

TOWN OF WENHAM
Joint Wenham Board of Health with Hamilton Board of Health
Meeting of June 19, 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 (BOH) with the Hamilton BOH was held on Friday June 19, 2020 at 3pm via zoom.

Wenham call to order - With a quorum present, Dr. Ting called the Wenham BOH meeting to order at 3pm.

Board members present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Gerald Donnellan. Not present: Regina Baker
Maribeth Ting, Public Nurse; Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative Services; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Hamilton call to order - With a quorum present, Mr. Smith called the Hamilton BOH meeting to order at 3pm.

Board members present: David Smith, Chair; Christopher Small Not present; Dr. Giselle Perez
Christine Lee, Public Nurse
Sean Timmons, Joint Recreation Department Director

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

Abbreviation used

DPH Department of Public Health

HW Hamilton and Wenham

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus Discussion)
 - Update from Wenham Public Health Nurse

Ms. Ting reported that Wenham had no increases in COVID -19 accumulative cases and no additional deaths.

Wenham stands at 19 COVID-19 positive cases and 2 COVID-19 related deaths.

Ms. Ting reiterated the importance for people to continue practicing physical distancing, face covering, and hand sanitizing.

The Governor is releasing Phase 2 /Step 2 of his reopening plan and continual updates from DPH are being released.

Update from the Wenham Board of Health

Ms. Ting noted that Wenham elections are June 25 and she is working closely with the town to assure safety measures are in place as well as for town meeting on July 11 to take place outside.

- Update from Hamilton Public Health Nurse

Ms. Lee reiterated the importance that safety measures continue to be followed. Hamilton has no new COVID -19 cases the past 13 and COVID-19 positive cases remains 36 with 7 deaths attributed to the virus.

- Update from the Hamilton Board of Health

Mr. Smith noted that Hamilton's town meeting on Saturday, June 20 (Tomorrow) precedes Wenham's Town meeting and was also being held outside. Mr. Smith noted photos of the tent with chairs set up 6 feet apart etc. appear to meet the physical distancing; there is a section of paired seating for couples and a separate tent for families with children for those that have no child care to bring blankets and physical distance 12 feet apart.

The boards discussed a potential situation that a COVID-19 positive person would insist on attending town meeting. The board members had many concerns and briefly discussed various scenarios and possible resolutions.

Ms. Bresnahan is attending Hamilton's town meeting to observe.

- Discussion on COVID-19 response & Any unanticipated COVID-1 related discussion

Regarding religious services, the members acknowledged there seems to be some uncertainty of how phase 2 addresses faith-based organizations. All events are encouraged to be held outdoors; indoor services have strict restrictions.

Bible studies and youth groups not permitted to meet indoors and have been limited to 10 people, but unencumbered outdoor areas are exempt for groups greater than 10 attendees. The second order of phase 2 does not include faith-based organizations. Therefore, the members agreed discretion was at the local level and outdoor faith-based groups of more than 10 could meet outdoors following physical distancing and wearing face coverings.

Mr. Timmons spoke on the concerns of the Joint Recreation Department to adhere to the COVID-19 guidelines especially as they relate to playgrounds. The Governor has lifted restrictions on playgrounds with the provision that equipment be cleaned as opposed to disinfected. Currently the playgrounds in Hamilton and Wenham remain officially closed by the BOH.

Mr. Timmons identified the obstacles he faced with lack of staff, budget, no on-site water source at playgrounds and informed the boards that the playgrounds were being used, and enforcement was another issue. With that understanding the board members agreed Mr. Timmons provide samples of other local town's signage posted at public playgrounds, that using the equipment was done at one's own risk. Ms. Bresnahan will confirm with the insurance companies the liability of using these signs and check with town counsel for the next joint meeting. One suggestion included high school students washing playground equipment as part of their community service project. Mr. Timmons will follow up with the school.

Mr. Timmons said he researched the use of portable restrooms but this option was cost prohibitive. Public bathrooms must be cleaned daily and spoke on the options to contract for cleaning services during the weekend or all 7 days; the Department of Public Works may be able to clean the bathrooms daily Monday -Friday.

There was a discussion on hand sanitizing stations being installed at the playgrounds but Mr. Timmons noted the lack of a water source makes this a project, and with the public restrooms open, people have a place to wash their hands.

The board members will continue this discussion at the next meeting with additional information.

Ms. Lee noted that COVID-19 virus has been found in human waste and noted the importance bathrooms are open for use and cleaned regularly.

The board members concurred to increase public outreach and awareness was the most important approach.

Ms. Bresnahan and Mr. Timmons will have updated information for the next meeting.

Mr. Timmons reported there is interest from the local sports organization to being field use for practice. He has asked team managers for a plan of action which includes COVID-19 protocol.

The boards agreed that a plan and protocol be provided and the teams be held accountable for following their protocol.

- Updates from staff, if needed

Bobbie Cody, Wenham Assistant Health Agent reported that she continues to check on establishments in the towns and confirm protocols are followed. She noted that Gordon College in Wenham has cancelled camps this year but she continues to work with the college to update the procedures for next year. On a side note, Ms. Cody observed that youth indoor swim teams' practice is allowed, but the Gordon College pool is not open to date. The Pingree school in Hamilton is holding camp for one week for half a day.

- Review and Approval of any outstanding minutes – June 10, 2020 were held for review.
- Next joint meeting date: June 26 at 3 pm
- Adjourn - *The Wenham and Hamilton Boards adjourned their meetings by roll call vote at 4 pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By
Catherine Tinsley
6.20.2020