

MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 06/03/2026

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: Tabitha K. McCrohan-Chairman, Robert Longton-Member

TOPIC		ACTION
Call To Order	Board of Selectmen - Called to Order at 6:00PM in the Student Commons, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 100 Center St. Dighton, MA	
New Business:	Board to discuss a potential regionalization opportunity and intermunicipal agreement with the Dighton Board of Selectmen for a shared Animal Control Officer position; review of proposed terms and structure; possible vote(s) may be taken. The Boards reviewed a proposed intermunicipal agreement for shared animal control services between Dighton and Berkeley. Dighton's administrator explained that, due to budget pressures and difficulty hiring ACOs, the town explored regionalization instead of reducing its ACO position. The proposal, modeled on a Somerset-Swansea agreement, keeps the ACO as a Dighton employee who responds to calls in both communities. Calls would be logged through the Dighton Police Department, and Dighton would bill Berkeley quarterly for roughly 50% of the general ACO costs. Berkley currently uses a Ford Explorer outfitted for animal control with a cage and winch; any future ACO vehicle or other capital expense would be handled by mutual agreement, with the expectation that both Towns would share such costs. Dighton's existing pound would be used for impoundment, and related fees would accrue to Berkley. The boards discussed legal language and operations. A draft clause that terminated the agreement "immediately" if Berkeley adopted its own animal impoundment bylaws was viewed as too abrupt. There was consensus to revise this to a 90-day termination notice, allowing time for town meeting and an orderly transition. Vacation and coverage were identified as key issues: for the first year, if the Dighton ACO (the employing town's officer) is on vacation, Dighton will have no formal obligation to cover Berkeley's calls, and Berkley will be responsible for arranging its own temporary coverage. Both sides characterized this as an interim solution, with the intent to improve coverage options over time. The idea of developing a per-diem ACO (possibly a retired or part-time person) was discussed as a longer-term strategy to provide vacation and backup coverage for both towns. Reference was made to other communities' per-diem rates and to Berkley's current structure (approx. \$28,000 total ACO budget, including stipends and a \$75 weekend-call stipend), with an understanding that any new per-diem coverage would require additional funding and later amendments. The boards also emphasized the need for clear dispatch triage and emergency definitions. Berkley experiences roughly 240 ACO calls per year, with a significant portion being deer strikes. Members agreed dispatchers need guidance on which calls are true emergencies (such as dog bites and public safety issues) requiring immediate response, and which can be deferred to regular business hours to control off-hours costs. Deer-strike response, currently handled by Berkley's winch-equipped vehicle, was identified as a service that must be explicitly addressed in the operational plan, whether as a core ACO duty or via alternative municipal arrangements. Overall, both Boards agreed the projected combined workload for a shared ACO is manageable and that the first year should be used to collect data and refine the model. Next steps include revising the agreement to insert the 90-day termination language and clarify vacation/coverage expectations, and having the administrators develop a more detailed operational plan (capital cost treatment, per-diem options, emergency definitions, dispatch protocols, deer-strike handling) for review by both boards and relevant staff, with the understanding that the arrangement will be revisited and adjusted as needed after an initial implementation period. Board to discuss a potential regionalization opportunity and intermunicipal agreement with the Dighton Board of Selectmen for a shared Board of Health Agent; review of proposed terms and structure; possible vote(s) may be taken. The Boards discussed a potential regionalization of the Health Agent/Board of Health staffing between Dighton and Berkeley. The concept is to use Dighton's existing Health Agent, currently working 28 hours per week in Dighton, as a special municipal	Discussion Only, no votes taken Discussion Only, no votes taken

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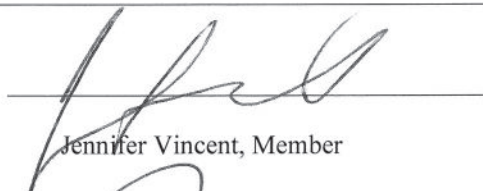
Adjournment:

employee for Berkeley for **up to 7 additional hours per week**, creating a 35-hour position. This would give Berkley access to a professional Health Agent without creating a fully separate, tax-funded role, while maintaining (not reducing) Dighton's current level of service as required by the PHE grant. The boards reviewed existing Board of Health hours (generally Monday–Wednesday in Berkley, with every other Tuesday evening meetings) and discussed structuring a schedule that complements those hours and possibly allows some time in Berkeley on other weekdays, subject to grant constraints.

Both boards expressed support in principle but agreed that the proposal must be **formally referred to each town's Board of Health** to determine specific needs, preferred hours, and how the shared agent would integrate with their operations. The Health Agent's schedule and duties would then be refined within the "up to 7 hours" framework and brought back to the Select Boards for further action. Members characterized this as another cost-efficient regionalization opportunity that can enhance continuity and quality of public health services in both communities, contingent on positive recommendations from the Boards of Health and confirmation that all grant requirements are met.

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM

Next Scheduled Meeting is Thursday, June 11th, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.


Tabitha McCrohan, Chairwoman
Jennifer Vincent, Member
Robert Longton, Member
Matthew Chabot, Town Administrator