



Acton Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

September 30, 2025

7:30 PM.

Hybrid Meeting COA Building 30 Sudbury Rd and via Zoom

Present:

Members Present: Mark Conoby – Chairman and William McInnis

Virtual Members Present: Dr. William Taylor and Dr. Rekha Singh

Staff Present: Penelope Funaiole – Health and Human Services Director, Matthew Dow – Environmental Health Director and Anita Arnum – Fire Chief

Virtual Staff Present: Jeff Dalton – Fire Prevention Officer

Others Present: David Martin – Select Board, Michele Holland, Carolyn Davis, Mark Frigo – Nexamp, Eric Barren – Nexamp, Mohamed Kassamali – Nexamp, Scott and Maureen Blaufuss, Xiaoqiu Yu, Halei Zhu, Sang Zhang, Ronald Reagan, Chris William, Jeff Vandegrift, Joseph Hon, Elizabeth Hon, Penny Hon, Kurt Marden, Jackie Marden, Ellen Smith, Aidan Smith, Tracey Flannery, Eddie Flannery, and Susan and Don Jas

Others Present Virtually: Tim McGlinchy – Central Mass. Mosquito Control, Frank Cornine – Central Mass. Mosquito Control, Doug Halley, Judy Hodge, Alex Hoang, Chen, Jamie Bermudez, Jim L., Judith Aronstein, Ming Xuyou, and Paul Fricker

1. Opening

Chairman – Mark Conoby opened the meeting at 7:33 PM. A script was read that was provided by the Town and this meeting of the Board of Health was called to order.

2. Regular Business

Environmental Health Director Update

The Environmental Health Director Matthew Dow provided updates on several ongoing projects. Updates included information about Gould's Plaza, which had previously come before the Board regarding a failed system and tight tank. Mr. Dow reported being in contact with the State,



confirming that Gould's Plaza needs a state permit for the tight tank. A septic plan for one of the seven failed systems had been submitted but was taken back due to price concerns. Matthew indicated that Gould's Plaza is working on a new system with nitrogen reduction technology and will present to the Board at the October 14th meeting.

Regarding Dover Heights, Mr. Dow reported that this system had been failed for over two years. The owner contacted DEP about pulling the previously approved permit to submit a new application, and they are awaiting DEP clarification.

For the Boardwalk School monitoring wells, Matthew received information from Marc Hamel that afternoon confirming data would be provided before the next October meeting.

Matthew also announced passing the Registered Sanitarian exam and is now officially an RS, which was congratulated by the Board members.

Health and Human Services Director Update

Penny, the Health and Human Services Director, provided an update on various initiatives. The department is working on a community health needs assessment, which included outreach efforts at Oktoberfest and the Council on Aging open house. A survey was distributed but had to be taken down due to possible spam responses. Penny plans to reissue the survey with better security measures.

The Public Health Nurse, Susan Sama, will be starting monthly wellness talks, some at the senior center and others open to the general public. The nurse recently collaborated with the conservation agent to create videos sharing information about mosquitoes and ticks.

The department is working to hire a per diem food inspector or health inspector for approximately 8 hours per week, particularly to cover weekend events such as fairs.

Regarding the community health needs assessment timeline, listening sessions are planned for the last week of October and first two weeks of November, with varied scheduling to accommodate different community members.

Any Board Members Future Agenda Items

The Board discussed future agenda items, including scheduling a joint meeting with the water district to discuss topics such as high sodium content, PFAS, and water resource protection. Other upcoming items mentioned included mosquito control, hazardous waste collection, regulation updates, and goal setting.

Any Public Comments



A resident inquired about the interaction between the Board of Health and the water district regarding PFAS concerns. The Board explained that there is significant coordination with the water district, noting that in previous cases involving water safety issues, such as the shut-down of a well in 2007, it was the Board of Health that acted because it was a health issue rather than a water production issue.

3. New/Special Business

Timothy McGlinchy & Frank Cornine, Central Mass. Mosquito Control Project

Tim, Director of Central Mass Mosquito Control Project, and Frank Cornine, Director of Operations, provided an end-of-season update. Tim explained that their state agency conducts mosquito control in 44 cities and towns throughout Central Massachusetts, including parts of Worcester and Middlesex Counties.

This season differed from last year with no Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) activity in the region, though there were some early detections in Western Massachusetts and later samples in Southeastern Massachusetts. However, this was an unusually active West Nile virus season—the most active in Tim's 36 years with the district. Of their 44 towns, 34 had positive West Nile virus samples, beginning in June and increasing throughout the summer.

In Acton specifically, the district has 14 trapping sites across the northern, central, and southern sections of town. They conducted 52 trap nights using CDC traps, gravid traps, and sentinel rural traps, collecting and submitting over 1,400 mosquitoes for testing. Two West Nile virus positives were detected on August 6, and two more on August 14, all from the same trap location one week apart. All positive samples were Culex mosquitoes, which are found in stagnant water sources like catch basins.

The district treated catch basins in town with bacteria targeting Culex mosquitoes and responded to approximately 330 residential complaints. The district also coordinated with the town's recreation department.

In response to questions from the Board, Tim clarified that the risk of West Nile virus typically increases later in the season as the virus amplifies through bird populations. He confirmed that mosquito populations have decreased significantly due to seasonal changes and drought conditions. The district's trapping season concludes the following week, with the final week of testing to occur after that.

The Mosquito Control Project representatives mentioned their water management program for stream cleaning to prevent stagnation and potential breeding areas. They offered to participate in the town's hazardous waste collection day to collect unwanted tires, which can become mosquito breeding sites when they collect water.

Hazardous Materials Permit – Nexamp – Boardwalk School, 75 Spruce Street



Mark Frigo, Vice President of Nexamp, along with colleagues Mohammad Kassamali and Eric Barren, presented their application for a hazardous materials control permit for a battery storage facility at the Boardwalk School. The applicants explained they had addressed the 31 conditions previously outlined by the Board of Health and had worked closely with Fire Chief Arnum to address safety concerns.

The project includes an 18-foot sound barrier around the energy storage system, with infrared cameras for heat/fire detection linked to a fire control panel capable of contacting Nexamp, Tesla, and a central monitoring station. The battery would be positioned 57 feet from the school building, with 8 feet of space between the sound barrier and the Tesla Megapack. The battery would be 18 feet from the property line and approximately 10 feet from the access driveway.

Board member Bill McInnis expressed strong concerns about the project location, noting that while Nexamp had addressed many technical concerns, the proximity to the school remained problematic. He referenced NFPA standards recommending a 100-foot separation distance for safety and stated he could not support the project at its current location but would support it if relocated to meet the 100-foot distance requirement.

Fire Chief Arnum confirmed that the location has been problematic from the beginning, expressing concerns about access for emergency vehicles in case of an incident, especially given the proximity to school buses and children. She noted that firefighting protocols for lithium battery fires require letting them burn, as they cannot be extinguished, and that such incidents could require monitoring for 10-24 hours, potentially disrupting school operations for days.

When asked if alternative locations existed, Mark Frigo explained that the site is constrained by wetlands to the north and east, and that relocating to the west would interfere with school evacuation routes. He also noted that moving the project would make it economically unfeasible due to the cost of relocating electrical infrastructure.

Multiple community members spoke, predominantly expressing concerns about the location. A parent showed photos of the busy bus lane at dismissal time and raised concerns about cascading hazards with nearby septic tanks and diesel generators. Another resident expressed concern about the project potentially becoming a target for bad actors due to its proximity to a school.

One resident spoke in favor of the project, noting its importance for addressing climate change and managing electricity demand during peak usage periods.

Following extensive discussion, Bill McInnis moved to deny the permit as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Taylor. The vote was unanimous, Board members all voting aye.

The Chair noted that while the permit was denied, the applicants could reapply with an alternative proposal that addressed the concerns raised, particularly regarding location and safety.



Minutes – August 26, 2025

The meeting adjourned before this agenda item was addressed.

Consent Items

No discussion occurred for this agenda item.

Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. McInnis, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:05 PM. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Next Meeting

The next Board of Health meeting will be on Tuesday October 14, 2025.

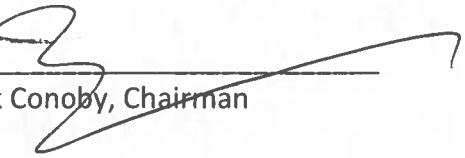
Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting:

- Town of Acton script for Boards and Committees opening meeting
- Board of Health agenda
- MDPH Weekly Arbovirus Report
- Nexamp – Boardwalk School, 75 Spruce Street – Standard Conditions for ESS – BOH recommendations for Hazardous Materials Control Permit
- Nexamp – Acton Boxborough – BESS Hazardous Materials Permit Memo
- Acton Devset Rev. AB Fire Chief Review
- Boardwalk Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- DNV Report
- ICS Form 201
- ICS Form 202
- ICS Form 203
- ICS Form 204
- ICS Form 207
- ICS Form 208
- ICS Form 215a
- Megapack 2 XL NA
- Megapack 2 XL Compliance Summary
- Response to Town of Acton Questions
- Acton Solar
- Board of Health meeting minutes from 8/26/25

Respectfully Submitted,



Matthew Dow



Mark Conoby, Chairman



Environmental Health Director

Acton Board of Health