

Wellesley Board of Health  
Remote Meeting via Zoom  
Meeting Minutes  
May 24, 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:

Wanda Alvarez, LSW, Community Social Worker  
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, Swellesley Report  
Linda Corridan, Director of Nursing, Wellesley Public Schools  
Shira Doron, MD, resident  
Maura Renzella, LSW, Youth Director  
Beth Sullivan Woods, Select Board  
Lloyd Tarlin, MD, former Board of Health member, resident

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 PM.

The meeting minutes of May 10, 2021 were approved.

1. Community Health

a) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley reported that there were no new cases since the last meeting. Several (non-COVID) reportable communicable diseases have come in.

Dr. Shira Doron reported that COVID hospitalizations are decreasing as well as the number of COVID cases. She said there is a heightened level of anxiety regarding the May 29<sup>th</sup> lifting of COVID restrictions, especially around unmasking. She stressed the importance of messaging around the

combination of the vaccinations and lower case counts, noting that each week we will see case numbers plummet.

Leonard Izzo reported on last week's Community Briefing, which highlighted the Health Department's social services and upcoming mental health program for the community.

Mr. Izzo reported he has been having discussions with many town department representatives regarding reopening plans for town buildings. Mr. Izzo has been promoting best practices.

b) COVID Vaccine Update

Maura Renzella reported that she has been working with Wanda Alvarez and Joyce Saret to ensure that anyone living in public housing who wishes to be vaccinated has access. She noted some vaccine hesitancy among Barton Road residents however they are moving in a positive direction.

c) Nourishing Wellesley Program

Maura Renzella provided an update on the Newton-Needham Regional Chamber of Commerce program for Newton, Wellesley and Brookline. The program provides financial support for local restaurants and meals to those facing food insecurity in those communities. Senator Cynthia Creem secured the \$40,000 grant funding for Wellesley. Ms. Renzella reported that 17 restaurants participated in the program which began on March 11, 2020 and will end on June 10, 2021. Senator Creem is expected to seek additional support to continue the program in the Fall. Thus far, 1,115 meals have been delivered by volunteers.

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

Linda Corridan reported that there were no COVID cases in the WPS last week. This is the second consecutive week without a case; 844 faculty and staff have been vaccinated.

Ms. Corridan reported that next Tuesday, a COVID vaccination clinic will be held at the schools for students 12 and older. Thus far, 400 students have registered. The second dose clinic has been scheduled for June 15<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Corridan noted that many students have already received their vaccinations.

e) Human Relations Service

Deadra Doku Gardner provided an update on the status of the FY22 Human Relations Service contract. The draft has been forwarded to the Board of Health for review; it will then be forwarded to Town Council for approval.

Dr. Mark Kline will be invited to the next Board of Health meeting.

f) COVID-19 Testing

Linda Corridan inquired as to whether the Board of Health will suggest any changes in testing in the schools for the remainder of the school year. Ms. Corridan said there are four more cycles of testing and no testing is planned for the extended summer program. Marcia Testa Simonson replied that there will be no further Board discussion regarding testing in the schools for the remainder of the school year.

Linda Oliver Grape requested that the Board of Health be consulted should there be a plan for testing at the start of school in the Fall. Dr. Doron reported that parents would like the School Department to be more transparent and keep the community informed of any changes prior to the start of the school year.

g) Social Services - Mental Health Awareness Month

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that the mental health awareness flag campaign at the Wellesley Free Library is very visible.

Joyce Saret reported that the webinar on mental health and depression has been rescheduled for June 8<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

2. Environmental Health

a) Camps and Programing

Vivian Zeng reported that she continues to work with camp operators. Many operators are asking for extensions for submitting their applications.

Leonard Izzo reported on the ongoing labor shortage. The Health Department is receiving more requests for programming and camps however staffing remains a concern across the State and in our area.

b) Food Establishments

Leonard Izzo and Vivian Zeng reported that the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) will no longer allow to-go

alcoholic drinks as of June 15, 2021 and effective August 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be no more outdoor dining.

Beth Sullivan Woods reported she is working with the town's Executive Director on interim and long-term solutions to maintain outdoor dining.

Beth Sullivan Woods reported on the success of the closure of half of Central Street this past weekend and thanked Jessica Cliff and Vivian Zeng for their help with the closure and expansion of outdoor seating.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on June 7, 2021, 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner

Administrator