

Wellesley Board of Health
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2021
12:00 PM

Present:

Board:

Shepard Cohen, MPA, Chair
Marcia Testa Simonson, MPH, PhD, Vice Chair
Linda Oliver Grape, PA-C, MPH, Secretary
Carol Hannenberg, MD, Associate member

Staff:

Deadra Doku-Gardner, Administrator
Leonard Izzo, Director
Cheryl Lefman, Community Health Coordinator
Ann Marie McCauley, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Vivian Zeng, Senior Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Kerry Bedard, Resident
Shira Doron, MD, Resident
Linda Chow, Wellesley School Committee
Linda Corridan, Director of Nursing, Wellesley Public Schools
Lisa Fico, Resident
Sharon Gray, Wellesley School Committee
John Lanza, Advisory Committee
David Lussier, Superintendent, Wellesley Public Schools
Melissa Martin, Wellesley School Committee
Anne Perkin, Resident
James Roberti, Wellesley School Committee

The meeting was called to order at 12:04 PM

Meeting minutes were approved for the following dates:

- December 21, 2020
- December 23, 2020
- December 30, 2020

Citizen Speak:

Kerry Bedard reiterated parents' concerns regarding the school metrics. At the previous meeting, Ms. Bedard addressed a letter they prepared in regards to operational concerns at the Wellesley Public Schools (WPS).

As noted at the last Board of Health (BOH) meeting, the letter outlines four areas concern for review by Dr. Lussier and applicable boards/committees:

- 1) Revisit the metrics for moving between the fully remote, hybrid and fully in-person models of education.
- 2) Regularly revisit the specific barriers to full in-person learning.
- 3) Provide a voice to all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers) to understand families' changing thoughts as the pandemic unfolds, new science emerges, and the effects of remote and hybrid instruction are realized. The group requests a better format to two-way communication.
- 4) Lastly, requests full transparency of the decision-making process outlining the extent to which the preferences of all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers etc.) were considered.

Anne Perkin reported that since the last meeting, the letter has been circulated among parents and that the group has roughly 300 signatures. Ms. Perkin cited comments made by parents.

1. Administration

a) Wellesley Public Schools – Dashboard

David Lussier reviewed the current status of the COVID-19 WPS dashboard. Dr. Lussier reported that the school department has been successful taking targeted action quickly and efficiently, which included rapid contact tracing to reduce the spread of the virus.

Linda Chow elaborated on revisiting the dashboard metrics and providing further updates. Ms. Chow said there will be a metrics meeting this week. She requested that Dr. Shira Doron participate in this group; Dr. Doron agreed to participate.

Dr. Lussier reported that the school department has felt the urgency to bring the schools back in person since the beginning of the school year; however, there are multiple constraints to doing so. Dr. Lussier cited examples of limitations such as the spacing available and transportation.

Linda Chow encouraged parents to contact the School Committee to ask questions. She referred vaccination and education questions to Dr. Lussier and Linda Corridan.

b) Wellesley Public Schools - Vaccination and Teachers

The teacher's union is pushing to have the teachers vaccinated in January and not February.

Marcia Testa Simonson directed the group to the Mass.gov website [When can I get the COVID 19 vaccine](#). She noted that those who do not come into contact with direct care patients are not currently a priority and remain in their current phases. There has been no movement for the K-12 group to move to an earlier phase.

2. Community Health

a) COVID Vaccine

Leonard Izzo reported that the vaccine is not in-house at this time. The staff is currently working on getting first responders vaccinated as soon as it arrives.

Marcia Testa Simonson reported that mass vaccination clinics (for first responders) are to be held throughout the state, such as at large stadiums, however nothing is definitive.

Linda Oliver Grape reported her concern about the congregate settings and long-term care facilities. Ann Marie McCauley will follow-up with those facilities.

b) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley provided a case numbers update. There has been a jump since Friday with 38 new positive cases. Most have been from household spread among family members. An example included that some preschoolers have exposed family members to the virus.

Ms. McCauley reiterated that the State's MAVEN training has not yet been made available to new staff and volunteers waiting to assist with contract tracing.

c) COVID-19 Vaccine Availability

At the last meeting, Dr. Doron reported that Tufts Medical Center had vaccinated several thousand of their staff (without significant side effects). At today's meeting, she noted that much of the vaccine is available and remains in the freezer/ fridge units, waiting for dissemination.

3. Environmental Health

a) Boston Sports Institute

Vivian Zeng reported there were complaints regarding a great deal of activity at the BSI complex over the weekend. She noted that swim meets are taking place.

This meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on January 6, 2021, 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator