

Town of Wellesley
Board of Health Meeting (online remote)
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 29, 2022, 9:00 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
Jhana Wallace, Community Health Coordinator
Deadra Doku-Gardner, MS, Administrator
Lenny Izzo, Health Department Director
Ann Marie McCauley, RN, Public Health Nursing Supervisor
Wanda Alvarez, Community Social Worker
Joyce Saret, MSW, Senior Community Social Worker

In attendance:

Shira Doron, MD, Resident
Bill Parquet, Builder for 148 Walnut Street
Christina Dougherty-Advisory Liaison

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM

1. Chairman's Report

- a. Mr. Cohen reported that on October 6th, 2022, there is a meeting scheduled with all Town of Wellesley Department Heads to discuss next year's budget. Lenny Izzo and Deadra Doku-Gardner will send a recording or meeting information to the Board of Health.
- b. Professional Development Update-Mr. Izzo reported that staff are prepared to attend the APHA conference in November. Ms. Oliver-Grape will also be attending. Several staff are attending the MEHA conference this week and MHOA in November.

2. Community Health Update

a. Nurse Report

1. COVID: Ms. McCauley reported that with schools and colleges back in session there is a slight increase in COVID cases, approximately six cases/day from PCR testing. The positivity rate is 6%. Mr. Cohen inquired about colleges and COVID. Ms. McCauley reported that the colleges have had cases and isolation is occurring in dorm rooms. Ms. McCauley also reported that colleges are not requiring testing and that each college is approaching COVID mitigation differently.

Mr. Izzo reported that previously the Department found businesses where Covid ran through the entire staff and closed for periods of time. This could be an issue this Winter.

Mr. Izzo reported the Department will encourage people to get tested and the Department has two pallets of tests. The tests will be distributed at every opportunity and event. There may be a drive-through distribution event in the Fall.

2. Flu: Ms. McCauley reported that the Department is focused on Flu clinics. A clinic for town employees has taken place and next week a community clinic will be held at 90 Washington in the gymnasium (10/4/22).

The community clinic is limited to 150 doses and constrained by gym availability. Ms. McCauley reported that the Department is using a new software platform, COLOR, for registrations. The regular and high-dose versions of the Flu vaccine will be available. COVID boosters will also be available.

Other upcoming clinics include the Council on Aging, Waterstone and the Department will reach out to Mass Bay depending on supply.

Ms. Oliver-Grape suggested the Department might want to be prepared for a prevalent flu season. Ms. McCauley reported that Flu is showing up earlier this year and the Department has already had several cases reported.

- b. Dr. Doron reported on hospitalization, wastewater, case rates, updated CDC guidelines, and Flu. Hospitalization rates are low but case rates in wastewater are holding at a higher level and increased yesterday. The CDC reports the Commonwealth as in the green overall. Ms.

Dr. Doron reported that the CDC put out new guidance on Friday that health care settings can now make masks optional if they are not in high transmission settings. MA hospitals are still in red, so masks are still required. Dr. Doron reported they are not seeing much Flu in the hospital yet, but they are seeing early flu, likely due to new testing protocols.

- c. Emergency Preparedness: Mr. Izzo explained the Department's emergency preparedness program. The upcoming Flu clinic will be used as a training for incident preparedness. Every staff member participates in some capacity. Volunteers from several outlets will be participating.

Dr. Testa-Simonson explained that the CDC provides funding to prepare for emergencies. There are deliverables to receive this funding, and one is to ensure you have a unit for this type of emergency dispensing need. Mr. Izzo reported that the Department is due for a large tabletop drill with NC-8 partners and all Department staff.

- d. Programming: Ms. Wallace updated the Board on community health and outreach projects.
- e. Social Work Update
 - 1. Ms. Saret updated the Board on activities from the Social Work staff. Mr. Cohen inquired about adding a new social worker position. Mr. Izzo explained that the Department needs a smaller group discussion on mental health needs in Wellesley to identify gaps and solutions. Mr. Cohen suggested a working group. Ms. Oliver-Grape reported that there had been a timeline and a discussion of funding, but COVID prevented further movement.

3. Environmental Health Update

- a. There was a variance request for a geothermal well at 148 Walnut St. in Wellesley requiring a Board of Health vote. Mr. Cohen moved to approve the request. Dr. Testa Simonson seconded. Ms. Oliver-Grape voted yay. The motion was approved.

4. Administration

- a. Mr. Izzo asked for a vote to approve continued participation in the Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) with NC-8-(also required from Select Board). Mr. Izzo explained that the agreement includes regional support staff including an epidemiologist and social services. Ms. Oliver-Grape advised against making any addendums to the agreement. Dr. Testa Simonson shared that this

agreement does not replace staff but provides a shared service among towns. Mr. Cohen made a motion to accept and sign on to the IMA for the Public Health Excellence shared services grant. Ms. Oliver-Grape seconded. Dr. Testa Simonson voted yay. The motion passed to sign the IMA.

b. New Space Updates-Phones, Furniture, Floor Coverings

1. Mr. Izzo reported that the Board needs to approve funding to finish the office work. Ms. Oliver-Grape made a motion to approve a budget over \$500 for office expenses. Dr. Testa Simonson seconded the motion. Mr. Cohen voted yay. The motion passed to approve funding.
2. Mr. Cohen noted that the Board appreciates the work of FMD and custodians and thanks the Recreation Department for allocating space.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled for October 27th, 2022, at 9:00am.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Jhana Wallace, Community Health Coordinator