

PERU BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday November 14, 2023, 10:30 AM

Community Room 3 E Main Rd


1. The meeting was called to order at 10:01 AM
2. Roll call: present Peggy White, Nanette Mone, Darryl Darby and Valerie Bird Health Agent.
3. Nanette recording.
4. Laura Kittross and Marie Brady, both from the Alliance (BPRA), attended with a request that Peru sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the implementation of a grant, MassCall3A, by the Alliance for Youth (substance abuse) Prevention. They are working mostly through the schools setting up youth advisory boards and needs assessment surveys, collecting data on trigger points. The surveys are done every 2 years in the 8th, 10th and 12th grades. The data will show trends but not names. The work could end up in the community with education with families as to when it is appropriate to drink and use cannabis. Laura said it is important to prevent early use of these substances and to show that brain development can be harmed if use begins at 13 and 14 years old. Laura said that the plan is to encourage youths to at least wait until later, 17 or 18, as the harm to the brain would be considerably less. One problem is that some parents are using cannabis and alcohol in the presence of and with their teenagers. Another concern is what is included in the school health curriculum. By signing the MOU, Peru BOH will give the Alliance the authority to do the work of the grant for the town. The towns of Windsor and Washington have already signed; Dalton is considering doing the same after further consideration. The Alliance will give updates to the BOH as appropriate. A motion was made to sign the MOU for the Youth Prevention work. All in favor.
5. Review BOH confidentiality policy. Peggy asked Laura to comment. Laura said it is a great idea and encourages boards of health to do it. Although boards of health are not subject to HIPAA laws (we do not treat) a number of issues such as the infectious disease TB, which need monitoring to be sure medication is being taken and certain housing issues should remain confidential. Nanette said board members are already committed to confidentiality and this just adds another layer of bureaucracy. Peggy said that (if) a new person should come onto the board, that person might not have the same ethics as the current members and a written policy would be important in that instance. Darryl said he had no problem with signing. Laura did say that if we choose not to sign, we could agree to periodically remind the members of their responsibilities. Jim Kenney asked if the written policy were to be adopted then would every member have to sign. Peggy said since members are elected to the BOH, there is no way to know what a given person's ethics were and it is better to have a definite policy in place. Nanette asked to put off a motion to adopt until next meeting to give her time to review the document. It was agreed. Peggy asked Laura while she was here about attending a selectboard meeting in January as Vern wanted her to do. Peggy thought it might be to go over the costs of the service, just thinking out loud. Laura will follow through and let the board know as the members want to be there also to listen.
6. Jaymie Zapata attended the meeting to discuss what she said was a misunderstanding regarding the amounts available to each town under the Rural Health Equity grant. Nanette thought the town had \$10,000 to spend and the board put in a request for the funds for a variety of projects. Jaymie said


that we had “up to” that amount if we presented a clear need. However, two other organizations are asking for the remaining funds (slightly more than \$9,000) in this years’ grant. Berkshire Bounty and Becket Federated Church run out of food every week and are seeking more funds. Peru had thought to give a donation to the Hinsdale food pantry because about one-third of their clients are from Peru. The board members decided to reevaluate and leave it up to Jaymie to determine where the funds should be expended. She will follow up with the board. At this point, Peggy, Darryl and Nanette declared food insecurity was the most important use of the funds. It was decided to continue with the request for the grocery cards for the persons most in need in Peru. Nanette will contact Coralie Pelkey for the final list (number) and will call Peggy so she can fill out the form for Jaymie to disburse the money. Jaymie also told us that the grant renews in January 2024 which was good news.

7. Review and approve minutes from 11/14.2023. Peggy had a small request that where the minutes used the word “migrants”, it should be changed to immigrants. A motion was made to approve the minutes with the minor correction. All in favor.
8. Health Inspector’s Report is next. A) 100 Middlefield Rd septic system and 11 Curtin Rd system are complete. The perc test for 10 Spruce Rd still has to be scheduled. There are 2 new installers in Peru: Herb Spitzel and Bill Goddard Jr. Valerie will check on the Lafayette Dr. property that Peggy asked about. B) With regard to the hogweed issue at 55 E. Windsor Rd, Valerie has written a letter to the owner (an LLC) but had no address so put the letter in the mailbox at the property. Valerie said the box was half full and she thinks the property is now abandoned. Valerie will ask Caryn Wendling if the taxes have been paid and thus obtain an address. Nanette asked who installed the new septic and shouldn’t that person have contact information. If we can’t reach the owner, Valerie said we would have to go to court to get access to the property. Valerie asked if we are certain that it is not wild parsnip because it is very similar to hogweed. Peggy said that Jennifer (MDAR) identified it as hogweed. Peggy wanted to know how to respond to the resident who had complained recently in passing the property and noticing the hogweed. Valerie said she would email him. The board will wait for Valerie’s research before making a decision to proceed to court. C) with regard to 16 Lafayette Dr., Valerie checked and found that the septic system was installed in 2003 prior to the house being built.
9. Regarding emergency management and the board status on NIMS 700 and ICS 100, both Nanette and Darryl said they had not yet been able to complete them. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting before we ask Bruce, as emergency manager, to attend to explain the program.
10. Regarding combining CPR training with Narcan training and Opiate education, it was decided to do them separately. Peggy had spoken to Jesse, fire chief, about combining the classes, but he said that the CPR class alone would take several hours and would have to be on a Saturday. The board decided that it would be too much time and information to do both at one time. Nick Simonds, of the Harm Reduction program, has agreed to conduct the Narcan & Opiate class. He is available 01/17/2024 or 01/24/2024 possibly at 6PM, weather permitting. Nick will have to double check his schedule and will get back to the board before the next meeting.
11. With regard to the updating the fee schedule, rather than model Peru fees after some of the other towns’ fees we obtained, it was preferred to pattern our update on the Alliance recommendations. Valerie will have a copy for the board for the next meeting. Peggy checked back records and found that Peru last updated the fees in 2019.

12. A motion was made in deference to Jim Kenney to move up the discussion on the RV's. All in favor. With regard to setting up a meeting to discuss the adoption of a bylaw for campers on private property, Darryl, as a member of the planning board, reported that Sam Haupt, as chair of said board, has not come forward with a date. Darryl said that generally meetings are held when an issue arises. Nanette asked if there was a way to make the meeting happen. Jim Kenney, attending, said he would contact Sam. Jim has an interest in the camper situation. A neighboring property has one and he wants to be sure that the owner is adhering to the board of health requirements. Valerie has tried to contact the owner when she is on premises to get receipts for the tank pumping. So far, the owner has not been there. Valerie is hesitant to approach the camper as it cannot be seen from the road and can't see if the owner is there. Jim said he appreciates the efforts of the BOH, but asked where are the teeth? Peggy said again that the board is complaint driven and we need a bylaw on this issue. While Jim was here, he gave an update on the cemetery commission of which he is a member. The commission decided to remove approval of green burials in Peru's cemeteries. It might go to town meeting for a vote to allow such burials again. Jim was surprised that every town has different rules on cemeteries. Green burials can be done on private property but Valerie said that there are rules there too. A plot has to be surveyed and included in the deed; the burial spot has to be 4 feet down, although Valerie would have preferred it to be deeper. There is a state statute covering the rules.
13. Update on well regulations: There is still no confirmation from town counsel that the document the board submitted is legally accurate. Peggy has contacted Terry, Peru town administrator, several times to try to get an answer from the lawyer(s). It has been five months with no word. Peggy wants support from the board members to email Terry again (Peggy realizes that Terry is very busy) with a cc to Vern. The concern is that the board needs to prepare for the public hearing and it could involve time and effort to schedule the meeting around everyone's personal schedule. Also, notification of the meeting has strict guidelines. Nanette asked if the board could get a dispensation from Vern to contact the lawyer directly ourselves.
14. The next BOH meeting will be on Tuesday 12/12/2023 at 10:30 AM.
15. The agenda will include the inspectors report with hogweed update, review confidentiality policy, Jaymie Zapata's final report on Rural Health Equity grant request, confirm date for Narcan training, review fee schedule, board status on emergency management, update on planning board, update on well regulations.
16. Peggy has been able to obtain more covid test kits, which now are 5 tests to a box, and Narcan kits. They are available in the usual places: the compactor station, the library and the town hall.
17. A motion was made to adjourn at 1:16 PM. All in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted as a draft by Nanette Mone 12/10/2023

Nanette Mone 

Peggy White 

RECEIVED
 DEC 13 2023
 Kim Leach
 TOWN CLERK
 TOWN OF PERU

Darryl Darby

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Darryl Darby', written over a horizontal line.

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