

Wellesley Board of Health
Zoom Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2020
11:30 AM

Present:

Board:

Shepard Cohen, MPA, Chair
Marcia Testa Simonson, MPH, PhD, Vice Chair
Linda Oliver Grape, PA-C, MPH, Secretary

Staff:

Ann Marie McCauley, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Deadra Doku-Gardner, Administrator
Leonard Izzo, Director
Cheryl Lefman, Community Health Coordinator
Joyce Saret, Senior Community Social Worker
Vivian Zeng, Environmental Health Agent

In attendance:

Jon Lanza, Liaison, Advisory Committee
Beth Sullivan Woods, Board of Selectmen

The meeting was called to order at 11:34 am.

1. Administration

a) Director's Report

Mr. Izzo elaborated on recent issues surrounding Coronavirus in Wellesley.

b) Human Resources

Leonard Izzo reported that the Senior Environment Health Specialist's position has been posted. Once that position is filled, the other environmental health position will be filled.

Leonard Izzo has reviewed the social worker applicants and will be conducting interviews.

c) CARES Act

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that Financial Services has been tracking the expenses.

d) Wellesley Public Schools – School Reopening Plan

Leonard Izzo reported on the School Committee meeting of this morning. There will be another Board of Health and School Committee meeting tomorrow - Thursday, August 13, 2020.

Marcia Testa Simonson requested a change in the agenda for the meeting on Thursday. The Board of Health agreed to change the agenda. Linda Oliver Grape will make the changes and forward for posting.

Linda Oliver Grape reported the School Committee plans to open the schools with a hybrid plan. However, Linda Oliver Grape disagrees – from purely a health perspective that is not the way to go because there should be more consistency in the scheduling of students in the classroom.

Marcia Testa Simonson believes the school's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) requires a working group to come together to complete a formal plan. She reviewed the ages of the school teachers and found that there is a relatively younger group of individuals working in Wellesley schools. Dr. Testa Simonson reported that 2% of the teachers are 65 or older and that 50% are under 40 years old.

Dr. Testa Simonson reported there are childcare issues for many of the teachers and staff. Further discussion needs to take place as to how the Wellesley Public Schools are going to manage the many employees who do not live in Wellesley - 90% of the faculty and staff are from communities outside of Wellesley.

Linda Oliver Grape reported on the school plan if there are one or more positive cases; a plan must include consideration of when to close a classroom, when to close a school and when to close the schools town-wide. Marcia Testa Simonson reported that all cities and towns are asking the same questions.

On August 13th the goal for the School Committee is to vote on the opening school model. As reported at a previous meeting, Leonard Izzo said the schools formed a reopening committee (with multiple sub-committees). Mr. Izzo has an active role in the planning of school opening and how schools will operate in the fall.

e) Broad Institute

The Board of Health agreed that Jessie Boehm from the Broad Institute will be invited to the next BOH meeting to provide an update on Covid-19 testing for students, teachers and staff.

f) Testing

Ann Marie McCauley reviewed various testing types available. She reiterated the PCR test is the gold standard in its ability to pick up active infection.

2. Community Health

a) Influenza Vaccine

Ann Marie McCauley reported that some vaccine is expected to arrive at the end of this week. First responders and town departments will be vaccinated at small clinics first.

b) Mental Health and Social Services

Joyce Saret reported things are mostly even and steady, although there is a great deal of anxiety among parents and students about going back to school.

c) Coronavirus – cases, etc.

Ann Marie McCauley reported there are no new cases since yesterday afternoon. There were two new cases yesterday.

Shepard Cohen would like a table showing limited data on each positive case, to keep all interested parties informed and more importantly, to detect any trends which would help determine responses.

d) Private school plans

Ann Marie McCauley reported the nurses have been reviewing the opening of private schools and college plans.

e) Long Term Care

Ann Marie McCauley reported the long-term care facilities are doing well.

4) Environmental Health

f) Outdoor Activities

Leonard Izzo reported on sporting activities - there will be reductions in field space.

Outdoor gatherings, by state mandates, are now limited to under 50 people.

Public gatherings of political and religious organizations are exempt.

g) Mosquitoes

Leonard Izzo reported that spraying took place in Plymouth county in response to a EEE case. Mr. Izzo reported that hot dry summers are conducive to mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus.

h) Library Reopening

Vivian Zeng reported that the main branch of the Wellesley Free Library will reopen on August 3, 2020 to a maximum of 25 patrons at a time. The satellites will reopen at a later date.

i) Pools and Beaches

Waterstone has reopened its pool after completing reconstruction. Vivian Zeng has reviewed its policies and procedures.

Morses Pond will be staffed by the green shirt group. Matt Chin, the Recreation Director, is trying to extend opening.

j) Food Establishments

Leonard Izzo reported that the Environmental Health Specialists are working with various establishments. Most of the restaurants relied on take out and did not take advantage of the outdoor seating.

Vivian Zeng and Lenny Izzo reported that Wellesley College will be housing their students from high risk states at the Verve Hotel in Natick. Wellesley College plans on transporting food for two weeks beginning on August 16th. 200 meals will be delivered the first week and 250 meals the second week. Wellesley and Natick health departments are working together to monitor this arrangement.

Vivian Zeng reported that Babson Campus is projecting 1300 meals to be served in the dining rooms.

The Board of Health meeting adjourned at 12:40 pm. The next meeting of the Board of Health will be held on August 13, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator

Documents reviewed during this meeting and on-file in the Health Department:

- NONE