

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. , by Chairman, Richard Desjardins. Also in attendance were; Member, Al Holman; Member, Richard Robinson; Fire Chief, Ron Goodale; ACO, Mike Moran; Police Sgt. Bruce Rivard, Town Manager, Blythe Robinson; Asst. Public Health Supervisor, Diane Tiernan; Town Nurse/Agent, Trish Parent; and Town Council, Greg Corbo.

The meeting was called today to discuss the issues at 60 School Street. Chairman Desjardins asked for reports from those present.

ACO, Mike Moran stated that they were able to capture another three cats from the previous 12 and they think there is another 3 cats hiding. They are unable to catch the remaining cats until the property is cleaned out. He will check the traps on Tuesday and Wednesday before the firm comes in to clean. The MSPCA will also be on hand Wednesday while the cleaning is being done.

Chief Goodale stated the Fire Dept. was called in to provide assistance with the Animal Control Officer and to supply haz. mat. gear. He stated the conditions inside were worse than he has ever seen, there are insects and other health risks present that he feels need to be addressed quickly.

Police Sgt. Rivard stated that the Police were on standby for any issues that arose, including controlling the media.

Town Manager, Blythe Robinson stated the town is working with a firm called 24 Trauma who is able to start the cleanup process as soon as possible. They will remove all the garbage and fixtures and some of the walls down to the studs. The work should commence Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m. They will have air purifiers, disinfection, and remove the trash into dumpsters. Maureen has made a list of items she would like to keep and the trauma team will do their best to keep what items they are able to salvage.

The issue we are having is that there is no budget in place to pay for the cleanup. If the Selectmen approve of using the welfare fund, we will pay for the cleanup with those funds and then put a lien on the property for reimbursement. Otherwise, we will need to have the Finance Committee transfer funds from somewhere to pay for the services. As part of the court order we are obligated to offer relocation services, meaning social services provided by our Senior Center who will assist the women that were displaced in finding housing. The only monetary fees we are required to offer when condemning a house is moving expenses if a moving company is hired to move personal items. We do not believe there will be too many personal items that need to be relocated.

Town Council, Greg Corbo stated that the town was able to initiate a temporary restraining order on the property, in order to clean, remove cats and board the house up. The order is only for 10 days however, and we will be returning to court on Wednesday morning for a preliminary injunction. This will enable us to perform the initial work to protect public safety and to board up the house. The expenditures involved in doing all this will be payable by the owner, possibly through a lien and the homeowners will be required to rehab the house to make it habitable. If they cannot do so, we will need to explore a receiver for the property who will complete the work and then put their own lien on the property. If that is not feasible, the house may need to be torn down.

Richard R. asked Blythe if it mattered where the funds came from to clean the property up. Blythe stated no, it didn't matter where; we just need to find the funds. If we can't use the welfare fund, we don't have another alternative and we must transfer money into the BOH expense account to pay for the cleanup.

Greg stated that the town cannot expend funds without a town meeting. Obviously there is no time for a town meeting so we must find a source of existing funds that are already in place.

Al asked if this could be considered a state of emergency and we could get financial assistance. Greg stated he didn't believe so, but he would look into it.

Blythe also stated that this is considered an emergency and we were not required to follow the procurement law of 30B. It was not necessary to acquire 3 bids to have the clean out work done.

Richard D. asked if anyone in the audience had any questions or comments.

Leo Lamunzzi of 4 Cross Street stated he has fleas in his house along with his neighbor that weren't there before the town started moving things around at 60 School Street. Richard R. stated fleas exist outside and he is not sure what the town's obligations are in this matter. Trish stated that fleas are a temporary problem that will resolve itself; it will be difficult to show cause and effect. Blythe stated the town can't use public funds on private property without a court order.

Gregg stated that the court order to protect public health does not go beyond the four corners of 60 School Street. He would suggest the neighbors submit their expenses and we will ask the courts for reimbursement.

**Motion one** - Richard R. made a motion to request the Selectmen amend the pleadings to the court to add additional funds for reimbursement. Al seconded the motion and Richard D. made the motion unanimous. Motion approved.

Leo asked what assurance there would be that once the house is cleaned, there will be no fleas. Richard D. stated the trash that comes out will be double bagged and sprayed down with pesticides. The firm is very familiar with these types of situations and will do everything they can.

Marlene Jaworksi of 9 Maple Street stated she also was very concerned about fleas and cockroaches and other health issues. She does not have these pests in her home now and wants to make sure that she doesn't in the future. She stated that there was a cat problem in 2011 that the Board was notified about and the cats are all back after being removed. What assurances does she have that the occupants won't return and have it happen again?

Greg stated that the town is hiring a professional service whose intent is to protect public safety. They will take safeguards but there is no specific guarantee.

Bill Monroe of 9 Maple Avenue stated they have not been able to use their back porch since 2011 because of the stench and wants to see the house torn down and the soil it sits on be removed.

Greg stated the town is constrained to follow certain procedures and we now must focus on moving forward. The next step is to establish if the house can be rehabbed or if it needs to be torn down. If the house is habitable, we cannot prevent them from moving back in if they are up to date with their taxes. They are free to do what they wish.

Chris Crawford of 8 Maple Street asked how long this problem has been going on. 4 years ago the house was cleaned and they were left with 4 cats. Al stated we do not know, we were not able to get into the house. The fourth amendment restricts us from entering into your home without your permission. Chris asked how to get copies of the complaints and was instructed to contact the BOH staff.

Marlene asked if either of the women were under a section 12, if they were evaluated. Board stated due to HEPA regulations, we could not give out that information. Marlene asked if that would give us the right to enter the house if they were. Trish stated no, that does not give us the right.

Chief Goodale stated he is sympathetic to the neighbors, but to understand the Board was proactive on this and other properties in town since the approval of the nuisance regulations. We were at this property following a nuisance letter by Code Enforcement. Al stated that is true but the nuisance law still does not give us access to the interior of a property.

**Motion two** - Richard D. made a motion to ratify our action taken on Wednesday evening to condemn the property at 60 School Street. Al seconded the motion and Richard R. made the motion unanimous. Motion was approved.

Diane stated she received a phone call today from Maureen Guido, asking if the garage contents would be addressed and if the furniture on the porch could stay. Greg stated the order was for the entire property. Mike Moran stated he did not think the porch contents would be salvageable.

At this time the ACO requested the Board address a request from Amy Lane of 4 Westboro Road, to keep her large animal permit intact and keep her two horses. She will be starting a new job and has sought medical attention. Board stated no, the order remains in effect. The horses must be removed. Mike stated there is enough food for the horses for another day. Sgt. Rivard stated if there is no food available, the horses must be removed immediately.

**Motion three** – Al made a motion to adjourn and Richard R. seconded the motion. Richard D. made the motion unanimous.

2:05 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Tiernan, Asst. Public Health Supervisor