

Wellesley Board of Health
CONFERENCE CALL
Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2020
2:30 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:

Ann Marie McCauley, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Holly Detroy, Environmental Health Agent
Deadra Doku-Gardner, Administrator
Leonard Izzo, Director
Cheryl Lefman, Community Health Coordinator
Joyce Saret, Community Social Worker
Vivian Zeng, Environmental Health Agent

In attendance:

Jamie Chisum, Principal, Wellesley High School
Linda Chow, Chair, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools
Sharon Gray, Secretary, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools
James Joyce, Wellesley Media
David Lussier, Superintendent, Wellesley Public Schools
John Lanza, Advisory Committee
Melissa Martin, Vice Chair, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools
Catherine Mirick, School Committee, Wellesley Public Schools
Jason Norris, resident and student, Wellesley High School
Ryan Silverstein, resident and student, Wellesley High School
David Silverstein, resident
Beth Sullivan Woods, Board of Selectmen
Diane Zinck, Secretary, Wellesley High School

The meeting was called to order at 2:32 pm.

The Board of Health approved the following minutes: July 8, 2020.

1. Administration

a) Director's Report

Leonard Izzo provided the following updates:

- Mr. Izzo elaborated on recent issues surrounding Coronavirus in the Town of Wellesley.

b) Wellesley Public Schools (WPS)- Possible Graduation Plan for July 30th

Leonard Izzo, Jamie Chisum and David Lussier reviewed the tentative plan for an outside graduation ceremony on July 30th (rain date August 1, 2020). The graduation is planned at 5:30p.m. on Darcey Field on Friday, July 30, 2020. The event would include 380 graduating seniors, WPS administrative and faculty, as well as public safety personnel. Parents and others would not be permitted to attend but would be able to watch a live broadcast. Mr. Izzo reported that Darcy field is a Natural Resource Commission property and the WPS would be required to obtain a permit to use the field for graduation.

Both David Lussier and Jamie Chisum said the students have suffered during the Covid-19 pandemic and they are asking for one last "formal get together" as a graduating class. Dr. Lussier reported the administration and School Committee would prefer to abide by a recommendation of the Board of Health and Health Department director. Drs. Lussier and Chisum understand that a Board of Health recommendation is a "suggestion" and the final decision to host or not host a graduation is to be determined by the WPS administration and School Committee.

Leonard Izzo gave his opinion, noting that he understands the disappointment of the graduating seniors' inability to participate in a formal graduation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Izzo noted he has given a great deal of consideration to the request of the graduation class, but cannot support such a large group congregating at one time. In addition, he is concerned about mosquitoes being present, as we are in the second year of a customarily three-year cycle of mosquitoes that could carry Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus (WNV).

During the meeting the Board of Health considered various options to the proposed plan. Jason Norris, a senior, offered suggestions on behalf of the graduating class. Marcia Testa Simonson reported that the Board of Health is required to give their recommendation in the form of a vote, however the final decision lies with the school superintendent, Davie Lussier.

The Board of Health voted: Marica Testa Simonson voted "yes". Ms. Testa Simonson supported the plan believing the event could successfully take place with some modification. Linda Oliver Grape and Shep Cohen voted

“no”. Shep Cohen noted that having a large gathering such as the one proposed sends the wrong message, especially after residents have been cautious for many months. A vote of two to one was taken - not in favor of having such a large event.

c) Wellesley Public Schools (WPS)- reopening plan

As noted at a previous meeting, Leonard Izzo reported the schools formed a reopening committee with multiple sub-committees. Staff members are assigned to specific committees. Mr. Izzo reported a plan is beginning to form as to how the schools will open and operate in the Fall however, there continues to be questions and concerns.

David Lussier reported that he is working on a reopening plan to get the children back to school safely. Dr Lussier reported that the Department of Public Health and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) continue to release a guidance regarding initial opening plans.

The Board of Health and the Wellesley Public Schools will work closely to establish a set of directives and process policy on all school openings and closings.

d) Bag ban order

Leonard Izzo reported that the temporary reusable bag ban expired on June 30, 2020.

e) Social Worker Position

The Community Social Worker position has been posted and is now closed. Joyce Saret is reviewing the applicants and will make recommendations.

2. Community Health

a) Simons Fund

Joyce Saret reported the Simons Fund has agreed to provide additional grant funds of \$1000 to support the meals delivery program.

b) Influenza Vaccine

Ann Marie McCauley reported she anticipates conducting flu clinics as soon as possible depending on the arrival of the vaccine. As noted at the last meeting, Vote and Vaccinate is being considered as a clinic option, as the first election will be held on September 1, however it is not anticipated that the vaccine will arrive by then; more likely arrival will be early October.

c) Coronavirus – cases, etc.

Ann Marie McCauley reported that there have been very few active new cases in the past few days.

4) Environmental Health

d) Mosquitoes

At the last meeting Cheryl Lefman reported on Governor Baker's press conference that focused on the presumption of another active mosquito season, as EEE was identified in a mosquito from a sample collected in Franklin County.

Leonard Izzo reported that the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project has just begun mosquito surveillance.

e) Wellesley Public Schools- Administrative Offices

Vivian Zeng reported she conducted a walk thru of the school administration offices.

The next conference call of the Board of Health is scheduled for Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 11:30 am.

The Board of Health meeting adjourned at 4:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator

Documents reviewed during this meeting and on-file in the Health Department:

- NONE