

Town of Wellesley
Board of Health Meeting (online remote)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 2nd, 8:30 AM

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:

Cheryl Lefman, MA, Community Health Coordinator, Retired
Jhana Wallace, MOH, Community Health Coordinator
Deadra Doku-Gardner, MS, Administrator
Lenny Izzo, Health Department Director
Ann Marie McCauley, RN, Public Health Nursing Supervisor
Joyce Saret, MSW, Senior Community Social Worker
Wanda Alvarez, Community Social Worker
Vivian Zeng, Senior Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Shira Doron, MD, Resident
Christina Dougherty, Advisory Liaison
Beth Sullivan Woods, Select Board

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM

1. Citizen Speak

There were no requests to speak.

2. Director's Report

- a. Mr. Izzo discussed the 2023 MetroWest Foundation grant focused on capacity building. Funds are available for up to \$20,000. The Health Department plans to submit a concept paper to implement an electronic system to track resident records across divisions in the Department to improve efficiency, confidentiality, and resident satisfaction.

- b. Ms. Oliver Grape inquired about the impact on Newton Wellesley Hospital for Brockton Hospital patients moved to Newton Wellesley Hospital after a fire ten days prior. Ms. McCauley offered to reach out to the hospital to determine the impact.

3. Chairman's Report

- a. Mr. Cohen inquired about reporting from HRS. Ms. Doku-Gardner reported that a new contract for HRS will be due in June. Dr. Testa Simonson requested a copy of the current contract be circulated.
- b. Mr. Cohen discussed the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey. Mr. Izzo reported that the survey information is now on the school website although this data does not include all Wellesley information. Ms. Saret explained the Wellesley Public Schools review process for the results and that this data is a year and a half old, and the new survey will be delivered in Fall 2023. Dr. Testa Simonson discussed that this survey is meant to look at general trends and not acute issues but a rapid survey could give an up to date snapshot of local youth health issues. Mr. Izzo suggested that the Health Department will continue to pursue access to the data earlier in the process and that the Department could consider an independent survey with regional partners.

4. Nurses Update/Community Health

- a. COVID/Flu/RSV Update-Ms. McCauley reported that the Department is only receiving 1-2 reports of Covid per day, almost no flu, and no foodborne illnesses. No Flu vaccines have been administered recently. Ms. McCauley suggested that the Department might order fewer doses of regular vaccine and the same amount of high dose vaccine next year. Ms. Oliver Grape reported there is more Strep infection in the community and an increase in PANDAS.

Dr. Doron reported low numbers of respiratory viruses at Tufts Medical Center but they do have several public health alerts: severe eye infection from contaminated artificial tears, highly resistant gonorrhea and a new CDC alert on resistant Shigella infection. Dr. Doron reported little to no Flu, RSV, COVID or Norovirus at Tufts.

- a. The Board of Health discussed Opioid Settlement Funds. Dr. Testa Simonson will contact the AG office for general information and for Wellesley specific information. There is an April 18th deadline to sign on for the next round of five Settlement funds. Funds from the previous two settlements have been given to Wellesley. Mr. Izzo will determine who from the Health Department will be working on the Settlement funds program. Ms. Sullivan Woods offered to

coordinate with Ms. Dougherty to ensure Advisory Committee is aware of Settlement fund deadlines and next steps.

5. Environmental Health Update

- a. Ms. Zeng reported on The Nines and housing inspections. The Health Department is required to do a pre-placement inspection of each affordable unit. This year so far twenty-four inspections have taken place, heavily impacting the inspection load. Additionally, the Health Department has been working with the developer on regulations for the pool due to the number of children living at the complex. Mr. Izzo reported that the Department will push harder for more child friendly developments on the property. Ms. Sullivan-Woods commented that there is an article at Town Meeting to approve a change to development rights to allow for another large condo or apartment complex. That agreement is being negotiated by the Select Board so now is the time to get any Health Department issues or concerns before the Select Board to ensure inclusion. Ms. Zeng will send the Department's concerns.
- b. Ms. Zeng reported that summer camp document packets are posted and there is an upcoming webinar required for all new camp directors. Mr. Izzo reported that the Department is expecting a challenging camp season with a lot of new camps and new camp directors.
- c. Ms. Zeng updated the Board on other current Environmental Team projects issues including Delta 8, the FDA grant, tobacco enforcement and an upcoming IT upgrade to the permit application process.

6. Administration

- a. Ms. Oliver Grape moved to approve the meeting minutes from 2/16/23. Dr. Testa Simonson seconded the motion. Mr. Cohen voted yay. The minutes were approved.
- b. Ms. Oliver Grape made a motion to appoint Dr. Testa Simonson as new interim chair of the BOH until such time as new board is reconstituted. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. Dr. Testa Simonson voted yay. The motion was approved.
- c. The Next Board of Health meeting will be Tuesday March 14 at 9:00 AM
- d. The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Jhana Wallace, Community Health Coordinator

