

TOWN OF WENHAM
Wenham Board of Health
Meeting of September 9, 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 September 9, 2020 at 9 am. *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: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair (2022); Gerald T. Donnellan (2021); 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; Gerald Donnellan

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

Dr. Ting announced that a joint meeting with the Hamilton Board of Health was scheduled for Monday September 14, 2020 to further discuss the Covid-19 metrics prepared for the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District. Dr. Ting added that because the School Committee/ Superintendent requested and voted to accept the metrics from the Boards of Health, all changes and amendments to the documents by the Boards of Health must be requested by the School Committee.

- Covid-19 Update from Public Health Nurse

Ms. Ting reported:

- No additional COVID-19 positive cases have been reported since the last meeting. Accumulatively, Wenham has 27 positive cases, 5 probable cases, and 2 Covid-19 related deaths.
- Wenham is seeing a slight increase in tick-borne diseases.
- There have not been mosquito related illnesses to date in this area.
- There is a drive thru flu clinic scheduled for October 14, 2020. This was an agenda item and discussed later in the meeting.

- Upcoming projects and initiatives related to Covid-19 public education

During the pandemic, Public Health student volunteers have assisted the town with outreach to residents over 60 years of age. Ms. Bresnahan asked the board to consider if the new group of students this fall would continue with the calls and help with social media awareness.

Ms. Baker opined this program was especially helpful to keep seniors in touch and updated that might not be on line access or have social media. It was noted that residents may opt out of the program or change the frequency they are contacted.

The board members agreed to continue with the outreach.

- Follow up from Public Forum

Dr. Ting reviewed there was a lot of input shared during the public health forum held on September 3. Questions are being addressed and data is still being compiled. Due to public concerns with the metrics created for the School District by the Hamilton and Wenham Boards of Health, there is a joint BOH meeting scheduled for Monday to discuss if changes are warranted to the metrics created to help the school district decide when to move from one learning mode to another.

One concern was if the students from Gordon College should be included in the town's population and if so, how this impacts the town's numbers in relation to the metrics being used by the HWRSD.

Ms. Ting reached out to the Donahue Institute and confirmed the students from Gordon College are used in total population numbers.

- Follow up on any current enforcement issues related to Covid-19

Those institutions not following the guidance

Ms. Bresnahan reported ongoing complaints about face coverings not being worn. The Assistant Health Agent is monitoring the complaints. Ms. Bresnahan explained these complaints were ongoing and the challenge was those that do not wear masks due to a medical condition brings in HIPAA laws.

Approved 7.23.2020

Those complaints made to the state are referred to local towns; the town responds fairly and uniformly but is lacking guidance from the state and working within the constraint The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) laws.

Face covering ordering include those working in a business and public going into a business.

Ms. Ting suggested a face shield although it is not closely fitted and it provides a barrier.

Ms. Ting will work with the Assistant Health Agent.

- Fall Flu Clinic Update and Preparation

Ms. Ting is waiting for an update from the state regarding the new software / app Prep Mode. This app will allow the electronic management of paperwork for flu clinics. This approach is essential for a drive through clinic.

The town has already started to receive the flu vaccines from the state.

Ms. Ting is attending various on line classes and webinars on holding a flu clinic and spoke on the consideration to have a targeted area (s) for walk up flu clinic and assisting families meet the state mandate that all students receive a flu vaccine.

- Approval of outstanding minutes: July 15, July 29; Joint HW BOH July 29, August 12; August 18; August 20; August 26.

Vote: The board members voted unanimously by roll call to approve the minutes as listed.

- Staff update

Mr. Bernard reported subdivision developments in progress continue to go forward with soil tests and inspections. Mr. Bernard observed an increase in construction and sales (septic system inspections) this year compared to previous years.

- Schedule next meeting

September 14,2020 Joint meeting with Hamilton BOH

September 23, 2020 Wenham BOH

- Adjournment – The board members unanimously adjourned at 9:50 am.

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

9.9.2020