

Wellesley Board of Health  
Remote Meeting via Zoom  
Meeting Minutes.  
August 11, 2021  
12:05 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  
Ashley Denton, Public Health Nurse  
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:

Gary Aharonian, owner, B & P Auto  
Jie Bai, resident  
Linda Chow, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools  
Shira Doron, MD, resident  
Leda Eizenberg, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools  
Jen Fallon, resident  
Lisa Fico, resident  
Stephanie Hawkinson, Communications and Project Manager, Town of Wellesley  
Ashely Hulme, Director of Nursing, Wellesley Public Schools  
David Lussier, Superintendent, Wellesley Public Schools  
Catherine Mirick, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools  
Carl Nelson, resident, Wellesley Celebrations Committee  
Beth Sullivan Woods, Select Board

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM.

## Chairman's report

Shep Cohen reviewed the general agenda for today's meeting.

## Director's Report

### a) Masking Update

Leonard Izzo reported that he has drafted a mask advisory for the community. He will be forwarding the advisory to the Board of Health.

### b) Colleges and Private Schools

Leonard Izzo reported on his meetings with the colleges regarding the return to school for the fall semester. (Babson College, Mass Bay Community College, Wellesley College). They will continue to discuss COVID vaccination requirements, guidelines, and best practices.

As noted at the last meeting, Mr Izzo continues to reach out to the private elementary and high schools to discuss the return to school. He continues to have a strong communication with the private schools.

### c) Wellesley Public Schools – COVID

David Lussier provided an update from the recent Wellesley School Committee meeting. Dr Lussier noted that the use of masks continues to be a discussion factor as the school district approaches the start of the school year. Dr Lussier reiterated that both the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC are suggesting masking for all age groups. As he noted last week, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) recommend that masks be worn for grades K thru 6k. Currently there is no plan for a statewide mask mandate in place.

Dr Lussier reported that most of the eligible students and staff have been vaccinated. Of those students eligible to be vaccinated, 82% have had at least one dose of a vaccine. Staff is self-reporting at 88% having received at least one vaccine dose. Linda Oliver Grape suggested that another self-reporting survey of staff be conducted before the start of school.

Dr Lussier reported that he and the School Committee currently are supporting a mask mandate for everyone attending and working in the Wellesley Public Schools noting a number of benefits. He reported that having everyone masked would provide a safe environment for all and eliminate the stigmatism (of those who are unvaccinated). The Wellesley School Committee will be making the decision in the coming weeks.

Linda Oliver Grape reported on the importance of being vaccinated. Ms Grape provided a reminder that students that have spent the summer in another state may have been vaccinated.

Shira Doron provided a review of recent scientific data regarding the vaccine, unvaccinated, vaccinated individuals, and the use of masks. Dr Doron reviewed the work she is currently doing on metrics (Off Ramping).

David Lussier reported that the current data does not warrant testing in the schools. Dr Lussier suggested that having a rapid screening test at schools may be helpful.

Leonard Izzo and David Lussier reported that the Facilities Maintenance Department has ensured that the ventilation systems in the schools have been upgraded and are running properly. The units are bringing in as much clean air as possible.

At this time the Board of Health reported that they would not be taking a position on masking or no masking.

### Community Health

#### a) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley reported that MAVEN is reporting two new COVID cases per day on an average in Wellesley.

#### b) Businesses and Town Buildings

Leonard Izzo reported that he will be preparing an advisory for masking should it be necessary to release to the local business and town buildings. Businesses will be able to set their own guidelines.

Linda Oliver Grape suggested that the advisory suggest language that strongly recommends vaccination to all eligible individuals.

#### c) Cooling centers

Leonard Izzo addressed the current heat wave and noted that he has been working with Stephanie Hawkinson. Information will be put out to the community on where to go to escape the heat.

#### d) Wellesley Wonderful Weekend

Shep Cohen reported that the event is taking place in October. Environmental Health agents will work closely with the organizers to ensure that every remains safe.

#### e) Tobacco Appeal Hearing

Gary Aharonian, owner, B & P Auto was present and reviewed the events that took place on July 30, 2021. Mr Aharonian acknowledged that an employee at B & P Auto sold a pack of cigarettes to a minor during a compliance check. Mr Aharonian has been business owner in Wellesley for 17 years and has never had a violation in the past. He is seeking a reduction in the \$1000 fine administered to first time offenders.

Jessica Cliff inquired as to the future training policies for employees. She notified Mr Aharonian of the free on-line training for tobacco sales that is available. She also informed Mr Aharonian of the availability of computer systems that are able to control tobacco sales electronically.

The Board of Health will provide a decision at the next meeting.

Linda Oliver Grape stressed the importance of documenting for the name of the employee who sold the tobacco.

f) Community Health Coordinator

As noted at the last meeting Shep Cohen and Leonard Izzo have reviewed the Community Health Coordinator job description and have made recommendations and updates to the qualifications and responsibilities. The job description is currently being reviewed by the Human Resources Department.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is tentatively scheduled for August 18, 2021 at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner

Administrator