

Wellesley Board of Health
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
June 16, 2022 – 9a

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 Nursing Supervisor
Joyce Saret, MSW, Community Social worker

In attendance:

Shira Doron, MD, Resident
Beth Sullivan Woods, Select Board

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

The following meeting minutes were approved: May 11, 2022, May 24, 2022, May 25, 2022, and June 2, 2022.

Chairmans reports

Shep Cohen provided a brief review of the minutes noting that he intends to use the minutes of May 24, 2022 as a planning guideline.

1. Administration

a) Opioid funding

Marica Testa Simonson reported on the state call that took place yesterday. She reviewed the opioid grant funding that will be available thru the state. The distribution of this funding is not very clear. It will be expected to be focused on the locations with the most surge.

Leonard Izzo reported that that the city of Newton and Town of Wellesley may partner on the programming.

b) Vaping

The Board of Health addressed the topic of vaping Wellesley. Dr Doron reported that vaping is an issue in the high school with more than half of the students' vaping. It is "more common to vape than not to vape".

Carol Hannenberg has been looking for data on vaping and has been in contact with Joyce Saret of the Health Department and Ashley Hulme at the schools. Joyce Saret reported that she is awaiting the results of the survey done by parents. It looks as though parents are concerned about vaping and would like to see restroom monitoring and more education.

Carol Hannenberg reported that there are middle school programs available as they are posted on the MDPH website. These programs are specifically for parents and kids that wish to quit vaping. Linda Oliver Grape pointed out that one of the great vaping purveyors was Amazon delivering to Whole Food store lockers. Leonard Izzo reported that that problem had been resolved.

Mr. Izzo will be meeting with the schools and will have a conference with select town department heads to determine preventative actions to discourage vaping.

Linda Oliver Grape suggested that the summer period may be a good time to develop a vaping deterrence educational program for the Fall.

c) Office space

As noted at previous meetings, Mr. Izzo has reported that the department is at full-house capacity. The physical space in the office is lacking and staff has difficulty finding a place to work within the office suite. At today's meeting Mr. Izzo reviewed the short-term plan and the long-term plan. He reported that he has been working with the Facilities Maintenance Department (FMD) on the space next door. The short-term temporary plan is expected to be completed in September to occupy what is now the Recreation Department art room. Temporary walls and cubicle style workspaces are planned. The long-term plan for the hard space will be a few years in the planning.

d) PFAS Update

Linda Oliver Grape asked that the Board of Health receive a water supply mediation update at the next meeting. Leonard Izzo reported

that he will be inviting Dave Cohen, Director of the Department of Public Works to a future next meeting.

e) Biosafety Lab

Leonard Izzo provided a brief overview of his tour of the biosafety lab location in Boston. A similar lab is expected to come to 93 Worcester St.

Mr. Izzo reported that the tour and presentation was interesting and very informative. The group will be invited to a future board meeting

Mr. Izzo reported that the lab is not expected to open for at least another year.

f) Wastewater testing

Leonard Izzo reported on the various pricing for wastewater testing. The estimate for both covid and opioid testing is \$40k a year.

The Board of Health discussed the value to the data should the Town of Wellesley subscribe to a testing program. Additional information will be provided at a future meeting.

2. Community Health

a) COVID update

Ann Marie McCauley reported on the Covid cases of the last several weeks – case numbers have dramatically reduced since the last meeting. In addition, Mr. Izzo noted that the call and email volume in regard COVID illnesses, questions and vaccine has also drastically diminished. The department is not receiving any requests for vaccine from residents.

The Board of Health discussed additional public messaging and education regarding COVID prevention. Marica Testa Simonson stated that the messaging is not having an impact at this time. Linda Oliver Grape reported that she is concerned about public communication fatigue. Ms. Oliver Grape does not want to “over message”.

Leonard Izzo reported that he has been working with Jhana Wallace about on a newsletter for the public. It will include Health Department information to include water safety, COVID and camps. Mr. Izzo noted that he intends to improve and strengthen communications by moving into social media.

Leonard Izzo reported that he is receiving questions around camps and COVID from camp operators. Unlike last camp season, restrictions have been lifted and there will be no testing of campers. Shira Doron reported that she is working with Terriers Camp who has supplied COVID tests to the campers to use at home should they be symptomatic. Mr. Izzo is not advising camps to do any internal testing.

c) Monkey pox

Shira Doron reported that there are three confirmed cases of the Monkey Pox in Massachusetts. Symptoms present as mild and minor rash.

d) HRS

The Board of Health discussed the revised HRS FY23 contract.

The Board of Health voted to approve the FY23 HRS contract.

e) Mental Health

Joyce Saret reported that there continues to be an increase in anxiety and depression in the schools. She reported that the schools are hiring several new social workers in the elementary school.

The Board of Health has asked that Ms. Saret prepare an overall report reviewing the needs of the community. The report is to include information from town outreach workers (police, COA, WPS and Housing Authority) and should also include information on past, present and planned future programs.

Leonard Izzo reported that Wanda Alvarez has established office hours at Barton Road. Joyce Saret report the Housing Authority has hired two new staff members and that there has been a shifting of positions.

2. Environmental Health

a) Update

Lenny Izzo provided a brief update on the following:

- Summer camps
- Morses Pond opening
- Upcoming and opening restaurants and bakeries
- Seasonal pools

The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 a.m.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for June 29, 2022, at 9 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner, Administrator