



Acton Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2020

7:30 P.M.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS VIA ZOOM

Present:

Virtual Members Present: William McInnis -Chairman, Joanne Bissetta, Mark Conoby, Dr. William Taylor and Michael Kreuze

Virtual Associate Members Present: Dr. Thomas Jacoby and Dr. Rekha Singh

Virtual Staff Present: Sheryl Ball-Health Director, Heather York-Nursing Director, Evan Carloni, Matthew Dow, Frank Ramsbottom, John Mangiaratti and Matthew Selby

Virtual Present: Terra Friedrichs, Tack Palmer and Greg Bishop

1. Opening

Chair - William McInnis opened the meeting at 7:32 P.M. Mr. McInnis stated that with the ongoing pandemic, the Board is meeting virtually and public participation has been a little more difficult. Mr. McInnis stated that he will ask for public comment on items requiring a Board vote. The Board appreciates the public cooperation while we are all learning the new virtual processes.

2. Regular Business

A. Director Update: The Health Director updated the Board with additional agenda items that included:

- Board vote to extend the closure date of public buildings
- Opening of community gardens.

The Board asked staff to schedule these items for the next meeting.

B.COVID-19/Corona Virus

1. Plastic Bag Ban - In alignment with the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Health has been asked to cease enforcement of the plastic bag ban on a temporary basis. The Board of Health discussed this at a previous meeting and due to the risks associated with potential contamination of reusable bags and the shortage of paper bags the Board



is in agreement of this ban. On a motion made by Dr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Conoby, the Board unanimously voted to cease all enforcement of the Town of Acton, General Bylaws Chapter AB – Plastic Bag Reduction and also banned the use of customer provided reusable bags until July 1, 2020. The Chair polled the Board and all were in support.

2. Acton Nursing Service Update – Ms. York stated that she received notification that the Town has received its first confirmed case of COVID-19. Ms. York also stated that there are 2418 positive cases and 25 deaths in Massachusetts. Ms. York stated that she is now in contact with an assigned epidemiologist from the MDPH. Previously MDPH would do the tracking but has asked the Nursing Service to do the contact tracing and follow up with patient. Ms. York also stated that she has been in contact with BOH member Dr. William Taylor who has drafted a letter to our residents over 70 to ask them to self-report any symptoms or self-isolation. Ms. York stated that self-reporting will allow her staff to track residents better as some doctors are telling their patients to self-isolate. Ms. York stated that all tracking is being done through MAVEN. Ms. York also stated that if the need arises, she will seek assistance from the school nurses. The Board also stated they would like the mailing to extend to others if possible.

3. Mailing to our Senior Population – Dr. William Taylor asked the Board to support a mailing to our residents over the age of 70. Dr. Taylor stated that the mailing will ask residents to self-report fever over 100, cough and shortness of breath. This information is critical to the Town's ability to track these residents who are ill and may not have seen their physician. The Board voted to send the letter with revisions to include a prominent title to alert residents to read, how to access letter in multiple languages and include the DPH Public Health Advisory: Stay-at-Home Advisory for Individuals over 70 and for those with underlying health conditions; and Safe Practices for the General Public with this letter. The Health Division, along with other department assistance will begin preparation of this mailing and the Nursing Service will be the contact for residents to self-report. Greg Bishop identified as being in this population and stated how important it is to send out this letter. The Board is happy to do their part to support the community. On a motion made by Dr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Conoby, the Board unanimously voted to approve the distribution of this mailing the over 70 population and others if warranted. The Chair polled the Board and all were in support.

4. Construction in Acton- The Governor issued guidance for protection of construction sites and workers against COVID-19. Frank Ramsbottom, Building Commissioner, informed the Board that they are conducting outside inspections and unoccupied



facilities only in order to safeguard his employees against COVID-19. The Governors guidance will allow for open construction site to adhere to social distancing, provide handwashing stations, requirement of gloves and eye protection, etc. On a motion made by Mr. Conoby, seconded by, Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to approve a directive to defer or postpone non-emergency inspections based on limited staff resources and availability, including all construction activities requiring permits and inspections and all State Guidelines and Procedures must be followed by Land Use Department:

- a. The State Guidelines and Procedures must be implemented and maintained at all times or the work site must close immediately until full compliance is assured.
- b. No workers or individuals shall be allowed at any work site if sick, show signs or complain of typical symptoms of covid-19, are unable to certify no-contact with individuals with or suspected to have or been exposed to covid-19, or who have been advised or directed to self-isolate or quarantine.
- c. All work site activities shall be in full compliance with General Guidance including but not limited to hygiene, cleaning and decontamination, 6' separation from other individuals, no physical contacts, on-site restrooms regularly cleaned and provided with warm water, soap, hand sanitizer and towels at all times
- d. All work sites shall provide and make available hand washing stations which provide warm water, soap, hand sanitizer and towels at all times for frequent handwashing for all onsite personnel.
- e. On-site personnel must be designated in writing to maintain and keep clean the facility, handwashing stations and all workspaces with a log of all actions.
- f. All high contact surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized at least twice per day with a log of all actions.
- g. All workers at the work site are required to wear cut-resistant gloves or equivalent and eye protection safety goggles/face shields.
- h. In any situation where contact is less than 6', all affected workers shall be supplied and continuously use PPE including as appropriate face mask, gloves and eye protection.
- i. In the event, any of the guidelines or procedures are not able to be implemented or followed, the site must immediately close and the permittee must immediately notify the Land Use Department. The site cannot open or resume any work until it is certified in compliance and inspected.
- j. The BOH or their designee is authorized to amend or modify this order, provided as it in more stringent and protective of public health.

The Chair polled the Board and all were in favor.

5. MRC Volunteers – Health Division staff will send out requests for residents to become a volunteer. Volunteers are needed for both medical and non-medical staff.



6. Preparedness Planning - Health Division staff are working hard to identify and implement policies, protocols and procedures to ensure our residents safety during this public health emergency. Staff is also looking at areas to identify food source and isolation areas if needed.

7. Shelter in Place - The Board stated that while this may be needed we are not currently there yet. The Board also stated that we need to rethink the name and possibly not call it a shelter in place. The Board will discuss this again at a future meeting.

8. Educational Information – Health Division staff are constantly updating our residents in regard to COVID-19 and will continue to do so.

4. Minutes:

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Ms. Bissetta, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of March 16, 2020 as corrected. The Chair polled the Board and all were in favor.

On a motion made by Ms. Bissetta, seconded by Mr. Kreuze, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of March 23, 2020 as corrected. The Chair polled the Board and all were in favor.

5. Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:22 PM.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting;

- Acton Board of Health motion and vote concerning use of retail bags
- Proposed informational letter for Mailing BOH guidance memo
- Email from Dawn Bentley and Martin Finnegan concerning private schools in Acton
- Email from Counsel regarding Board authority
- Email from Frank Ramsbottom regarding Building Department inspection
- DPH advisory dated 3/23/2020
- Construction Letter with Guidance
- Commission Public Health regarding plastic bag ban
- Board of Health draft Minutes dated March 16, 2020 and March 23, 2020

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheryl Ball
Acton Board of Health

William McInnis- Chairman,
Acton Board of Health