

Board of Health Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 7, 2023  
Virtual Meeting

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS PRESENT**

Marianne Hartmann, Emily Cilley, Dr. Peter Sheckman

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

None

**OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Jeffrey Vaughan, Director of Public Health; Neia Illingworth, Public Health Nurse

**OPEN MEETING**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM.

**REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS**

- On MOTION by Sheckman and SECONDED by Cilley, the Board of Health voted to approve prior meeting minutes from February 1, 2023. Roll call: Hartmann (yes), Cilley (yes), Sheckman (yes).

**DISCUSSION – RACE AND EQUITY TASK FORCE**

- Hartmann stated that she would like to discuss the creation of a race and equity task force. Sheckman stated that he agreed a task force should be created but he is not sure it is public health related. Cilley stated that the Town had been looking for a Director of Diversity and Inclusion for quite some time at a high rate of pay but never filled the position. Sheckman suggested that the Board of Health suggest this task force idea to the Select Board and Hartmann agreed.
- Sheckman asked Cilley for examples of kids in the schools who are coming forward with related problems. Cilley stated that METCO program high school students are eating lunch in the METCO rooms rather than the lunch rooms with other students. The Board also discussed other examples such as students who are not able-bodied, students who have same-sex parents, etc.
- Sheckman stated that having a Board of Health member in the Swampscott Public School systems has been an asset and asked Cilley if she knew anyone who would be interested in

joining the Board of Health after her term ends since she is not re-running. Cilley recommended a new nurse from the High School who also works at an ER.

## **PH NURSE / PH EMERGENCY MGMT. COORDINATOR UPDATE**

### **COVID UPDATES**

- As of March 7, 2023, Swampscott has had 4277 lab-confirmed cases. This total does not include at-home tests or presumed positives.
- 14-day Average Daily Incidence Rate as of March 2, 2023 was 6.6 per 100,000 residents
- Essex County is in the “yellow” or at a moderate level.
- Dominant variants:
  - XBB.1.5 – 89.6%
  - BQ.1.1 – 6.7%
  - BQ.1 – 1.6%
- Testing updates:
  - Cataldo Ambulance is currently providing free PCR testing in Lynn two days a week but the Stop the Spread program will be ending on March 31, 2023
  - Rapid-antigen/at-home tests (up to 8) are still covered by insurance as required by the Federal Government. They may be found at a pharmacy, retail store, or online. Covidtests.gov was restarted on December 15, 2022.
  - The FDA has recently approved the first at-home test kit that tests for both flu and COVID.
- Public Health Emergency
  - The COVID-19 Public Health Emergency will end on May 11, 2023.
  - Following the end of the Public Health Emergency, access to free at-home Covid testing will depend on what health care insurance an individual has.
    - Those who are under traditional Medicare will no longer receive free at-home tests.
    - Those on Medicaid will be able to access free at-home testing until November of 2024.
    - Those under private insurance will no longer be guaranteed free at-home testing. Some insurers may voluntarily choose to continue to provide free at-home tests.
    - The cost of PCR tests is going to increase regardless of health insurance coverage.
- Vaccines:
  - The Federal Government supply of Covid-19 vaccines and boosters will remain free to everyone until they run out, at which point only those covered by insurance will have access.

### **OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES**

- The Swampscott Public Health department is supporting/participating in the following regional efforts:
  - PHE meetings

- PHN meetings
  - NS MVP
  - Diaper Drive
  - Application for a regional grant
  - TB testing for new arrivals
- Flu numbers are low but norovirus cases have been increasing in MA and across the United States
- Narcan Distribution Program updates:
  - First two required steps of the program had been completed at the last meeting. Since then, Neia has attended a “train the trainer” meeting, worked to create flyers and postcards, and begun to submit orders of Narcan. The next steps would be to get the supplies together, get the training together, and then begin promotion. Neia would also like to become a CPR trainer.

## **BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO DRAFT BODY ART REGULATION**

- Jeff stated that he sent the draft regulation language to the Board today as well as a description of the major changes between the 2003 version and the current draft. Some changes include language for apprentices, cosmetic tattoo services, visiting artists, etc. Public Health departments worked with tattoo artists on the changes. Jeff asked the Board to send any questions to him so that he can relay them to the proper recipient and get answers before the next meeting.
- Sheckman asked if there are currently any tattoo shops open. Jeff stated that there are not. Sheckman stated that he did not see much in the regulations about what artists should do if they are accidentally injured via used needle. Neia stated that the regulations do contain bloodborne pathogen training as well as other advisories.

## **HEALTH DIRECTOR REPORT**

- Metal drop off/Styrofoam collection will resume at the end of the month at the DPW yard.
- The Town has received a new restaurant proposal for the old Zestfriendz location.
- The Town did a pilot for a boat wrap recycling program last year and will do it again this year. He stated that they got a late start last year so the numbers were a little low but they would like to try again.

## **OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE BOH**

- The Swampscott Conservatory along with a Marblehead Wildlife rehabber and two State reps will be hosting a “The Truth About Rodent Poisoning” presentation on March 14, 2023 at 6:30 PM at Swampscott High School.
- Sheckman asked if any household pets (cats/dogs) are being accidentally poisoned by this. Jeff stated that it happens regularly with birds, some of which are endangered.
- Jeff and the Board discussed alternatives to rodent poison such as electrocution boxes, traps, contraceptives, pesticides, etc., all of which are more expensive than rodent poisoning.

Sheckman asked what alternatives are available for private homes. Jeff stated that there is currently only one company in the area that does the electrocution boxes and that it would be easier for homeowners to use a box with something in it.

- Marianne stated that the Town election is April 25, 2023 so Cilley will probably be in one more meeting. The Board asked if this will be an in person meeting as the current remote meeting provisions are set to expire March 31, 2023.

#### **SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE**

- The next meeting has been scheduled for April 4, 2023 at 6 PM at Town Hall.

#### **ADJOURN**

- On MOTION by Sheckman and SECONDED by Cilley, it was VOTED by roll call to adjourn the meeting. Roll call: Hartmann (yes), Cilley (yes), Sheckman (yes).
- The meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM.

True Attest,

Brittney Jones