

TOWN OF WENHAM
Wenham Board of Health
Meeting of October 7, 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 joint meeting of the Wenham Board of Health with the Hamilton Board of Health, was held Wednesday October 7, 2020 at 6pm. *Due to the COVID19 Virus pandemic, and restrictions concerning in-person gatherings ordered by the Governor, this meeting took place virtually on Zoom. The Chair announced the meeting was being recorded and those BOH Members present.*

The Wenham Board of Health (BOH) 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.

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

- Call to order - *With a quorum present, Dr. Ting called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.*

Board members present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Regina Baker; Gerald Donnellan

Also present: Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative Services; Maribeth Ting, Public Health Nurse; Greg Bernard, Health Agent; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Dan Pasquarello, Citizen Petitioner

- Covid-19 Update from Public Health Nurse
 - Ms. Ting reported there were no new Covid-19 positive cases in Wenham the past 2 weeks. To date Wenham has 32 confirmed cases, 10 probable cases, and 2 deaths. The two part-time nurses are doing the contact tracing.
 - Gordon College is in the second week of pooled saliva testing. The college divided the students in groups of 30-50 students and is randomly doing saliva testing. If there is a positive test, individual students are tested. There were no positive results in the first week. In the second week, there were low readings and PCR testing will be done on those students in the pool. Ms. Ting is working closely and providing support to the nurses at Gordon College.
 - Wenham is proceeding into Step 2 of Phase 3 of the Governor's Plan.
 - The Town will hold Halloween on October 31, 2020 with trick or treating between the hours of 5 – 8 pm. Those feeling ill are encouraged to not give out candy. All residents should adhere to safety standards i.e. wear a face covering, use hand sanitizer, maintain physical distancing.
Information is on the town's web site, including a flyer for Halloween Activities:
 - Low risk – household activities
 - Moderate risk- small gatherings outside, goodie bags for grab and go
 - High Risk - door to door trick or treating, costume parties

- Update from Assistant Health Agent on outstanding food establishment complaints

Mr. Bresnahan reported the Assistant Health Agent has received additional complaints but no substantial findings of non-compliance with COVID protocols; surprise inspections were done and all requirements were met.

- Update from Health Agent - Greg Bernard

Mr. Bernard reported that he is busy with septic inspections, soil tests and permits. There has been no slow down.

- Flu Clinics – October 14 from 4-7 pm

Ms. Ting recognized Jackie Bresnahan for her preparation and coordination of this year's flu clinics.

The town has 340 doses including high dose, pediatric doses, and adult doses with 170 flu shots already pre-booked.

Pre-registration forms are on the town's web site and appointments are required. There is no cost for the vaccine.

The October 14th flu clinic is a drive thru clinic at the Buker School. Cars enter at the Perkins Street end of School Street.

A number of vehicles can be processed at the same time, and there is no limit of person's per vehicle.

Proof of the vaccine will be provided via email the following day.

- Update, discussion, and potential response on Citizens Petition regarding Board of Health

Mr. Pasquarello was present as the petitioner of the Citizen Petition on the October 17 Special Town Meeting Warrant.

The petition was in response to the proposed change of metrics of guidance from the Hamilton & Wenham Boards of Health for the school to change from mode of learning remote, hybrid, and in person that were more conservative than the

Approved 10.21.2020

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) metrics. The community questioned the if the BOH metrics was appropriate and if these were mandated by the BOH.

Since the initial petition, discussions have taken place and clarified that the intent of the Boards of Health were to provide guidance to be incorporated with other information to determine the mode of learning.

Dr. Ting clarified the metric documents were not meant to be mandatory but used strictly as guidance for the Superintendent. To avoid any confusion about the effect of the guidance for the operation of schools previously issued by the Joint Boards of Health and to make clear that the guidance was not intended to be binding on the school district, Dr. Ting made the following motion to repeal and restate the guidance previously voted by the Wenham Board of Health.

Vote: The Board of Health voted unanimously by roll call to repeal the guidance that was approved by vote taken on [August 26, 2020] and then modified and reaffirmed by vote taken on [September 14, 2020], and that we restate the guidance to include an express statement that it is not binding on the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD).

Each page of the documents that comprise the guidance will have the following disclosure:

*This guidance is **NOT** an order or a mandate from the Boards of Health.*

*The HWRSD is **NOT OBLIGATED** to follow this guidance.*

*The HWRSD is **NOT OBLIGATED** to deviate from guidance issued by Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH).*

At the end of the COVID-19 Metrics for HWRSD document add the following paragraph:

The metrics are presented with the understanding that we are still dealing with a fluid situation and must be prepared to be flexible when making decisions on the mode of teaching and learning we employ at a particular time. This is subject to change based on new scientific evidence, DESE guidelines, CDC guidelines, and medical guidance. the Hamilton Wenham School District and its Superintendent may take these guidelines into consideration when deciding the mode of Education, but they are not required to do so. The Guidelines are not intended to be a Public Health Order or mandate from the Wenham Board of Health.

- Approval of outstanding minutes - September 23, 2020

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the minutes of September 23, 2020.

- The BOH will meet October 21, 2020.

- New business, unanticipated by the Chair (for discussion only)

The Veterans Committee asked for guidance regarding Veteran's Day services. Step 2 Phase 3 allows outside gathering not to exceed 100 people physical distanced with masks. Ms. Ting will contact the committee chair.

- Adjournment – *The Board unanimously voted by roll call to adjourn at 6:54 pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

10.9.2020