

Wellesley Board of Health  
Remote Meeting via Zoom  
Meeting Minutes  
April 12, 2021  
12:00 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  
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:

Bob Brown, The Swellesley Report  
Linda Chow, Chair, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools  
Linda Corridan, Director of Nursing, Wellesley Public Schools  
Shira Doron, MD, Resident  
David Lussier, Superintendent, Wellesley Public Schools  
Beth Sullivan Woods, Member, Select Board

The following meeting minutes were approved: April 5, 2021

Citizens Speak

No one was present that wished to participate in Citizen Speak.

1. Community Health

a) COVID-19 Update

Ann Marie McCauley reported that it has been a busy week for COVID cases. There was a total of 51 cases in the community – this included

21 cases at Babson College and one case at Wellesley College. Ms. McCauley said the positivity rate for this week is 0.7% up from last week's positivity rate of .46%. Most of the cases were in those under 20 years old, and the oldest was 60.

b) COVID-19 Vaccine and Clinics

Ann Marie McCauley reported that a second dose clinic for housing was held last Thursday; the clinic went well. The Health Department will not be receiving additional vaccine.

c) Babson College – COVID-19 Update

Leonard Izzo and Ann Marie McCauley reported on their weekly call with Babson College administration. They expressed concern over the increase in cases at the College. Mr. Izzo reported that a message focusing on restricting student activity and travel was sent out to students from the college president. Mr. Izzo said they will meet on Tuesday or Wednesday to discuss additional restrictions.

d) COVID-19 Messages

Leonard Izzo reported on the letter to the community about continuing to wear masks and remain vigilant. The letter was included in the Town's weekly community briefing. Mr. Izzo said he received complaints and some positive feedback about the message. He noted that many children and parents are in public areas without masks.

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

Linda Corridan reported a total of six new cases last week at Wellesley High, Fiske and Schofield schools. This morning she reported an additional three positive cases at the High School. Transmission was in households; there was no in-school transmission.

Ms. Corridan said that 784 staff (approximately 81.5%) have had at least one dose of vaccine or are fully vaccinated. She thinks this may be an underrepresented number, as some staff did not register through the nurse's office.

David Lussier reported that with the upcoming school vacation, the Health and School departments are reinforcing messages about out-of-school behaviors, emphasizing the need for compliance with masking, distancing and handwashing.

Sixth graders at Wellesley Middle School began in person learning this week. By the end of the week, all grades will be in school in person Dr. Lussier said that everyone is encouraged to participate in the viral testing program. Approximately 2800 samples per week are being tested. As a result of testing, there have been asymptomatic cases identified at the elementary level.

#### Prom Guidance:

Dr. Lussier reported that prom guidance has been released by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). They encourage schools not to have proms. Dr. Lussier and Leonard Izzo agree that the safest choice is not to have a prom in Wellesley this year.

#### After-school Programming:

David Lussier reported that he recognizes the importance of after-school care for families and working parents. He said schools are facing challenges in being able to identify all the elements that may or may not be in place to be able to provide the space for after-school programming. Dr. Lussier noted that the schools do not look like they normally do space-wise and showed pictures of what the Schofield cafeteria currently looks like. This space is normally used for after-school programming but is currently being used as storage of desks and furniture which were removed from classrooms to accommodate the three-foot classroom spacing. Dr. Lussier also showed the gym which is currently acting as a classroom. Dr. Lussier said that everything is dependent upon what will happen in the Fall noting that it is hard to identify how the spaces will work for the afterschool programs.

Leonard Izzo reported that the after-school programs are permitted by the State. He does not know what the fall guidance will look like or when it will be released. He will ask the MA Department of Public Health about the three feet of separation inside and six feet outside guidance. Should this move forward, Mr. Izzo and the Health Department staff will work with WPS to ensure compliance with COVID-19 protocols and guidance.

Dr. Lussier suggested to the WCCC program that they begin the pre-registration process to gauge the interest among families. Linda Oliver Grape said there was confusion among parents and residents who were not aware of a pre-registration process and initiating the process may be helpful. She said that no one can predict what the COVID prevalence will be in the Fall; this is a difficult situation for parents as well as the schools.

Shepard Cohen said that at this point the after-school program is not a Board of Health issue.

f) Social Services/Mental Health

Shepard Cohen reported that he has completed a report from the March 19, 2021 Mental Health and Social Services meeting; the report has been forwarded to the participants. Mr. Cohen acknowledged Cheryl Lefman on her work in putting the report together.

Mr. Cohen said they identified the service gaps including:

- There is a lack of mental health professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists and pediatric psychologists
- There are few pediatric psych beds in hospitals
- The Town needs to fill the gaps by hiring social workers and other behavioral health professionals and should explore funding options
- It is imperative for summer camps to operate

Joyce Saret will work with HRS to determine the numbers of individuals in need of help and/or referrals. She would like to ensure that the person is getting a warm hand-off for help. Ms. Saret is heartened that the schools have additional hours for the school social workers however there are still many needs.

Dr. Lussier reported that they have built in an additional \$20k into their budget to expand the social work hours over the summer. They are waiting for this to be passed, but challenges remain as there is increasing budget pressure.

Jessica Cliff reported that she has been in touch with Scott Munger, the Behavioral Health Coordinator at Metrowest Hospital. They have seen an influx of cases (upwards of 40%) since the onset of COVID-19. Ms. Cliff noted that the Emergency Room has been closed and Norwood Hospital remains closed. All other hospitals are seeing an influx of mental health issues and there does not seem to be a plan in place.

Shepard Cohen reported that he will bring together a smaller group to further discuss a solution.

## 2. Environmental Health

### a) Microblading Plan Review fees

Vivian Zeng reiterated that there is an extensive amount of staff review necessary for microblading establishments and operators, noting that microblading practitioners may spend many hours reviewing regulations and plans with an Environmental Health Specialist. Often these practitioners decide not to operate in Wellesley.

At today's meeting, Ms. Zeng provided fee recommendations. The Board of Health voted on and approved a microblading plan review fee of \$500. This fee is effective immediately.

### b) Town Hall offices

Leonard Izzo reported that he has been working on a plan for Town Hall offices to reopen.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled on April 21, 2021, 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner

Administrator