



MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

An Accredited Local Public Health Department

www.nmdhd.org

CLINTON
Branch Office
1307 E. Townsend Rd
St Johns, MI 48879-9036
(989) 224-2195

GRATIOT
Branch Office
151 Commerce Drive
Ithaca, MI 48847-1627
(989) 875-3681

MONTCALM
Branch Office
615 N. State St., Ste. 1
Stanton, MI 48888-9702
(989) 831-5237

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
615 N. State St. Ste. 2
Stanton, MI 48888-9702
(989) 831-5237

MARK W. (MARCUS) CHEATHAM
Health Officer

JENNIFER MORSE, MD, MPH, FAAFP
Medical Director



BOARD OF HEALTH
George Bailey
Bruce DeLong
Betty Kellenberger
Tom Lindeman
Sam Smith
Dwight Washington, Ph.D.

BOARD OF HEALTH PUBLIC HEARING

at

Mid-Michigan District Health Department
Gratiot County Administrative Offices
Ithaca, Michigan

Monday, October 15, 2018
6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

We take action to protect, maintain, and improve the health of our community.

- Members Present:** Betty Kellenberger, Tom Lindeman, Dwight Washington, Bruce DeLong, and George Bailey
- Members Absent:** Sam Smith
- Staff Present:** Mark W. (Marcus) Cheatham, Ph.D., Health Officer; and Liz Braddock, Director of Environmental Health
- Staff Absent:** Cindy Partlo, Board Secretary
- Guests:** Mark Coscarelli from Public Section Consultants and Seth Gibson from Clinton Conservation District

Marcus Cheatham, Health Officer called the Public Hearing of the Mid-Michigan District Board of Health to order at 6:00 p.m., on Monday, October 15, 2018, at the Gratiot County Office of the Mid-Michigan District Health Department, Ithaca, Michigan, to obtain public input regarding an amendment to the Environmental Health Regulations, including the addition of Chapter 7, Septic Management Ordinance.

M. Cheatham explained that the current Regulations in place give the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) authority to conduct enforcement when sections of the Regulations are not met. The current Environmental Health Regulations include septic installation only.

M. Cheatham stated that a committee was formed to develop recommendations to address failed septic systems within the district and he read the cross-section of members serving on the committee. He said that the committee's recommendations are outlined in the white paper *Failing Septic Systems in Mid-Michigan*.

M. Cheatham introduced Mark Coscarelli with Public Sector Consultants and stated that he would be the moderator for the Public Hearing. M. Coscarelli discussed the format and stated that the Public Hearing would be taped and the public would be limited to three minutes per comment.

A. Environmental Health (EH) Regulations, Chapter 7 Septic Management Ordinance

The Public Hearing began with the following questions regarding the draft language:

1. What gives MMDHD the authority for us to decide when the septic system should be inspected and come to my home to do this inspection? This program should be a part of a Time of Sale program.
2. What happens when the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) money runs out and is gone?
3. How many people will need to use the MSHDA money?
4. How can people pay back a MSHDA loan?
5. If I have a 50-year system that is a tank only that goes into an agriculture drain tile, what happens to me?

M. Coscarelli requested that all additional questions should be added to a comment card. The next part of the Public Hearing included the comment card names being called out in the order received.

Jane Keon	I have read the document and I don't like government intervention but this is the least intrusive.
Mike Thompson	I have concern over the cost since I have 3 different houses and the cost to get the systems fixed would be \$10,000 to \$20,000. I have a working septic system that is not going into a tile field, so this should be happening when you built or moved into a home. I do pump and maintain my septic; and it is quite a burden what you are reaming down our throats.
Gary Rayburn	This was one of the better committees that I have worked on. We have to start somewhere and this is a good place to deal with our rivers. A Time of Sale would not work and we need to start somewhere.
Chris Johnston	All questions have been answered; no comment.
Liz Harrison	I work for a title company in Isabella County and they have a program and a time of transfer is the way to go. It has exclusions in Isabella. This program is not checking the water – only septic. Are you going to send postcards to everyone to notify?
Ruth Lehner	Who chooses the inspector? If I just had my septic pumped, can I go back and send a pumper's report in to you?
Craig Hooper	Regulators are there to get hold of your stuff. This will greatly limit your life. They can cause you to have to vacate your home. They think they can continue to improve our health but that is not happening and there is also no imminent health hazard happening. You want us to be forced to pay for our own inspections. Hundreds and hundreds of residents in rural areas do not have money to fix. You can drive past many places right now and find failed systems.
Ken McIntyre, Sr.	No comment.
Bill Shaw	I work as a realtor and in construction. This has been oversimplified.

Laura Campbell	I am from Farm Bureau and representing the local farmers. I intend to send you questions. Can you discuss enforcement? How does it happen and who does it? What is the next step beyond this public hearing? What happens if one or more of the counties doesn't agree and approve the new code?
Lee Aldrich	I am a resident of Gratiot, and I have been on and off this committee and have been involved as much as I was invited. Registered inspectors are not knowledgeable and the inspector that was involved in this committee had no idea about what an inspection involved. This ordinance is not factual and it is inconceivable that it will work. Isabella County does not do what they told us they would do when their program started.
Pat Feldpausch	If the State of MI has their program, it will not allow time of sale and will not force you to repair. We need to be proactive and do something about this problem.
Brenda Lehmkuhle	We have two homes on our property and we are the homeowners. We have old farmhouses. Why are we having to pay for something that was grandfathered in? It should be fixed at time of sale. I shouldn't have to be told to fix if I am pumping my tank. I am hooked into the drain tile in the field; and we are two people. We are not bothering anyone. 10% of the residents each year will have to fix.
Dawn Krantz	Time of transfer is the time to do this due to finances being available. If you arbitrary come up to a property, 70% won't pass
Kevin Sopocy	Why is the Health Department having a hard time finding tanks that are failing? You put mound systems in the ground in Clinton County that have water running out of them. There is a big problem. My first system was put in 1966 and a second in 1978. I have a diverter valve and when the tank is pumped I switch between fields. You need to put replacement in next to old systems not on top of old ones.
John Martin	I worked for a chemical company. The water became polluted after we stopped adding chemicals. There was a big mound that had sludge maybe 15 or 20 years ago. Big companies add big pollution just as the bigger the farm, the bigger the pollution. The State needs to worry about the big issues in big companies not the smaller people like us.
Brian Heinze	What is the ratio of DNA tracker for humans and animal? What do you need to do to become an inspector?
Dan Rossman	Is there work on having engineered fields? I worked with Dr. Ted Loudon, is there work on alternative systems? Can a composting toilet be used?
Lee Aldrich	In Isabella, a pass has to meet all isolations distances. It includes nitrates and E.coli for the well, they look at the size of the field and borings are needed. Jim Lower bill is in committee and this would supersede any local codes. Inspections are good.
Diane Fisk	Water quality should be more important. There are wells that are being contaminated with chemical tanks from the farm fields. We have 6 houses in Montcalm county. There are chemicals in the well which pollutes the entire groundwater. We had to abandon a 70 ft. well because of nitrates and drill a 240 ft. well.
Lyn Cannon	Why worry about septic tanks? What about land application? They are as bad and worse, especially when close to the river.

Mark Daniels	What will the fees cover? Does it cover the cost of the program? Who covers the cost of sending postcards and issuing permits? Is this version anywhere else in the State?
Linda Johnson	I live in the City of Ithaca and the city won't run sewer to us even though there are newer homes and older homes. What can be done about this?
John Hardman, North Star Township	Need more information, more public meetings and education before this meeting.
Wendy Loomis	We recently pumped out tank and the pumper said we keep records for 7 years. Maybe you can use that data.
Craig Hooper	The Appeal process is an appeal to the Board of Health.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Health, the Public Hearing adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Liz Braddock
 Director of Environmental Health for
 Bruce DeLong, Chairperson
 Mid-Michigan District Board of Health