



EMERGENCY MEETING

Acton Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

December 21, 2021

6:00 P.M.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS VIA ZOOM

Present:

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

Virtual Associate Members Present: Dr. Jacoby voting for absent Joanne Bissetta and Dr. Singh

Staff Present: Sheryl Ball-Health Director, Felix Garcia and Matthew Dow

Others Present: Alex Park, Basil Chigas, Ben Wolfson, Beverly Davis, Bev Hutchings, Carrie McMillen, George Philipp, Jenifer, Joe Will, Kyra Cook, Leslie Johnson, Leo Mercado, Mandy Zervoglos, Margaret Miley, Marion Richardson, Nancy Covitz, Pat and Pete Schappert, Paul Rogers, Sharon Mercurio, Steve, Corinne Hogseth, Judith Aronstein, Himaja Nagireddy, Doug Sherman, Adam Klein, Austin Cyganiewicz, Christine, Hart Millett, Ira Wolf, J Bernhard, Jennie, Jennifer Smith, JJ, Lisa Wojick, Marion Maxwell, Michael, Missy, Nermin, Shelly Stuart, Peter Light, Susan Welt, Terry Linsey, Thomas DeWeese, Tommy and 2 call in users.

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 and this emergency meeting of the Board of Health was called to order.

2. Regular Business

Mask Mandate

Ms. Ball stated that the COVID cases have significantly increased in the last 4 days and also mentioned that cases are going up across the State and the United States. There are currently 1500 cases in the hospital in Massachusetts and we believe that a town wide mask mandate should now be in place due to the significant changes we have recently seen. The Town instituted a mandate for town employees yesterday. Ms. York stated that over the last 3-4 days our cases increased dramatically and we had 29 new cases today. Ms. York stated that since Thanksgiving we have had 230 cases. Ms. York mentioned a memo that the school district sent with their case count but noted the town as a whole is seeing large increases and the cases are spread out amongst all populations. Ms. York stated that we are seeing household spread and seeing households without children as well. Mr. McInnis asked if Acton is seeing an increase and if other communities are seeing the same increases. Ms. Ball stated that we seeing are slightly less than some other communities but most communities are also seeing the same



significant uptick in cases and noted that looking at the data the cities and towns that currently have a mask mandate on average are doing better than communities that don't. Ms. Ball stated there is a draft in the Board's packet that mimics an order the Town did previously and also some additional recommendations for businesses to think about doing as additional measures to keep everyone safe. The Board discussed the proposed mask mandate and questioned whether there should be an end date but the Board decided it will continue to be reassessed at every meeting rather than placing an end date today.

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Dr. Taylor, Mr. Kreuze moved to institute an indoor mask mandate in accordance with the proposed draft effective at noon on 12/22/21.

Discussion prior to vote: The previous language in the mask mandate adopted Acton Police as special health agents to help with the enforcement and this language was changed in this draft asking them to assist only. One member of the Board stated that this would not be a good use of our police force and also asked about the current State guidance. Ms. Ball stated that the State recently advised that all (regardless of vaccination status) residents wear a face covering regardless of vaccination status which is a change from the previous guidance for those that were unvaccinated. The Board is also requesting that the Select board endorse this mandate and Ms. Ball mentioned that the Select board was shown this document last night. The Board stated that they support this mandate, encourage people to get vaccinated, strongly advises everyone to follow safe business practices and asked staff to get these messages out to residents. Members of the public expressed both opposition and support of this mask mandate. The Board took these comments under advisement.

The Board unanimously voted to institute the indoor mask mandate effective, December 22, 2021 at noon. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Next Meeting

The next BOH meeting is scheduled for January 5, 2021.

4. Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Dr. Jacoby, the Board voted to adjourn at 7:00 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
- Draft order of mask mandate
- Board of Health information and guidelines
- Massachusetts COVID data cases for counties
- COVID data from staff
- Memo from School

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheryl Ball
Acton Board of Health

William McInnis- Chairman,
Acton Board of Health