

Wellesley Board of Health
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
February 22, 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:

Jessica Cliff, MHA, Environmental Health Specialist
Deadra Doku Gardner, MS, Administrator
Leonard Izzo, MS, RS, CHO, Director
Cheryl Lefman, MA, Community Health Coordinator
Ann Marie McCauley, RN, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Joyce Saret, LICSW, Senior Community Social Worker
Vivian Zeng, REHS, RS, CP-FS, Senior Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Bob Brown, The Swellesley Report
Linda Chow, Chair, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools
Linda Corridan, Director of Nursing, Wellesley Public Schools
Shira Doron, MD, Resident
David Lussier, Superintendent, Wellesley Public Schools
Beth Sullivan Woods, Member, Select Board
Lloyd Tarlin, MD, Resident and former board member

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 AM

Meeting minutes were approved for the following date: February 17, 2021

1. Community Health
 - a) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley provided a COVID-19 update. There were zero positive cases of residents over the weekend and four today.

As reported at the last meeting, Babson had multiple cases after the Superbowl, however there were no new cases yesterday or today.

b) COVID-19 – Wellesley Public Schools (WPS)

David Lussier provided an overview of the hybrid learning models at WPS.

Dr. Lussier re-stated the need for teachers to be vaccinated to go full in-person, and hopes they can receive their first shot in March. He stated the first dose is essential in the WPS reopening plans. Dr. Lussier reported on the new guidance issued by CDC, which maintained the requirement of six feet of physical distancing. He said that even at three feet, not all students could go back to full in-person.

Marcia Testa Simonson reported that over a million individual need to be vaccinated in Phase 2, and more than half are in the first two groups In Phase 2. She said therefore, it is too early to assume that teachers will be vaccinated in March. Any teacher or staff member with two qualifying medical conditions are eligible to be vaccinated now along with those that are over 65.

Dr. Shira Doron reported the medical community was very surprised by the guidance released by CDC on February 12, in regards to school opening. She will be speaking at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on Tuesday. She reported on the science of the vaccine and research on transmission, indicating that it may protect not only you, but those around you from the virus. The first dose appears to be more than 90% effective.

Lloyd Tarlin noted that the virus is mutating and the more people that are immunized the better off we will be, as it will lead to herd immunity.

c) COVID-19 Vaccine and Clinics

Marcia Testa Simonson reported there are no appointments available at any mass site at this time. The State is expected to receive 110,000 doses each week. Leonard Izzo reported that local boards of health will not be receiving any of this vaccine. The only local vaccine allocation expected (of approximately 150 doses) is from the federal program and is designated for those in low income and age restricted housing. Wellesley Health Department and Wellesley Housing Authority are collaborating on plans for administration.

Leonard Izzo reported that the State is working on how home bounds residents will be vaccinated. A list of Wellesley homebound residents is being compiled. Additional information will be provided as it become available.

Mr. Izzo reported on the Norfolk County 8 (NC8) regional collaboration meeting that took place on Friday, February 19, 2021. The group intends

on drafting a letter to the State, requesting to become a large regional vaccination clinic.

Cheryl Lefman reported that messaging to residents has been clear stating that if they are eligible and have an opportunity to get their vaccination, to do so; they should not wait for a local clinic.

d) Mental Health

Joyce Saret reported that many parents of school age children remain concerned about their children not being in school.

Ms. Saret said residents are concerned that they are unable to get appointments.

Ms. Saret reported that she, Wanda Alvarez, and Jessica Cliff are working with Cheryl Lefman to update the mental health resources guide on the Health Department website.

e) Community Diversity

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that the Select Board has been addressing discrimination, racism and acts of intolerance in the community. Some of this was known to be taking place in the community but was not broadly publicized. The Select Board is looking closely at the issue. Ms. Sullivan Woods spoke with Joyce Saret seeking recommendations. She also spoke with Mark Kline of Human Relations Service and learned that the agency has a program for residents who have experienced these issues.

Police Chief Jack Pilecki informed Ms. Sullivan Woods that the Town of Natick has a program called the Freedom Team, where volunteers in the community connect with people who have experienced racism, discrimination, and intolerance.

f) Wellesley College

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that Wellesley College will not be holding any summer programs.

2. Environmental Health

a) Regulation Updates

Leonard Izzo reported that the staff is working on updating the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery regulations. A draft will be forwarded to the Board before the March 3rd Board meeting for review.

Leonard Izzo and Vivian Zeng also reported minor changes have been made to the Food Establishment and Body Art regulations.

Vivian Zeng reported there has been increased interest in microblading.

b) Babson College

Vivian Zeng reported that Babson College is interested in having a large Spring Day event and is intending on inviting multiple food trucks. Ms. Zeng will provide additional information regarding if/how this event could take place at the next meeting.

3. Administration

a) Budget Update

The Board of Health will be presenting their budget to the Advisory Committee on Wednesday, February 24, 2021.

Marcia Testa Simonson reviewed the draft budget where changes were requested by Financial Services. Financial Service has suggested a \$50k cut in the budget to meet the guidelines.

Beth Sullivan Woods said the Health Department had a supplemental mid-year budget adjustment, and the Advisory Committee should be aware of that.

Marcia Testa Simonson and Leonard Izzo will be speaking further with Advisory Committee liaison John Lanza in preparation of the Board of Health presentation.

This meeting was adjourned at 1:26 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on February 24, 2021, 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator