

TOWN OF WENHAM  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
Meeting of July 1, 2020  
Wenham Town Hall, 138 Main Street

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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 July 1, 2020 at 10 AM virtually on Zoom.

The Board of Health makes regulations as it deems necessary for the public health and safety of the Town. The Wenham Board of Health is responsible for the enforcement of State Sanitary Codes, State Environmental Codes and Wenham Board of Health Regulations. Areas of responsibility include: septic systems, housing and dwelling units, food service establishments, private wells and recreational camps for children.

Board of Health members: Regina Baker (2023); Gerald T. Donnellan (2021); Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair (2022)

Call to order: *With a quorum present, Dr. Ting called the meeting to order at 10 am.*

Board Members Present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Regina Baker; Gerald Donnellan

Also Present: Maribeth Ting, Public Health Nurse; Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative

*Due to the COVID19 Virus pandemic, and restrictions concerning in-person gatherings ordered by the Governor, this meeting took place virtually on Zoom. Dr. Ting identified that this was a virtual meeting, the meeting was being recorded, all could be heard, and votes would be taken by roll call.*

The town elections were June 25, 2020 and Ms. Baker was re-elected for another term on the Board of Health.

- Elect Chair & Vice-Chair
  - Chair -Ms. Baker nominated Andrew Ting as Chair. There were no other nominations. Dr. Ting accepted the nomination.
  - Vice Chair- Mr. Donnellan nominated Regina Baker as Vice-Chair. There were no other nominations. Ms. Baker accepted the nomination.
- COVID-19 (Coronavirus Discussion)
  - Updates from the Public Health Nurse

Ms. Ting updated the board members that after a month, Wenham has a new positive case of COVID-19, bringing the accumulative totals to 20 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 and 7 probable cases of COVID-19. There are 2 reported deaths related to COVID-19. The state attributed these 2 deaths to those communities where death occurred, therefore, these 2 cases are not in the town's case count.

Ms. Ting questioned if posting the fatal statistic compromises patients' privacy and asked how the Board wanted to address reporting COVID-19 fatalities on the web site; only the accumulative number of deaths would be reported. Also, during check in calls made to seniors by Academic Health volunteers, a number of seniors have asked about the fatalities in town. The volunteers have asked how to answer i.e. what language should be used, and should this statistic be publicized more. The callers will be advised to reassure seniors. The Board supported not posting the fatalities statistic.

The Governor may begin Phase 3 on Monday July 6. The Governor continues to advise people arriving to Massachusetts to self-quarantine, with the acceptance of those arriving from New York, New England or New Jersey.

Town Administrator Anthony Ansaldi recently contacted the public nurse to ask about holding public meetings (live) in town hall. Ms. Ting contacted Ron O'Connor, Director of Local and Regional Health with this question. Ms. Ting summarize Mr. O'Connor's response saying that it was strongly encouraged for all employees to work from home under the Safer at Home order. The difficulty with boards/committees meeting live is that these are open meetings to the public and there is still an order for no more than 10 of fewer people to gather. The BOH will stress the public continue to wear face coverings especially when Town Hall opens. The BOH has not changed their position that virtual meetings be held and there be no live open meetings. Mr. Ansaldi requested a board of health member address this at the July 7 board of selectmen meeting.

A question arose from those planning town meeting if Wenham should offer COVID-19 testing prior to town meeting, as a precaution. Ms. Ting opined that this testing does not quite meet the criteria for public testing. A discussion followed regarding the concerns the board had with public testing and privacy and because a false negative would be more concerning than someone thinks they are negative and spread the virus. The town is well prepared for a safe town meeting being held outside under a tent, required face coverings, and COVID-19 questionnaire.

Approved 7.15.2020

The board also discussed that there was no policy if someone that has symptoms or has tested positive, still attends the town meeting to vote. Dr. Ting observed that there was no immediate increase in COVID-19 following the recent protests with large gatherings, with some people wearing face coverings and others not wearing face coverings.

Ms. Bresnahan informed the board that staff was recently advised by town counsel that residents in isolation from COVID-19 could strongly be encouraged to remain home, but could not be prohibited from attending and voting. Ms. Ting will follow up on this discussion and get clarification as well. Ms. Ting added that close contact is defined as closer than 6 feet for more than 10 minutes and as long as residents follow town meeting safe guidelines and wear face covering, stay 6 feet apart and use hand sanitizer. Ms. Ting questioned a robocall to inform and remind residents about safe procedures during town meeting.

- Review any guidance from State or enforcement of guidance
  - Those coming into Massachusetts are asked to quarantine for 2 weeks unless coming in from New England, New Jersey, or New York.
  - The language proposed for playground signs was approved by MIAA, the town's insurance carrier. The signs will be ordered and posted along with the other requirements for playgrounds to open.

- Discussion on Fall Flu Clinics

The flu vaccines are in the process of being ordered. The final order will be placed after this meeting.

The board discussed holding a flu clinic at the Buker School using a similar set up as was used for the elections with flue stations being 6 feet apart.

Ms. Ting said that the North Shore Regional Public Nurses was considering a regional drive through flu clinic and suggested that the towns of Hamilton and Wenham hold a drive though clinic at i.e. Pingree Park. The Board recognized that this would not serve all people and identified some problematic logistics with a drive through clinic and supported also a clinic for Wenham residents proposed to be held in the Buker School. Ms. Bresnahan requested the board discuss dates to reserve the Buker gymnasium for the flue clinic. The board agreed on Wednesday October 14 & October 21, 2020.

It was uncertain if the vaccines would be available for a clinic prior to October. Last year the town had 100 adult doses (\$18 ea.); 40 high doses (\$20ea); 39 child doses. Due to COVID-19, the board noted more people may get the flu shot and discussed ordering more vaccines; additional medical supplies would also be needed. The board agreed \$6,000 would be applied for under the CARES Act to fully supply the public flu clinic. Ms. Bresnahan suggested online pre-registration to move things along quicker and minimize contact.

- Updates from staff, if needed
  - Greg Bernard, Health Agent, was out in the field working and did not attend the meeting.
  - Ms. Bresnahan shared Bobbie Cody, Assistant Health Agent, report on a complaint from a resident regarding an employee at a food establishment not wearing a face covering while working. The food service establishment was contacted and Ms. Cody followed-up with the employees who has a health issue and cannot wear a face covering.
  - Ms. Ting will also follow up if a face shield would be appropriate for those that have a medical reason for not wearing a face covering.
  - The Wenham Tea House has closed and Ms. Cody has completed a closing inspection. There are code updates that need to be done if another tenant wants to rent the space.
  - The pool at The Maples is opened; this is the only pool allowed to be opened, with restrictions, at this time.

- Review & Approval of any outstanding minutes: June 10, 2020; Joint with Hamilton BOH June 19, 2020 & June 26, 2020  
*Vote: The board members voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the minutes of June 10, 2020, June 19, 2020, & June 26, 2020.*

- New Business

- The board received an email from Sean Timmons, Recreation Director confirming he spoke with the leaders of Youth Sports regarding the Hamilton & Wenham BOH's requirements to being the sports programs.
- The BOH will meet Wednesday, July 15 at 7:30 pm.

- Adjourn – *The board members unanimously adjourned at 11:07 am by roll call vote.*

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

(Recorded)

7.10.2020