



**CITY OF GARDNER**  
OFFICE OF THE  
**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
95 PLEASANT ST, ROOM 29  
GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS 01440-2630



**Members Present:** Lauren Saunders – Health Director  
Susan Avallone, RN – Chairperson  
Geoff Tobia, Esq. – Member

**Absent:** Dr. Michele Parker – Member

**Attendees Present:** Tim Slocum  
Steve Slocum

### **Board of Health meeting held March 27, 2023**

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**4:33 Meeting called to order.**

**4:33 The December 12, 2022 meeting minutes have been accepted. The review of the minutes from the February 6, 2023 meeting were postponed until next meeting.**

**4:35 Title 5 Variance Request for 400 Matthews St: Steve and Tim Slocum are present to give an overview of the construction project and outline on why they are seeking a Title 5 Variance. Slocum Inc is creating rental space for businesses in the Gardner Community. The end goal will be 6 buildings, with 6 spaces per building for a total of 36 spaces available to be rented out to businesses. Four units will be occupied by Slocum’s personal business, leaving 32 units for rent. Everything is designed for commercial use only. Units each have a bathroom which includes a toilet and sink. There are floor drains in the rental bays that flow to a gas and well separator which flows to the tight tank which will be pumped and serviced on a separate alarm system.**

**Currently the project is in phase one, with only two buildings constructed. The existing sewage disposal plan is designed for full capacity to serve all 6 buildings. Since there are currently only 2 buildings in place, they would like to install a tight tank for temporary means of sewage disposal. Installation of a tight tank for new construction does not meet Title 5 regulations, which is why they are seeking a variance from the Board.**

**They explained that the tight tank variance would only serve the first two initial buildings. The full septic design includes a leach field the size of one of the buildings, which is extremely large. To get septic sand onto the property they had to do some major excavation and during the wintertime the progress was brought to a halt as 250 tractor trailer loads of septic sand would be required for a system this size. They’re proposing a tight tank to take the place of the septic tank and eventually be tied into the permanent septic system and out to the leach field. The original tank was 2000 gallons, the tight tank proposal would be redesigned for 3000 gallons to meet the flow of the two buildings that are currently existing. There are 8 tenants in the two buildings, so potentially 8 bathrooms.**

If the tight tank variance is granted, the tank will only be used temporarily for the first phase. To get occupancy for additional buildings, the approved sewage disposal system must be installed, inspected and permitted. A contract with Rooter-Man in Ashburnham is already in place for routine maintenance pumping if the tight tank is approved. An alarm will be installed at the 60% tank capacity mark and will provide notification that it needs to be pumped within 48 hours. The timeframe for the other buildings completion is scheduled for this fall. There are already restrictions in place, no manufacturing allowed on site. Every tenant that applies goes through the Building Commissioner. By fall Slocum plans to comply with the full system and no longer need the variance.

Motion made to approve variance and voted in favor of by both present board members. Variance for use of tight tanks is temporary, only granted through the end of 2023 and is only to serve the first two buildings. A written approval letter will be drafted and sent out to Mr. Slocum.

- 4:56 COVID Updates: Gardner positivity rate is currently at 9.58%, MA positivity rate is at 4.47%. Another COVID vaccine clinic was recently held at the Council on Aging; 11 pneumonia and 27 shingles vaccines were also given. VEI Program ends at the end of the month. There is a wrap-up meeting Thursday with MPHNS Covid Response Team, CHC, DPH and others involved with the initiative. We're still handing out Covid tests in the office.
- 4:58 Old Business: The department was approved for a new inspector position which hasn't been posted yet. There's a new format on the EDS plan, we are working on updating it. An electrician came out to the landfill to inspect the pumps and determined it is an electrical issue. Due to the electrical issue, the pumps are not currently operating in auto mode, they are only operating in hand mode and need to be done manually. CEC has been down to monitor it once a week. Still working on the bid process in conjunction with the DPW and engineers for all other major updates and repairs. Restaurants previously mentioned to have repeat violations were issued fines which have since been paid. We have been working with the restaurants through the challenges and providing additional guidance and education. There's a new ordinance for illegal dumping and we were recently able to catch an individual littering on camera and issued a ticket with a letter explaining how to properly dispose of trash.
- 5:02 New Business: Keep Gardner Beautiful Spring Cleanup is scheduled for May 20th. There's a vacancy at the Transfer Station. Interviews began last week. Angela attended lead determinator training so now we will have two licensed determinators in the office. Lauren is attending the Certified Pool Operator training course for recertification in April. The GCAT Wellness Fair has a new date of Wednesday, April 12th.

Lauren is on the Development Review Committee for the city. The committee's job is to review big projects and new developments coming to the city. There is a park planned to be constructed on Rear Main/Derby Drive and the city plans to make it a recreation area. The proposal is to have an area for food trucks to park as well. The original plan included an area for porta potties but Lauren has requested permanent bathroom structures to be added for sanitary purposes. The board agrees having facilities built would be a better option than porta potties if there is a plan for food trucks and food service on site.

- 5:14 Next meeting: Monday May 8, 2023 at 4:30 PM here at Gardner City Hall in the Mayor's Conference Room; adjourn.

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**Susan Avallone RN, Chairperson**

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**Atty. Geoffrey Tobia, Member**

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**Michele C. Parker MD, Member**

**All conversations are documented on recordings identified as BOH March 27 Meeting, 2023.**