

## PERU BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES

Monday October 16, 2023, 10:00 AM

Community Room 3 E Main Rd

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:04 AM
2. Roll call: present Peggy White, Nanette Mone, Darryl Darby and Valerie Bird Health Agent.
3. Nanette recording.
4. With regard to the minutes from 9/11/2023, Peggy pointed out a typo from steeping to stepping. She also questioned whether in fact Valerie had confirmed where the jams were being prepared at the Lions' Club; Valerie said yes. A motion was made to approve the minutes from 9/11/2023. All in favor.
5. Heath Inspector's report: there were no Title V or perc test this past month. She will be doing a perc test in two days at 10 Spruce Dr. The system at 234 E. Windsor Rd is complete and the COC has been issued. (A) There is a new "hogweed" complaint by a resident about those on the property at 55 E. Windsor Rd. although the hogweed is past the growing at this time. At issue is the same property going back to 2018; Peggy copied all the relevant minutes for Valerie so she could see what has been done and what the problems have been and are currently. There has been a lack of cooperation from the lawyers of the estate of the previous owner as well as the current owner(s), who are difficult to reach. Valerie will check land records for the current owner's address with a view to writing a letter stating that the board has no recourse but to go to court to gain access to the hogweed so that it can be eradicated. It is a seven-year process (tough plant!). The state MDAR has a free program but the owner has not taken advantage of it. Previously Peggy had gone to the selectmen about the plants in the town right of way. The BOS bypassed the MDAR program and has a contractor who is working on getting rid of that hogweed. It happens to be the same woman who does the state program, but is working with Peru privately. Justin is dealing with the contractor. Valerie thought that she might try to have a conversation with the owner, but Peggy said that in view of his history of (apparent) avoidance, it could take months. The board agreed. A motion was made that Valerie will write a letter detailing the next step in the process. All in favor. (B) Peggy asked about the situation on LaFayette Rd. Valerie said there was a septic design in place alleviating Peggy's concern. (C) Peggy was contacted by a resident who wanted to bury the cremations of his spouse on his property. He subsequently changed his mind. However, Valerie said that the regulations are that a plot would have to be surveyed for the burial, it would have to be recorded on the deed, the water table would have to be below 4 feet and the plot would have to be more than 100 feet from any nearby wells. (D) Update on 20 South Rd. Ext.: Valerie received a call from the owner Mr. Bachon (?). He wants a signoff from the BOH. Valerie said that we need a septic design. The owner said he has an outhouse and it is grandfathered. Valerie told him that is not the case with new construction. Also, there is no perc test on the property nor the lot next to it. Valerie did check with the building inspector and he did issue a building permit. Another problem is that the tax collector has taken the next step in a tax taking on the property. He has already invested a considerable amount of money building the house himself, but we don't know if it is to code. It is not finished. Valerie said that is not our jurisdiction, but the BI's. Mr. Bachon is going to

such as yurts and tents, although a permit for these is 30 days, not the 90 days for campers. Also, the codes would still have to be followed such as water, proper disposal of waste and heat after September 15<sup>th</sup>.

9. Rural Health Equity grant update: the chair assisted yoga started last Tuesday 10/10 and was well attended; it will continue for six weeks. After much discussion, the board decided on the final request to Jaymie vis-à-vis the total grant. Peggy will send out the form; then we wait for the approval and of course the funds which are sent by the US mail. Nanette will get a copy of the BOH grant ledger to track the balance. Peggy made a motion to finish up the grant allocation and "Hip - Hip Hooray" for Peru! All in favor. Peggy's enthusiasm and the board's is to be noted due to the fact that Peru was the only town (of those eligible) that went to the extent of making sure the grant money went directly to the residents.
10. The next meeting will be on November 14, 2023 at 10:30AM.
11. The agenda will include the inspector's report including hogweed update, wrap-up Rural Health Equity grant, emergency management, zoning board update from Darryl, the status of the well regulations and the fee schedule (Valerie's presentation).
12. A motion was made to adjourn at 11:43AM. All in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted as a draft by Nanette Mone 11/10/2023

Nanette Mone   
Peggy White   
Darryl Darby 

ATTACHMENT: VALERIE'S LETTER TO LLC SSE-WINDSOR RD.

RECEIVED  
NOV 15 2023  
Kim Leach  
TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF PERU

55 East Windsor Rd LLC

55 East Windsor Rd

Peru, MA 01235

10/26/2023

To the Property Owners:

The Board of Health has become aware of the presence of an invasive, noxious plant located on your property at 55 East Windsor Rd. *Heracleum mantegazzianum* also known as “Hogweed”. The hogweed sap can cause painful burns, scarring, and even blindness

The easiest way to identify giant hogweed is to **look for purple blotches and white hairs on the stem**. If the plant has both those qualities, there's a strong chance it's the real thing. **Keep an eye out in open sites** with lots of light and moist soil, as well as partially shaded areas along streams, rivers, and roads as well as in fields, forests, and yards.

As the property owner, it is entirely under your control. The Board of Health is making you aware of the dangers this poses to Abutters, Highway dept and you. In late summer/ early autumn one hogweed flower can release up to 20,000 seeds. Seeds can travel to roadsides, and abutting properties to unsuspecting neighbors.

The life cycle of giant hogweed consists of four phases:<sup>[13]</sup>

1. Pre-flowering plants: In the first year, leaves sprout from seed. In subsequent years, leaves sprout from overwintering roots as well as seeds. This pre-flowering phase continues for several years.
2. Flowering plants (midsummer): After several years of growth, the plant flowers.
3. Seeds (late summer/early autumn): A flowering plant produces 20,000 or more seeds.
4. Dead stems (late autumn/winter): After producing seeds, the plant dies, leaving dried stems and seed heads standing.

To protect yourself and anyone else that may unknowingly come in contact with Hogweed, contact the Board of Health. We can point you in the direction of eradicating this noxious plant. Failure in taking steps in protecting yourself and neighbors may result in legal remedies. If you have any questions please contact me either by email [VBird@Berkshireplanning.org](mailto:VBird@Berkshireplanning.org) or cell 413 454 5161

Thank you

Valerie Bird