

Board of Health Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 17th, 2021
Virtual Meeting

BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS PRESENT

Marianne Hartmann, Emily Cilley

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m.

AGENDA

OPEN MEETING

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

- No minutes were submitted.

COVID-19 UPDATE - INCLUDING TOWN VACCINATION UPDATE

- Neia gave a presentation on Covid-19 updates.
- Swampscott had 7 weeks of no new cases, but as of this afternoon we have reached 1200 lab confirmed cases (34 new cases in the last four weeks). Charts are available on the town website.
- As of July 1st, the system has switched from color coding with red, yellow, green, and grey to color coding with different shades of blue and numerically to reflect the incidence rate.
- There are currently four variants, with the most recent and severe being the Delta variant. The vaccine currently protects against all known variants.
- As of late July 2021, the CDC recommends that people who are fully vaccinated should still wear masks indoors in areas of substantial or high transmission and/or if you or a member of your household have a weakened immune system or is unvaccinated. Essex County, MA is currently considered an area of substantial or high transmission.
- Masks are still required in healthcare facilities, on public transportation, and in congregate living places.
- The Massachusetts Medical Society has recommended that everyone wear a mask indoors regardless of vaccination status.

- As of Monday, August 9th the Town is requiring masks in all municipal buildings.
- As of August 5th, the CDC recommends universal indoor masking in schools regardless of age or vaccination status. This recommendation was also made by the American Academy of Pediatrics in July.
- DESE and MDPH sent out a memo on July 30, 2021 requiring schools to be in-person, full-time, five days a week for the 2021-2022 school year.
- As of last Friday, the CDC Director signed the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Recommendation for an additional dose on an mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine in moderately to severely immunocompromised people. People in these categories include people who have received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system, those who have been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood, those who have been receiving active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress the immune system, those who have received a stem cell transplant within the last two years, and those with HIV. There is talk of others receiving a "booster dose" eight months after their second dose of a two dose vaccine series or after their dose of a single dose vaccine series.
- As of August 12th, 82% of the total population of the town's residents eligible to be vaccinated have received at least one dose and 77% of the total eligible population are considered "fully vaccinated".
- Emily asked if there is any talk of requiring vaccinations. Marianne informed the board that the Salem School Committee is requiring all students 12 and older who wish to participate in sports and/or band and all faculty to either be vaccinated or submit to twice weekly testing.

DISCUSS HEALTH DEPT/SCHOOL DEPT TABLE-TOP EXERCISE ON 8/24

- The Emergency Management Team and Swampscott School Officials will be meeting on August 24th to go over some scenarios and discuss changes and recent memos.

HEALTH DIRECTOR REPORT

- G Bar and Grill has been cleared to add more outdoor seating.
- Zestfriends will be opening shortly.
- All beaches are currently open. Jeff stated that there are three more samplings scheduled between tomorrow and Labor Day.
- Housing inspections are starting to pick up.
- Rats are still a problem in town.
- Food inspections will be starting again as inspectors are now vaccinated and restaurants are no longer exclusively takeout.

BOH APPOINTEE UPDATE

- Allie Fiske of the Town Administrator's Office has posted the vacancy with an application deadline of near Labor Day. The BOH is not aware of any applicants.

OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE BOH

- An attendee asked if the Board of Health and Health Department will be writing a formal recommendation to the School Department regarding masking in schools. Marianne clarified that the recommendation would be that of the Health Department rather than the

BOH but that she is happy to work on it with the Health Department. She said that her recommendation would be that everyone should mask until the Delta surge is calmed down, as recommended by the CDC. Jeff agreed, adding that it is especially important as many students in schools are unvaccinated and school is an indoor environment. Emily stated that a recommendation should be included regarding what will happen post-exposure for those who are vaccinated vs. those who are not vaccinated.

- The Board agreed that they will make a recommendation to the schools. On MOTION by Cilley and SECONDED by Hartmann, it was voted to make a recommendation to the schools that masking should be in place indoors for students and staff pre-k through grade 12 as per the CDC recommendation. Roll call: Hartmann (yes), Cilley (yes).

SCHEDULING OF NEXT BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

The next meeting has been scheduled for September 21, 2021. All Board Members are in agreement.

ADJOURN

On MOTION by Cilley and SECONDED by Hartmann it was VOTED by roll call to adjourn the meeting. Roll call: Cilley (yes), Hartmann (yes).

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.