

TOWN OF WENHAM
BOARD OF HEALTH
Meeting of May 6, 2020
Wenham Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, § 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Wenham Board of Health (BOH) was held on Wednesday May 6, 2020 at 8:30AM virtually on Zoom.us.

- Call to order –With a quorum present, Dr. Ting called the meeting to order at 8:30AM.
Board Members Present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Regina Baker; Gerald Donnellan
Also Present: Maribeth Ting, Public Health Nurse; Greg Bernard, Health Agent
Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative Services; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary; Police Captain DiNapoli;
Fire Chief Kavanagh; Fire Deputy Chief Baxter

In response to the Covid19 Virus pandemic, the Massachusetts Governor closed all non-essential businesses and issued stay at home advisory. To comply with the Governor's orders, this meeting took place virtually on zoom video.

Identify that this is a virtual meeting, the meeting is being recorded, identify all attendees.

The Chair identified that this was a virtual meeting, the meeting was being recorded, all could be heard, and votes would be taken by roll call.

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus Discussion)
 - Update from Public Health Nurse
Ms. Ting updated the board on the State's Community Tracing Collaborative. This program is used to reach out to those who may have been in contact with COVID-19 patients. Ms. Ting note the program seems to be working well in those communities with a higher density compared to Wenham, but is available to the Public Nurse and BOH as a resource.
Ms. Ting is staying current on the CDC guidance updates, and meeting during the week with Public Safety to ensure proper response is used to those addresses that have a positive or presumed case of COVID-19.
The Governor has issued an order that facial covering of the nose and mouth be used when in the public.
 - Update from the Board of Health
 1. Another Public Health Forum is planned for May 21 at 3pm. This will be a single session based on the response from the previous forums. Dr. Ting will represent the BOH on the panel.
 2. At a joint meeting on April 28, 2020, the Board of Selectmen and the BOH voted on to extend the emergency order through the Governor's emergency order; this includes the closure of the Rail Trail, all trails, playgrounds, parks, and Pleasant Pond.
- Discussion on COVID-19 response

The Board of Selectmen voted 2 to 1 to hold the annual town election on June 4, 2020 at the Buker School gymnasium. A safety protocol was provided by the Town Clerk to keep polling staff, citizens and police/ fire safe. Dr. Ting noted his concern that June 4 doesn't allow the needed time to put safety guidelines in place. Chief Kavanagh added that he will need time to do a few practice sessions with first responders.

Dr. Ting read the proposed safety guidelines submitted by the Town Clerk, Dianne Bucco.

- Election workers will wear facial shields, wash hands, and keep 6 feet physical distance
- Police detail will assure no more than the safe number of people allowed
- Cones outside will mark 6 feet distance
- Voting booths will be 6 feet apart
- Pens and booths will be sanitized between voters
- Staff and voters will be screened
- Anyone entering the polling must wear face covering
- One-time gloves will be made available

Approved 6.3.2020

Dr. Ting spoke about his concerns and questions that need to be answered:

- Are the supplies already available or where are they supplies coming from and what assurance is there they will be available for June 4, noting there have been reported PPE shortages.
- Where will people be washing their hands? What soap will be used? If the bathrooms are open who will be cleaning between use? And with what supplies? Dr. Ting noted that different products have specific sanitation requirements and these instructions will need to be identified i.e. timing between cleaning and safe to use?
- How will the police enforce the number of people?
- What is the screening process? How will it be done? Who will be doing it? and what is the disinfection protocol?
- What is the safe number of people that can be allowed in the building at one time, including fire & police detail?
- Dr. Ting asked for confirmation in writing that polling places are exempt from state of emergency order prohibiting 10 or more people from gathering and if this includes fire, police, poll workers, staff?
- How will the gloves be used? made available? Stressing the importance for people to understand proper glove use, change and disposal.
- It will be recommended that the gym be set up similar to the flu clinic with one-way flow, and the use of dividers.
- The board members encouraged the use of absentee ballots.

The board members supported the original election date discussed by the selectmen of June 25 be kept to allow time to prepare a policy and procedure and gather additional information to provide a safe election.

The BOH will provide a letter to the board of selectmen outlining their concerns about holding an early (June 4, 2020) election and their unanswered questions to provide a safe election during the COVID-19 pandemic and their support for a later date.

Ms. Bresnahan was asked to contact the Town Clerk regarding their concerns and questions with holding an election safely and that she be invited to the next BOH meeting.

The Public Nurse shared the BOH concerns with the election protocol.

- Any unanticipated COVID-1 related discussion

- The BOH received a request from Mass Audubon to reopen one of their three trails in Wenham. The request was for the Endicott Trail, one of the lesser used trails.

The board and public nurse noted that public trails in Wenham are closed during the Governor's State of Emergency order. It was the consensus of the board that all trails in town remain closed due to COVID-19 virus concerns.

- The HW library requested the BOH allow a curbside pick-up/ drop off program during the State of Emergency. The board members and public nurse had concerns and questions about the protocol.

The Mass Library Association recommends time as a disinfectant and that returned books be set aside for 3 to 7 days.

The board noted that Libraries have not been assigned as essential by the Governor. The Library is a joint Hamilton & Wenham program and both Wenham's Town Administrator and Hamilton's Town Manager are in support but requested the BOH to outline how this would work safely. The board members noted that libraries in the area are closed. The Library Director Kim Butler will be asked about the program details and proposed protocol. Ms. Butler will be invited to attend the next BOH meeting to further discuss this request.

- Updates from staff, if needed

- Health Agent

Mr. Bernard said soil testing and septic plan review continues. He is returning calls to residents that have called his office with questions.

The Assistant Health Agent continues the process to permit summer camps and is working closely with Gordon College and is following up with food establishments regarding the face covering order; chefs working over a grill are exempt from this order. As restrictions lift for restaurants food service inspections will start again

- FY 21 Budget Request – Review Board of Health Budget

Ms. Bresnahan reported that the board of selectmen asked departments to revisit their budgets for reductions but the BOH budget increased due to the COVID-19 Virus pandemic health crisis. Some related expenses to the COVID response are expected to be reimbursed by the state.

Ms. Bresnahan proposed that the hourly pay for the Public Nurse continue during the crisis through December 2020 and this be revisited in January to return to the monthly stipend pending the status of the pandemic. The BOH concurred.

One increase in the expense line was for possible COVID-19 community testing site in town and additional funds for the anticipated increase in flu vaccine clinic

Approved 6.3.2020

- Review and Approval of any outstanding minutes: April 15, 2020. April 22, 2020; April 28, 2020 (Joint BOS/ BOH)
The board unanimously voted by roll call vote to approve the minutes of April 15, 2020. April 22, 2020; April 28, 2020 (Joint BOS/ BOH).
- New business, not reasonably anticipated by the Chair for discussion only.

Mr. Donnellan observed standing water in the foundation at 128 Topsfield Road and around the perimeter and questioned if this was the a BOH issued.

Mr. Bernard responded that the septic design was approved and is a raised in the back of the lot and there is a stormwater plan for the property. Mr. Bernard will follow up with the Building Inspector.

Ms. Bresnahan confirmed that water may not be pumped into the street from any property and may not be directed into storm drains.

It was noted that prolonged standing water (72 hours or more) during mosquito season was under the BOH jurisdiction.

- Next meeting- Wednesday May 13 at 830 am via zoom.
- *The board unanimously adjourned by roll call vote at 955 am*

Respectfully Submitted By
Catherine Tinsley
5.8.2020