

Wellesley Board of Health
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2021
12:00 P.M.

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:

Wanda Alvarez, LSW, Community Social Worker
Jessica Cliff, MHA, Environmental Health Specialist
Deadra Doku Gardner, MS, Administrator
Ashley Denton, RN, Public Health
Leonard Izzo, MS, RS, CHO, Director
Vivian Zeng, REHS, RS, CP-FS, Senior Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Bob Brown, Swellesley Report
Linda Corridan, Director of Nursing, Wellesley Public Schools
Shira Doron, MD, resident
Stephanie Hawkinson, Communications and Project Manager
Beth Sullivan Woods, Member, Select Board
Lloyd Tarlin, MD, resident and former Board of Health member

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 PM.

The meeting minutes of May 10, 2021 were approved.

1. Community Health

a) COVID-19 Update

Ashley Denton reported that there has been one new case since the last meeting. Dr. Shira Doron and Marcia Testa Simonson reported that the number of cases state-wide has reduced significantly.

Leonard Izzo reported on various changes in the Governor's orders. Effective May 29th most business and activities will return to pre- pandemic activity with the exception of mandatory face coverings in schools and healthcare settings. Mr. Izzo reported that the state of emergency will be lifted on June 15, 2021.

b) COVID-19 Mask Order

Wellesley Board of Health voted to rescind the local mask order that was put in place by the Board of Health and the Select Board in March 2020.

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that at tonight's meeting the Select Board will also vote to rescind the order. Going forward, the Town of Wellesley will follow all State COVID related restrictions, orders, and guidelines.

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

Linda Corridan reported that there were no COVID cases in the WPS last week. She said that 87% of the faculty and staff have now been vaccinated.

A COVID vaccination clinic for students 12+ will be held at the schools next week. Pelmeds pharmacy has been contracted to provide staffing and registration.

Ms. Corridan reported that testing continues in the schools.

d) Testing

Marcia Testa Simonson and Shira Doron reported that testing in the WPS schools is no longer necessary. Dr. Testa Simonson said it is not cost effective, is harmful, and outweighs the benefits, as there is such a low positivity rate. The Board of Health will address whether they recommend continued testing in the schools at the next meeting. Dr. Doron will discuss this with the school superintendent, however she believes that the testing has already been paid for the remainder of the school year.

Dr. Doron reported that positive predictive testing and research on those that have been vaccinated and test positive have a low viral load and are less likely to be infective. Expect to see less than one in a million positivity among vaccinated individuals.

e) Social Services: Mental Health Awareness Month

Jessica Cliff reported on the mental health awareness flag campaign at the Wellesley Free Library. Wanda Alvarez reported that the visual aspect of the campaign is especially impactful.

Joyce Saret reported that a webinar on mental health and depression is scheduled for May 24.

2. Environmental Health

a) Tobacco Regulations (Chapter XVIII)

Jessica Cliff provided an overview of the revised tobacco regulations. Permits will be capped at ten. The Board of Health voted to approve the updated tobacco regulations, effective immediately.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on May 24, 2021, 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator