

Board of Health Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, July 12, 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 and Neia Illingworth, Public Health Nurse

**OPEN MEETING**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM.

**REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS**

- On MOTION by Cilley and SECONDED by Sheckman, the Board voted to approve prior meeting minutes from June 2, 2022. Roll call: Cilley (yes), Sheckman (yes), Hartmann (yes).

**DISCUSSION REGARDING COYOTES – DAN PROULX**

- On MOTION by Sheckman and SECONDED by Cilley, the Board voted to take the agenda out of order to discuss coyotes first.
- Hartmann stated that there have been two recent confirmed coyote bites in the Vinnin Square area. Hartmann stressed that these were bites, not attacks.
- Hartmann stated that one major issue is that people have been feeding coyotes, which conditions them to associate people with food and train their pups to do the same.
- Dan Proulx, former Animal Control Officer, joined the meeting to discuss coyote problems. He echoed Hartmann's message that a major contributing factor is people feeding coyotes and stated that Vinnin Square is an especially prominent problem area because there are so many food establishments. He suggested that notices should go out to all the Vinnin Square restaurant staff reminding them not to feed wildlife and that signs may need to be put up as well. Proulx stated that not only are coyotes directly being fed, but they are also eating food left outside/from unsecured dumpsters/garbage

receptacles. Proulx explained that the increased opportunity for food incentivizes them to stay in the area.

- Proulx provided tips for those who should encounter coyotes: make a lot of noise
- Hartmann asked Proulx to explain pack sizes. Proulx stated that there are probably four or five coyotes in the area as cubs stay with the mother in the beginning of their lives. He explained that there are 6-8 cubs born per year on average so the population indicates that some do leave the area. He also stated that some coyotes that are mainly in Swampscott may still visit surrounding cities and towns.
- Sheckman discussed the risk of diseases carried by coyotes and compared it to the risk of disease carried by raccoons. Sheckman stated that coyotes could very well carry rabies and/or tick-borne illnesses, both of which can be deadly to humans.
- The Board discussed the benefits of coyotes such as controlling the rat population.
- A resident stated that they believed there should be a bylaw created to impose a fine for anyone found feeding a coyote. Proulx stated that the town is looking into creating such a bylaw already regarding wildlife. Hartmann stated that she had received draft language from the Town Administrator for such a bylaw.
- Cilley asked how often Jeff drives through the area and reminds retailers about feeding wildlife. Jeff stated that it was not done during the Covid-19 pandemic, but that notices were sent out warning retailers of fines if dumpsters are not properly maintained.
- A resident stated that they believed that overfilled trash barrels provide better opportunity for coyotes to get food and that trash barrels are too small to close properly if you have a family and produce more garbage.
- Select Board member Mary Ellen Fletcher asked if the Board of Health could provide a list of action items regarding these issues. Hartmann stated that she would like for the Board/Health Department to bring flyers to the restaurants in Vinnin Square and to print signs to post in the Vinnin Square area.

## **COVID-19 AND MONKEYPOX UPDATE**

- Neia provided a presentation on Covid-19 and Monkeypox.
- As of today, Swampscott has had 3658 lab-confirmed cases of Covid-19, which is 181 new cases in the past five weeks. Neia reminded listeners that these numbers do not include those who test positive on a home-test or probable cases.
- As of July 7, 2022, the incidence rate in Swampscott was 31 per 100,000 residents according to the MDPH's Weekly COVID-19 Public Health Reports and according to the CDC's COVID-19 Community Levels, Essex County is currently considered an area of "low transmission".
- As of July 9, 2022, BA.5 is the dominant variant in the United States, accounting for over 60% of cases. Researchers at Beth Israel have found that this variant and BA.4 appear to escape antibody responses among both people who have had a Covid infection and/or those who are vaccinated. Another wave is expected in the fall and the winter.
- Covid vaccine updates: On May 19, 2022, the CDC signed off on booster doses for 5-11 year olds. On June 18, 2022, the CDC authorized Covid-19 vaccines as young as 6 months. On June 24, 2022, the CDC signed off on a Moderna Covid-19 vaccine for

those 6-17 years old. On June 30, 2022, the FDA recommended changing the composition of Covid-19 vaccines for use in the fall.

- As of July 7, 2022, 91% of Swampscott residents are fully vaccinated and 61% have gotten booster doses.
- Covid testing updates: Cataldo Ambulance is now offering testing at the North Shore Community College Lynn campus. Walk-ups are welcome. Insurance companies are now covering 8 tests per month for subscribers as well, which can be picked up at no cost from any pharmacy. Massachusetts is to planning end the Covid-19 testing program in schools in the fall of 2022.
- The first case on Monkeypox in MA was confirmed on May 18, 2022. As of July 11, 2022, there have been 42 confirmed cases in MA. There have been 866 confirmed cases in the United States. There have been 9647 cases across 63 countries. Monkeypox symptoms include fever, headache, sore throat, chills, lymph nodes swelling, and a rash. The case fatality ratio has been 3-6%. Those who develop symptoms of Monkeypox should immediately isolate and reach out to both their provider and their local Health Department. Contacts of those exposed should monitor temperature twice daily for 21 days. A vaccine is available in limited supply for use before or shortly after exposure to protect against Monkeypox. It requires two shots, 28 days apart and there are four locations in MA that are administering vaccinations by appointment at this time.
- A resident asked if they should alternate Covid vaccines. Dr. Sheckman stated that they are both high quality and that people can receive whatever is available.

#### **INTRODUCTION TO ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER**

- Postponed to a future meeting.

#### **HEALTH DIRECTOR REPORT – POOL VARIANCES AND SUN STATIONS**

- Summit Estates has requested to keep their pool open from 5 PM to 7:30 PM without a lifeguard but with signage indicating that swimming will be at individuals' own risks.
- Crowne Point has requested a variance from 8 AM to 10 AM and 8 PM to 10 PM.
- On MOTION by Sheckman and SECONDED by Cilley, the Board voted to approve these variances. Roll call: Sheckman (yes), Cilley (yes), Hartmann (yes).
- Jeff stated that the Town has received a grant for a few Sun Stations that they will be putting up to provide sun screen to the public (potential locations include Phillips Park, Eisman's Beach)
- Jeff stated that beach water testing results have been good so far this year. Jeff stated that the risk of illness is due to ingesting water, not just being in it or swimming.

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

- Hartmann discussed the Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade. She invited members of the Board to make statements if they would like. Dr. Sheckman stated that

MA laws allow reproductive health and abortion. Cilley stated that she is concerned for MA residents going to college in other states where abortion is no longer accessible. Neia stated that reproductive rights are basic human healthcare rights and that while we are fortunate to live in MA right now, things could change and it is concerning and it is concerning to see things change in other states.

**SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE**

- The next meeting has been scheduled for August 10, 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: Sheckman (yes), Cilley (yes), Hartmann (yes).
- The meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

True Attest,

Brittney Jones