

Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 11, 2022
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 6:04 PM.

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS

- Tabled until next meeting.

COVID-19 AND MONKEYPOX UPDATES

Covid-19

- Case data:
 - Swampscott has had 3951 total lab-confirmed cases to date. This number does not include those who only test positive on a home-test or probable cases.
 - As of October 6, 2022, the incidence rate in Swampscott according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) is 18. The 7-day positivity rate is 7.76%
 - According to the CDC Covid Data Tracker, Essex County is considered an area of high transmission based on percent positivity. This data is based on only lab-confirmed cases. On a community level, Essex County is considered an area of low transmission based on new Covid-19 cases per 100,000 population (7-day total) new Covid-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total) and percent of inpatient beds occupied by Covid-19 patients (7-day average).
 - BA.5 is still the dominant variant – 79.2% of cases. BA.46 – 13.6% of cases. There are also two new variants: BF.7 and BA2.75

- Vaccine updates:
 - Pfizer and Moderna are seeking authorizations for updates for younger children
 - As of October 5, 2022:
 - 94% of Swampscott has received one dose
 - 84% of individuals are fully vaccinated
 - 71% of individuals have received their first booster
 - 47% of individuals have received their second booster
- Testing:
 - Cataldo Ambulance is offering free PCR testing at the North Shore Community College Lynn Campus
 - The State “Stop the Spread” sites will remain open through March 31, 2023. The closest site is in Revere
 - Rapid antigen (at-home) tests may be found at a pharmacy, retail store, or online. At-home tests are covered by insurance, and each person may receive 8 tests per month at no cost

Monkeypox

- Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus, a part of the same family of viruses as variola virus (the virus that causes smallpox).
- Symptoms of monkeypox can include a rash, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle aches and backache, headache, and respiratory symptoms (i.e. sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough). A rash follows the initial symptoms. Painful lesions can appear anywhere and will scab over and resolve within 2-4 weeks, following which the person is no longer contagious. Monkeypox can be spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. Those positive for monkeypox should isolate at home.
- Monkeypox can spread:
 - To anyone through close personal skin-to-skin contact, including:
 - Direct contact with the monkeypox rash, scabs, or bodily fluids from a person with monkeypox.
 - Touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox.
 - Contact with respiratory secretions.
 - A pregnant person can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta.
 - It’s also possible for people to get monkeypox from infected animals, either by being scratched or bitten by the animal
- People with monkeypox should isolate until cleared by Public Health officials
- Vaccine updates:
 - As of October 3, 2022, vaccines will be available to individuals who live or work in Massachusetts and meet the CDC’s eligibility criteria
 - On September 19, 2022, the Salem Board of Health, in partnership with Health Innovations, held a free monkeypox vaccine clinic at the Mayor Jean Levesque Community Center in Salem
- Case data:

- As of September 22, 2022, global cases have dropped by 22%
- Case numbers:
 - MA: 409
 - US: 26,577
 - Globally: 71,096

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Resident Sheryl Levenson asked if there is any guidance for residents who are due for multiple vaccinations which order they should get them in/which they can get together. Neia stated that individuals should reach out to their primary care providers, who will follow CDC guidance for vaccination and review their individual health records. Cilley echoed that it is dependent on each person and that prior reactions to vaccinations may be a factor that varies from person to person as well. Sheckman stated that CDC guidance dictates which vaccines should not be administered together. Cilley suggested that individuals who see multiple providers and take multiple prescriptions should take a total list of their prescriptions to their primary care doctor while they discuss these matters.
- Sylvia Chen from the Daily Item asked if there have been any confirmed cases of monkeypox in Swampscott. Jeff stated that he does not believe there have been any confirmed cases in the North Shore area. Chen asked if there are any vaccine locations in Swampscott. Neia stated that there is not currently a vaccine location in Swampscott and suggested that anyone interested in getting vaccinated should visit [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) to view the list of the 14 current locations as well as find information on the mobile vaccine options.
- Resident John Picariello asked for an update on the vacant two-family property at 11-13 Hillside Ave. Jeff stated that the Attorney General's office is in discussions about the property. The yard is now being maintained. A timeline will be set by the court system. Cilley asked if someone from the court will enter the property. Jeff stated that they do not have the legal right to enter the property. Cilley asked if Jeff can state that the property is uninhabitable. Jeff stated that he has not been inside the property to determine whether or not it is uninhabitable, but that he does not have an issue with the owner entering the property to do work inside for improvements. Hartmann asked what makes a property uninhabitable. Jeff stated that a person could not reside full-time in a property if there is no running water, electricity, etc.

HEALTH DIRECTOR REPORT

- No mosquitoes tested in Swampscott came back positive for any kind of virus. He stated that the first frost will kill mosquitoes, and that has not happened yet.
- North East Mosquito Control recently partnered with the Town of Swampscott for to host a tire collection event at the Town's metal drop off day. The event resulted in the collection of 53 tires. Jeff would like to have a collection event again next year.

- Body art regulations are being updated. Draft regulation changes will be coming in a few months. They are working with tattoo artists on some of these language changes.
- A new company will be taking over yard waste collection for the Town of Swampscott.
- Massachusetts Health Offices Association's conference will take place on October 27th and 28th. Jeff will be attending. There will be a mock trial for housing court.
- Jeff reviewed the dumpster regulations following discussion at the last meeting. The fee is \$100. One warning and one fine have been sent out since the last meeting.
- A few food inspections were recently conducted – Kell's Kreme, Panera, Mexicali

OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE BOH

- Cilley asked if the coyote situation has improved/if less food has been being left out. Jeff stated that he has not heard of any encounters recently, but that some people may report only to the police.
- Sheckman asked if it is possible to enforce a mandatory cover on recycling bins. He stated that the price is by weight and that rainwater increases the weight. Cilley stated that the Solid Waste Advisory Committee is discussing it.
- Sheckman asked if it was possible to increase dumpster fines/if the Board was interested in increasing the fines. Jeff stated that it was a Board of Health regulation. Hartmann stated that she would be in favor of increasing the fines for subsequent offenses. Jeff stated that any changes to the regulations would have to be voted on as well as advertised in the paper.
- Marianne asked about ways to use the opioid settlement money for Public Health benefit. She suggested making Narcan accessible for free, scholarships for drug treatment. Neia discussed partnership with speakers to visit schools. Hartmann would like to see more preventative programs. Jeff would like to see more drug education.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE

- The next meeting has been scheduled for November 8, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

ADJOURN

- On MOTION by Cilley and SECONDED by Sheckman, it was VOTED by roll call to adjourn the meeting. Roll call: Cilley (yes), Sheckman (yes), Hartmann (yes).
- The meeting adjourned at 7:09 pm.

True Attest,

Brittney Jones