

Lincoln Board of Health
Virtual Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 6, 2021

Members Presents: Frederick Mansfield, MD
Patricia Miller
Steven Kanner, MD

Others Present: Susan Rask, Health Director; Abigail Butt, COA/HR Director, Brian Young, Fire Chief; Andrew Glass, Chairperson, HDC/LHC; Elaine Carroll, Adm. Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. The next meeting will be on October 13, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

28 Lexington Road:

Dr. Mansfield said the point of this meeting is to support Susan Rask in issuing a condemnation of 28 Lexington Road, which means that the house is not habitable at this time but does not mean that we are going to demolish it. It does mean that the situation needs to be remedied before anyone can live there again. The Board of Health has responsibility to make sure it cannot be inhabited. We do not have any responsibility as far as cleaning it up, which is the responsibility of the landlord and the tenant. Apparently the Fire Dept. received a 911 call because the tenant was having trouble breathing and they had some difficulty entering the premises because of the clutter and trash everywhere. There was a bad smell from rotting food and possibly feces on the floor. They had some difficulty getting the tenant out but finally took him to Emerson where he has been transferred to a Rehab in Concord. Susan issued an emergency condemnation order based on the evidence and photos provided by the Fire Dept. Our representatives need to officially inspect the premises, which will be Tuesday, Oct. 12 at 1:00 p.m. The tenant also asked for some personal items to be collected and brought to him, which was done today by two fire personnel. There is a question as to what the landlord can do to clean up the premises. Susan said when she does her inspection she will also inspect the premises for any code violations. The tenant had said there was no electricity in part of the house, an issue with heat and hot water as well as plumbing issues with the drains. Any violations she finds will have to be fixed by the landlord. Abby Butt said the tenant told her only 2 of the 7 radiators work and on a cold winter day, the house does not get above 40 degrees. The landlord said he had not been told about that before. Susan said she would turn on the heat to see if it gets up to 68 degrees but may not be able to determine that at this time of year. The tenant had not told the landlord about any hot water issue and when he was told it was corrected. The landlord said the tenant only uses parts of the house and some rooms that do not have electricity are kept as a museum. The tenant does use other parts of the house like the attic the basement as storage. It is basically the northern newer part of the house that the tenant uses and the southern older part of the house has been used as a sort of museum.

Andrew Glass said he had spoken to Tim Higgins about the Preservation Restriction Agreement (PRA) he Town has on the property, which imposes a lot of restrictions on the homeowners to come to the Town if they undertake any sort of remediation efforts that would impact the house or property under the PRA. Mr. Glass said he would be happy to work with the homeowners as they work through the condemnation order and what Susan might find and ask them to fix in the house that might impact the PRA. Abby said related to things that may need repairs, the Town has access to some funds through the Council on Aging and Human Services for both the tenant and landlords, which is not a huge amount but will definitely help. Susan asked Abby if it would be possible to remove some of the trash like empty boxes and plastic bottles. Abby said the risk of removing even trash could result in throwing away something of value like cash or jewelry being kept in something that may look like trash. Abby will work with the tenant, but her priority is finding a place for him where he is comfortable. To do that he needs to know that his possessions are safe and if we push him, it is not going to go well. Susan said if there is trash in the way it will be hard for the owners to make the necessary repairs. Brian Young said since the Fire Dept. first went in, things have gotten worse with the rotting trash. Also, there are some fire issues with multiple plugs on the same outlet and a lot of fire fuel loads in various rooms. We need to find a way to remove trash and turn off the electricity. Abby said this would be hard to do without the tenant there and it would be unhealthy to have any friends come in to help. The owner said the estate is down to \$17,500 and the taxes will be due soon. Abby said the tenant should be paying rent even though he is not there and if he does not then it can be deemed abandonment. Only the rotting food should be removed. The tenant has legal rights over the premises. The

tenant has to allow the landlord to enter the house to make repairs. Abby is hoping to be able to ask the tenant if he would allow a representative to remove his possessions to a storage facility where he can go through things when he is able. The rotting food will be removed if Abby can get permission to do so before the inspection on Tuesday. Patricia Miller made a motion to vote to support the condemnation of the house pending the official inspection of the house and revoke the condemnation when the house is deemed to be habitable. Steve Kanner seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Patricia Miller-aye; Steve Kanner-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye.

Mental Health Clinic Update:

Abby said the clinic is going really well but not functioning the way we thought it would. The flyer was changed and reached out to more sources. It was made clear that this was a private clinic with no records going to the school or no record being recorded through any Town department. The feedback from Eliot is that children would not want to be seen going into the building where the clinic is held even though the building is empty at that hour. Those families who have reached out are being moved to Eliot to get the services. It is never just one child who needs counselling but all the children in the family including parents are experiencing some hard times. So a lot more people are going to Eliot but only one child is attending the clinic in person. What the adolescent clinic has done is to bring the mental health services within the Town for residents less than 60 years of age. Abby is drafting a grant for funding for these services, but the Board has not received any bills from Eliot under the contract or additional fees.

At 8:40 p.m. Steve Kanner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Patricia Miller seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Patricia Miller-aye; Steve Kanner-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye.

Submitted by Elaine Carroll

Approved: November 17, 2021