

Board of Health Meeting Minutes  
October 4, 2011

The Lakeville Board of Health held an emergency meeting on Tuesday, October 4, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Office Building. Present at this meeting were Board Members Robert Poillucci and William Garvey. Also present were Health Agent Lawrence Perry and Board of Health Supervisor Nancy M. Teser as recording secretary. Board Member Terrence Flynn was absent from this meeting.

Chairman Poillucci called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and asked if anyone was recording this meeting. No one was recording this meeting.

Chairman Poillucci stated he went to the Freetown- Lakeville Regional School campus with Health Agent Perry earlier this afternoon to meet with School Facilities Manager Robert Souza and Certified Water Operator Robert Bouchard because of complaints he received from some parents following an open house meeting held at the high school on Monday night about what appeared to be dirty water. Chairman Poillucci said he also spoke with Chuck Shurtleff of the Department of Environmental Protection and showed him some pictures of dirty water in a sink and in a boy's urinal that was emailed to him.

During the visit to the school, Poillucci noted that the water did not appear dirty in any of the sinks, urinals or toilets that they inspected. He said they were told that it was an on and off kind of thing over the past week and that it may have been caused by a couple of different things, one of which is "biotite" a non-hazardous mineral, or a hot water tank that was relined this year. Poillucci didn't believe the tank was the problem, since the hot water shouldn't be going into the urinals or the toilets. Poillucci noted, according to Robert Souza, the school facilities manager, they had custodians in the schools over the weekend cleaning the bathrooms and trying to remove the sediment and stains.

Chairman Poillucci stated that the Board of Health and the parents of the students should have been notified sooner that there was a problem with the water at the schools. Poillucci noted, although the water was affected in all three schools on the campus, the worst of the discoloration occurred at the high school, and the school officials didn't know what was causing it because the water is all from the same supply. Board Member Garvey asked if they flushed the toilets and ran the water there. Chairman Poillucci replied in the affirmative, but noted they only went to the high school today.

It was noted that certified water operator Bouchard considered the water safe for consumption at this time and that it wasn't necessarily a quality issue, but a problem associated with the plumbing system which may have included the tanks, supply, and distribution lines. Discussion was held regarding the two wells, the storage tank, and the water lines that service the schools. Board Member Garvey asked if tests were conducted separately on the two wells, at the storage tank, and the lines at each school. Garvey noted that the Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for the oversight of the public water supplies, not the local health boards. There was discussion regarding the installation of a centrifugal sediment filter as one way of treating for any sediment headed into the system. Another discussion regarding pressure testing all the water lines to insure there aren't any other damaged areas in the lines was held. Garvey stated that one well may be contaminating the water going into the storage tank and then to the school buildings and the other well may not be doing it. Poillucci said that he didn't really have the answer on that but he suggested they test the two wells before it goes into the storage tank. Poillucci and Perry said they went there today and ran the water and you wouldn't even know there was an incident there last week.

Board Member Garvey had questions about the hot water used in the high school kitchen. Chairman Poillucci and Health Agent Perry said the water ran clear from the faucets today. Agent Perry stated that the cafeteria is licensed by the Board of Health for the food service, but the office did not receive any complaints from them on the water. Chairman Poillucci said that the cafeteria manager was planning to change the menu to avoid having to use the water for the next couple of days until the problem was solved.

Again, Poillucci noted that he spoke with Chuck Shurtleff of the Department of Environmental Protection Drinking Water Division, who said that the school has been conducting regular tests on the water supply as required by law, and those tests have been turning out okay, although Mr. Shurtleff said he was unaware of the discoloration of the water. Agent Perry noted, according to the Environmental Protection Act guidance manual, turbidity is caused by suspended materials that interfere with the clarity of water and "biotite" the material suspected of contributing to the problem, is a dark colored iron rich type of mica.

Upon motion made by Member Garvey and Chairman Poillucci stepping down to second the motion then stepping back up to vote, the Board

VOTED: To send a letter to the Freetown-Lakeville Public School District Superintendent requesting that all water bubblers in the schools be shut off, they have bottled water available for students and staff to drink, there should be hand sanitizers available at every sink at all times, and a water test be done on each individual well before coming into the holding tank, the holding tank, and then the water line for each school until the water issue is resolved. Unanimous vote in favor.

Chairman Poillucci said he was told by Robert Bouchard that an engineer was being hired to help track down the problem, and that he believed it was a plumbing problem and not a water quality problem.

Upon motion made by Member Garvey and Chairman Poillucci stepping down to second the motion then stepping back up to vote, the Board

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 5:23 p.m.