

Wellesley Board of Health
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 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:

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, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Joyce Saret, LICSW, Senior Community Social Worker
Vivian Zeng, REHS, RS, CP-FS, Senior Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Shira Doron, MD, Resident
Llyod Tarlin, MD, Resident and former board member
Beth Sullivan Woods, Member, Select Board

The meeting was called to order at 11:35 AM

Citizen Speak

No one was in attendance who wished to participate in Citizen Speak.

1. Community Health

a) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley reported that since the last meeting on Monday, March 8, 2021, there have been 9 confirmed cases at Babson and three in the community.

b) Babson College – COVID-19 Update

Carol Hannenberg has been assisting with contact tracing at Babson College and said disease spread is not uncommon in dorms, and in public/common areas. She believes there continues to be social visits to bars and restaurants, parties, and team practices. Dr. Hannenberg said most of the cases are symptomatic and roughly 20-25% are asymptomatic. The data she enters does not include information on hospitalizations.

Marcia Testa Simonson reviewed the data noting a high incidence rate of cases at Babson College in comparison to the general Wellesley community. Since January 10, 2021 there have been 211 cases at Babson College (185 students, 13 employees and 13 service providers).

Linda Oliver Grape agreed that it is the responsibility of the Health Department to work closely with Babson administrators, holding them accountable, guiding them and working closely to reduce the spread. She suggested that Babson speak with Wellesley College and emulate their practices which have been successful at keeping their COVID infection numbers low.

Mr. Izzo will continue to work with his contacts at the College.

In addition, Leonard Izzo and Vivian Zeng reported on their meeting with Babson College yesterday regarding increases in COVID cases on campus, as well as planned social events. Mr. Izzo reported that the Health Department staff is in contact with several Babson departments (health, food, programming) on an ongoing basis. Going forward, Mr. Izzo and Ms. Zeng will have weekly calls with the College at 1pm on Thursdays. This morning, Mr. Izzo received an email from the Babson College president offering his appreciation and support for the work that the Health Department is doing in relation to Babson College.

Leonard Izzo reported that Babson College will not have spring break this year. He will report on graduation plans and the last day of classes at the next meeting.

c) Private Schools and Institutions – COVID Update

- Dana Hall - Ann Marie McCauley reported that the school has had very few cases and will be going on spring break next week.
- St John's School (Pre-K to 5) – Ann Marie McCauley reported that the children are in school full-time and are doing very well.
- Ten Acre – Ann Marie McCauley reported the school is doing well.
- Mass Bay – the college is in full remote mode.

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

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that the Wellesley Board of Health Position paper was released and parents are thrilled, and the feedback has been very positive.

Marcia Testa Simonson reported that the position paper has been distributed to public health associations (MA Environmental Health Association, MA Health Officers Associations, etc.) and will be offered as a template for other communities.

A webinar on school reopening is scheduled this Thursday evening.

e) COVID-19 Vaccine and Clinics

Ann Marie McCauley reported there were 40 doses remaining from the housing clinic last week. She will administer them at a clinic at the Health Department this Thursday. Any remaining vaccine will be used for homebound residents.

Linda Oliver Grape requested that the Health Department recreate a list of homebound residents.

Ms. McCauley reported that another clinic has been scheduled for second doses on March 23, 2021.

Marcia Testa Simonson reported CVS began scheduling appointments for teachers/faculty last week. There will be clinics for teachers at mass vaccination locations on certain days in March and April.

Leonard Izzo reported that the Council on Aging has been able to secure a few appointments for their residents however it has been very difficult. Marcia Testa Simonson reported that she has been tracking the appointment systems over the last three weeks and it is nearly impossible to obtain a vaccine appointment. Leonard Izzo reported that yesterday's DPH call was frustrating with details about the prioritization of vaccine for teachers over the senior population.

Shira Doron and Leonard Izzo reported on the CDC quarantine guidelines for those individuals who are 14 days post vaccination. These fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine should they come in close contact with a COVID positive case. After 90 days, they are required to quarantine regardless of their vaccination status. All individuals experiencing COVID symptoms should quarantine regardless of vaccine status.

Cheryl Lefman reported that she is working with Stephanie Hawkinson to update the FAQs with the newly released CDC information on travel and quarantine guidelines.

f) Social Services/Mental Health

Shepard Cohen reported that the meeting of mental health professionals and social service providers is scheduled for March 19th at 2:30pm.

2. Environmental Health

a) Tobacco Regulations

Jessica Cliff reported that a draft set of regulations is being reviewed by Town Counsel.

Leonard Izzo anticipates that the draft regulations will be ready for review at the March 17, 2021 meeting.

b) Temple Beth Elohim

Shepard Cohen reported that the Temple is planning a program to cook meals and distribute them to families in need. Jessica Cliff will review the plan and inspect the kitchen.

3. Administration

a) Executive Session

The Board of Health adjourned the meeting and went into Executive Session to discuss sensitive personnel issues.

This meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on March 15, 2021, 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner

Administrator