

Approved 12.29.2020

TOWN OF WENHAM

Wenham Board of Health

Meeting of December 17, 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 Thursday December 17, 2020 at 9am. 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 BOH is responsible for the enforcement of State Sanitary Codes, State Environmental Codes and BOH Regulations. Areas of responsibility include: septic systems, housing and dwelling units, food service establishments, private wells and recreational camps for children.

Board members are elected for a three-year term: Gerald Donnellan (2021); Dr. Andrew Ting, (2022); Regina Baker (2023)

Call to order - *With a quorum present, Dr. Ting called the meeting to order at 9am.*

Board members present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Regina Baker. Not Present: Gerald Donnellan

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

Officials present not participating; Tom Younger, Interim Town Administrator (A 9:10am)

- Covid-19 Update from Public Health Nurse

Ms. Ting updated the Board members that the current accumulative (2020) COVID positive case count in Wenham is close to 100 cases. The recent increase is mostly household members of a COVID positive person. She strongly advised residents to not travel for the holidays and keep to your own household.

The town has 3 remaining doses of the flu vaccine and 22 high doses for seniors.

Ms. Ting reminded residents that the Towns of Hamilton & Wenham partnered with Beauport Ambulance Services to offer COVID-19 drive-up testing during December for Hamilton & Wenham residents who are symptomatic or had close contacts with a COVID-19 positive individual, including Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District students / staff, Public Safety and town staff. Pre-registration is not necessary but recommended. The drive-up testing is in the parking lot of the Miles River Middle School, 786 Bay Rd, Hamilton. Testing is from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the following days:

- Saturday, December 19
- Sunday, December 20
- Wednesday, December 23
- Monday, December 28

- Follow up from public health forum

Dr. Ting summarized that the December 14 public forum went well. Even though the forum was not as well attended as previous forums, there were good questions, mostly related to the vaccine.

The Department of Public Health determines the distribution of the vaccine.

The interim Town Administrator Tom Younger and Deputy Police Chief DiNapoli were recognized and thanked for attending and moderating the meeting.

- Discuss additional guidance on closure or limiting use of public buildings (town hall, police/fire stations, library, Council on Aging, department of public works)

There is no new guidance from the Governor for the use of public buildings. Residents entering Wenham Town Hall are required to wear face coverings, physical distance, and use hand sanitizer. Staff is disinfecting/ cleaning surfaces between customers.

With COVID numbers increasing, the Board considered closing town hall. It was noted that town hall staff could do much of their work remotely, many transactions could be done on line, there is a tax collection box outside with the ability for staff to mail a receipt. The Board also spoke about requiring appointments at town hall and screening residents prior to entering the building.

Mr. Younger observed that this time of year, walk in traffic is minimal but felt it was important to keep town hall open to allow residents to pay their taxes by December 31.

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Mr. Bernard observed there is a variety of protocols in other communities, including appointments, sign in upon entering with phone number for contact tracing. Some town halls have closed to the public or reduced hours.

Ms. Ting preferred that residents make an appointment to enter town hall; who would control the appointments was a part of the discussion. Ms. Bresnahan also supported appointments and sign in / sign out. She noted that a one-way system in the building is already in place.

Ms. Bresnahan was asked to prepare an appointment structure for public buildings appointment with a goal to move the public in/out of town hall within a 15-minute window to reduce possible exposure.

It was mentioned that the Library Director has an advanced appointment system in place and is providing curbside window. People are utilizing the library on an increased rate.

The Board members voted unanimously by roll call that Ms. Bresnahan draft an appointment only system for Town Hall be created to include the appropriate signage and tracing mechanism to both provide reduced exposure to employees at town hall and safety to the Community in a public building.

- Updates from staff, as needed
 - Mr. Bernard observed that the snow will delay septic inspections, but this is the time of year that people are thinking/ planning ahead for spring and plans begin to be submitted.
 - The Assistant Health Agent is working to process food permits for food establishments January 1 2021. Late fees will be applied to applications past the due date of December 15.
 - Gordon College continues to discuss adding another (3rd) summer camp.
 - The Boot Straps food truck permit will be discussed after January.
- Approval of outstanding minutes, if any December 9,2020

The minutes were held for review.

- Schedule next meeting; December 29 at 9 am
- Adjourn - *The Board members unanimously adjourned by roll call at 9:50 am.*

*Respectfully Submitted By
Catherine Tinsley
12.17.2020*