



Acton Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2021

7:30 P.M.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS VIA ZOOM

Present:

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

Associate Members Present: Dr. Thomas Jacoby was present and Dr. Singh was not present.

Staff Present: Sheryl Ball-Health Director

Others Present: Himaja Nagireddy, Select board liason.

1. Opening

Chair - William McInnis opened the meeting at 7:30 P.M. A script was read that was provided by the Town stating why the meetings are virtual during this pandemic.

2. Regular Business

Health Director – Update

Ms. Ball spoke about Booster eligibility and stated that we can order doses and our group has decided to focus on our homebound residents first. We have also ordered pediatric doses and will be assisting the school with vaccination for the 5-11 population. We have not received confirmation as to when they will be delivered but we will schedule those clinics asap. Ms. Ball also indicated that the schools sent out a survey to see how many students would like to obtain the vaccine from our clinic and we are waiting on those results as well.

Nursing Service Update:

Ms. York stated that we currently have 21 cases in active isolation and our numbers are going up since the beginning of September. The details of the positive cases are varied both in age and vaccination status. Ms. York also reinforced the need for booster and pediatric vaccination clinics. Ms. York stated that there are many locations that can be found on vaxfinder for the general public to obtain their Booster shots and is referring those that call to the booster clinic locations. Ms. York also stated that we have 76% of our residents vaccinated which is about 18,000 out of 23,700 residents. Ms. York also stated the Life Care of Acton has already conducted a Booster vaccination clinic for their residents and Benchmark at Robbins Brook Assisted Living will be working with CVS to provide their clinic on November 4, 2021. The Board also spoke about mixing and matching the booster dose with any of the vaccine options. It was also stated that it is unknown as to what vaccine the State would be providing to us. The Board also asked whether a flu vaccine clinic was done and Ms. York stated it was done 1 week ago and another was done today.



Face Covering Discussion

The Board reviewed the data that Ms. Ball put together showing the positive cases within many communities that have no mask mandate, full mask mandate or a municipal mask mandate. Mr. McInnis and stated that Acton is doing ok and there is very little correlation among these categories and that the transmission rates among towns vary all over the place. Mr. McInnis also stated that Acton is doing the best in communities without a mask mandate. The Board previously stated that if something unique to Acton were to happen then their previous position of following the MDPH guidance may change. The Board discussed the data at length and asked if additional data is available and suggested that we should look at total incidents and also to look at a larger sample because some communities are very small and/ or large. The data presented is what we currently have access to. The Board questioned the schools face covering requirements and questioned whether we should have something in place requiring them for municipal building. Ms. Ball stated that the Town makes accommodations for our residents that are uncomfortable coming indoors, by meeting them outside, wearing a face covering or offering meetings via zoom which is appreciated.

Mr. Kreuze stated that we should have a mandate and should be following the schools lead (DESE) as well as doing everything we can to get our numbers to 0. The Board pointed out that towns with a full mask mandate are all well above 0. Mr. McInnis polled the Board and there was a consensus to not issue a mask mandate and to continue to follow MDPH guidance at this time but to reevaluate every meeting. Ms. Ball indicated that she would update the data frequently and present to the Board. The Board also asked staff to encourage our residents to obtain the vaccine and to continue to advise our residents to wear a face covering while indoors per the MDPH and CDC guidance.

Hybrid Meetings

Mr. McInnis stated that the State has allowed Boards and Committees to hold virtual meetings until April 1, 2022. Mr. McInnis suggested that we alternate doing all virtual and hybrid meetings. Ms. Ball will confer the chair prior to each meeting and depending on the agenda we may do it zoom only. The Board was in consensus with this.

Emergency Beaver Trapping Permit – Nagog Pond

The Town of Concord Water and Sewer Division has made an additional request for an emergency permit for beaver trapping due to beaver activity determining a threat to public water supply related to Beaver activity in Nagog Pond. There is an active lodge within the lake (reservoir) that is deemed a threat to human health and safety. Both towns utilize this reservoir for some residents of Concord and also for the properties located in Acton along Great Road.

This property located is a repeat request and given its location, we have determined that this site does not meet the criteria due to the location of the beaver activity within a drinking water supply for an alternative solution other than trapping. The Board asked that Concord to provide us with a report of how many beavers were trapped and how many dams were breached once completed.

Based on this information, the Health Department recommends that the Board of Health approve a 10 day emergency permit, beginning on Thursday, October 28, 2021, giving the licensed trapper and its



agent the right to use restricted traps and breach the dams or dikes subject to the conditions of the Conservation Commission.

In addition, the department would recommend that the Board approve that the applicant, should the 10 day emergency permit not solve the beaver problems be granted a 10 day extension.

On a motion made by Mr. Conoby, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to grant an Emergency Beaver Trapping Permit to the Town of Concord for the property located at Nagog Pond for a period of 10 days. The Chair took roll call and the vote was 4-0-1(abstention). Motion passes.

Minutes – August 30, 2021& October 6, 2021

On a motion made by Dr. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Bissetta, the Board voted to approve the minutes of August 30, 2021 with corrections. The Chair took roll call and the vote was 4-0-1(abstention). Motion passes.

On a motion made by Ms. Bissetta, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to approved the minutes of October 6, 2021 with corrections. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Next Meeting

The next BOH meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2021.

Other Business

The Board asked about mandating vaccine for Town employees. The Board asked Ms. Ball to inquire with the Town Manager regarding this status.

4. Adjournment

On a motion made by Ms. Bissetta, seconded by Mr. Conoby, the Board voted to adjourn at 9:30 PM. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting;

- Town of Acton script for boards and committees opening meeting
- Board of Health agenda
- Face Covering data
- Beaver Trapping Permit application,
- Minutes of 8-30-2021 & October 6, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheryl Ball
Acton Board of Health

William McInnis- Chairman,
Acton Board of Health