

Wellesley Board of Health
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2021
11:30 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:

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

In attendance:

Bob Brown, Resident and Swellesley Report
Lisa Keen, Resident
Marie Taylor, Resident
Beth Sullivan Woods, Member, Select Board

The meeting was called to order at 11:36 AM

Meeting minutes were approved for the following dates:

- February 3, 2021
- February 10, 2021

1. Community Health
 - a) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley provided a COVID-19 update. Numbers of positive cases continue to go down in the Wellesley community, with the exception of Babson College. On Tuesday, February 16, 2021, the College reported a surge of positive COVID cases, most likely due to events surrounding the Superbowl on Sunday, February 7, 2021. Ms. McCauley said that Babson has gone fully remote for 48 hours.

Ms. McCauley reported there has been one case of the UK variant in town. This case of B.1.1.7 was deemed to have occurred through community spread.

b) COVID-19 – Wellesley College

Beth Sullivan Woods reported on the meeting with Wellesley College officials. Members of the Select Board and Board of Health met with the College President and members of her administrative and medical staff on February 12, 2021. Ms. Sullivan Woods said the College has kept the town up-to-date on their reopening plans. The COVID numbers reflect that the school has taken the pandemic seriously, and the plans to keep students safe and healthy have been effective.

Ms. Sullivan Woods reported there are no plans to schedule any of the traditional ceremonies and events that usually take place in the spring and around graduation.

c) COVID-19 Vaccine and Clinics

Lenny Izzo reported that Governor Baker will be announcing today that individuals age 65 and older, individuals with two or more comorbidities, and residents and staff of public and private low income and affordable senior housing will be eligible to receive the COVID vaccine beginning tomorrow (2/18/21). Mr. Izzo believes this will make it even more difficult for those over 75 years of age to obtain an appointment.

Mr. Izzo elaborated that today's announcement indicates that individual communities will not be able to run community clinics as no vaccine will be provided to local boards of health. Marcia Testa Simonson said the Department of Public Health has chosen to distribute vaccine to mass vaccination clinics, as well as large regional clinics, rather than to small community clinics organized by local health departments. She said when considering vaccine transportation, refrigeration/freezer needs, and distribution, it is more efficient for the State to manage larger sites rather than smaller sites. The State has found that mass vaccination clinics to be quite effective. There will be 20 regional clinics; Natick Mall will be opening as a clinic site on February 22, 2021.

Linda Oliver Grape said it is important to recognize that the vaccination clinics being held in Needham are regional (State approved) clinics, open to anyone in the State. They are administering Pfizer vaccine.

d) COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics – Low Income, Age Restricted, Congregate Housing

As noted at the last several meetings, WHD intends on holding vaccination clinics at Wellesley Housing Authority (WHA) locations. Planning with WHA staff continues. The allocation of vaccine for age restricted, low-income congregate housing is part of a federal program.

e) Homebound Clinics

Leonard Izzo elaborated on various plans to vaccinate homebound residents. It was agreed that a list of residents who are home bound be compiled. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

2. Environmental Health

a) Camps- Summer Camps

Leonard Izzo provided updates on summer camps and playing field usage. There are two camps running during school vacation week.

3. Administration

a) Budget Update

Marcia Testa Simonson and Leonard Izzo have been working with John Lanza (Advisory Committee liaison) in preparation for the Board of Health presentation to Advisory scheduled for February 24, 2021.

This meeting was adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on February 22, 2021, 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator