

TOWN OF WENHAM  
Wenham Board of Health Joint with Hamilton Board of Health  
Meeting of August 12, 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 joint meeting of the Wenham Board of Health (BOH) with the Hamilton BOH, was held Wednesday August 12, 2020 at 3 pm. *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 announced the meeting was being recorded and identified those in attendance.*

Wenham BOH call to order - *With a quorum present, Dr. Ting called the Wenham BOH meeting to order at 3 pm.*  
Board members present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Gerald Donnellan Not Present: Regina Baker  
Also present: Maribeth Ting, Public Health Nurse; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Hamilton BOH call to order - *With a quorum present, Ms. Perez called the Hamilton BOH meeting to order at 3 pm.*  
Board members present: David Smith, Chair (A-3:07); Christopher Small; Dr. Giselle Perez  
Also present: Christine Lee, Director of Public Health Nurses

There were 82 public attendees on Zoom. This included town board/ committee members: Mary Beth Banios, HWRSO Superintendent; School Committee members: Michelle Bailey, Peter Wolczik, Michele Horgan, Stacey Metternick, David Polito, Anna Siedzik Dana Allaria.

Abbreviations used:  
HW Hamilton Wenham  
RSD Regional School District  
DESE Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
DPH Department of Public Health

- Update from the Public Health Nurses
  - Wenham Public Health Nurse Maribeth Ting  
The Town of Wenham has to date:
    - 21 accumulative COVID-19 positive cases
    - 9 probable cases
    - 2 deaths
    - No current tracing
  - Hamilton Public Health Nurse Christina Lee  
The Town of Hamilton has to date:
    - 41 accumulative COVID-19 positive cases
    - 8 Antibody positive
    - Following 3 cases.
    - 7 deaths
- Overview and discussion of DESE recent recommendations and how these would be applied to HW Organizing Public information.  
The School Committee has asked for advice from BOH to measure what is going on with COVID-19 and effect on schools and community and how metrics could be used for in person with restrictions, hybrid or all remote.  
A metrics will be created to show reliable data and thresholds to make changes.

Mr. Smith gave an overview of the basics of the proposed draft data metrics to include incidents in population as a percent of positivity, what are number of hospitalizations for COVID-19 in local hospitals, and incidents of COVID 19 infections in populations of HW and surrounding towns due to the exchange in students and teachers into the school system from outside of HW. Mr. Smith noted the day to day data was too erratic, and collectively, a set time frame would be used.  
Dr. Ting shared his observations that other school districts included the ability for preparedness to have disinfectants.

Ms. Ting confirmed easily accessible information to include DPH dashboard information in the Metrics such as information important to the community, prevention, in relation to how tolerant the community is.

Ms. Lee noted that both towns have college facilities and would not have an impact on the community data.  
Ms. Perez mindful numbers are expected to increase and be proactive in the planning and minimize disruption.  
Ms. Banios spoke on the COVID response team. This team will consist of a Board of Health member, Lead School Nurse, Superintendent, Director of Facilities, School Committee member, Education Union representative. The team will assess the situation and make a collective decision on the appropriate response.

Ms. Banios observed that shifting back and forth in modalities of learning was a concern and spoke on the current consideration that COVID rates are lower at this time and to start school with in person learning to give students the opportunity to make personal connections, and prepare for the ability to learn remotely as well as having the ability to utilize outdoor space during the good weather is a benefit in person learning.

Mr. Geary detailed the plan to have five outdoor learning/ lunch spaces (tents) per school. The cost to rent or own is being considered.

Tom Geary Director of Facilities, outlined a number of the action items required prior to opening. The district contracted with Environmental Health & Engineering, an indoor environmental consulting firm. Each school building was inspected and EHE provided a report with an executive summary of 83 deficiencies that need to be addressed prior to school opening.

Mr. Geary identified that 49 deficiencies need immediate action and are directly related to outside air intake and can be resolved through controlling programs; those buildings that have automated systems can be remotely adjusted through computer programs otherwise, a mechanical bypass will be needed to bring fresh air into the system. The challenge is balancing the classroom temperature comfort with outside air; all HVAC air filters will be upgraded to the recommended filter for the COVID19 virus.

An action metrics for the facilities has been created with expected due dates and completion dates.

Dr. Perez noted various scenarios that may challenge students and teachers and questioned the school's ability to address not only the physical needs but the emotional needs in such a sterile environment.

Dr. Perez also spoke on the importance of a transition plan to change from learning models, and how students will be transitioned next year.

Ms. Banios responded that ESE has a model to shift students between modalities and identify what components need to shift. Ms. Banios elaborated on the design team's priorities that include safety, social, emotion, and instructional strategies for the different environments. Ms. Banios observed answers continue to evolve as the plan is developed and noted some examples of situations being considered.

Lea Tabenkin, Head School Nurse, spoke on protocols school nurses will follow i.e. if a student presents with symptoms. Each school will have a dedicated medical waiting room to evaluate a student, and specific guidelines for student to leave school and return to school.

Dr. Ting said the Board of Health's working group will assess the best way to measure activity of what is going on to make decisions and provide a metrics and guidelines for the team's reference.

Ms. Banios summarized these are local decisions with recommendations from DESE and the approval of the plan is with the School Committee. The School Committee will review the draft plan on Friday.

Ms. Bailey reminded the boards that because this COVID19 advisory committee would need to respond quickly, it cannot be a public body that must post meetings 48 hours in advance, therefore, this advisory committee must be chosen by the Superintendent.

A general discussion followed.

Mr. Smith will work on the metrics for the next School Committee meeting.

A new web page will be created for updated and frequently asked questions, related concerns, protocols, etc.

- Adjournment – *The Boards adjourned by roll call at 4:11 PM.*

Respectfully Submitted By  
Catherine Tinsley  
8.21.2020