to seniors, vets, rooming houses, and daycares. These groups were all identified as at risk. Inserts in English and Spanish would be distributed with the kits. BE announced to the BOH that Northampton Health Department would be merging their test site with Easthampton. The Millside Park test site will now be testing 5 days a week. BE acknowledged the combined help of the DPW and PD and several others. BE told the BOH that she would be taking time off from January 11th to January 18th to move into her new house. BE explained that she would be available by text but wasn’t sure about email due to lack of internet at first.

A motion was made by AP and seconded by BR to adjourn the meeting;. *All in favor: 3, Opposed 0. Vote taken by roll call.*

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.