



**Acton Board of Health**  
Meeting Minutes  
May 18, 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. Rekha Singh and Dr. Thomas Jacoby

Virtual Staff Present: Sheryl Ball-Health Director, Matt Dow, Heather York-Nursing Director, Mark Hald, Bryan Cote and Eva Szkaradek

Virtual Present: Mitch Doherty, Jill Salamon, Jo-Ann Berry, Kevin Curley, Lori Cooney, Diann Oster, Fred Dushin, Terra Friedrichs, and Joe Will

**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 crisis.

**2. Regular Business**

Director Update: COVID-19 Updates to Residents -

Ms. Ball updated the Board regarding Health Division activities since the last meeting:

- Governor Baker Re-opening Plan – The Governor today outlined the State’s expectations for reopening Phase 1. In Phase 1 gatherings are still limited to 10 or less people and there is a new “safer at home advisory”, that speaks to going out for worship, healthcare, permitted work, shopping and outdoor activities. The Governor has allowed certain businesses to open effective today and they include: worship (with 40% occupancy), construction, firearms and shooting ranges and all are required to comply with sector specific workplace safety standards. Also all current essential businesses have to comply with the workplace safety standards by May 25, 2020. On May 25, the Governor is allowing hair salons, barbershops, office spaces with 25% capacity, labs, life sciences, car wash (exterior and self-serve only), pet grooming and retail



curbside pickup and again all need to comply with the workplace safety standards.

- Outdoor Activity Advisory – Ms. Ball stated the Governor has also posted information in his plan and states that in phase 1, limited contact sports are allowed as of May 25, 2020 but doesn't define the definition. There was also information on the Governor's website that speaks to non-contact sports which stated tennis and catch as long as those are done between players from the same household. Ms. Ball stated that we can discuss this further when we get to that in the agenda.
- Face Coverings – Ms. Ball asked the Board to confirm that face coverings are required on everyone except those unable to wear one for medical conditions or those under the age of 2. Ms. Ball stated that there has been some question about when to wear them when social distancing can be achieved and also in public buildings. The Board affirmed that they should be worn per Governor Baker's order.
- Updated Testing Guidance for Suspect COVID-19 cases – Ms. Ball stated that in tonight's packet there is updated guidance that states:
  - All symptomatic shall be tested and those symptoms include:
    - Fever, chills, shaking, cough, shortness of breath, lower O2 saturation, fatigue, sore throat, body aches, loss of taste or smell, gastrointestinal symptoms, inflammatory conditions (COVID toes), and for the elderly, chronically ill or residents in congregate housing, change in mental status or blood glucose control.
    - Testing is now required for all close contacts or being coughed on without proper PPE
    - Timing of Testing
    - Close contact with someone should be tested promptly
    - Antibody testing – The majority of tests currently available have not received FDA emergency use authorization and should not be used for diagnostic purposes as more data is needed on the characteristics of the test, the immune response to COVID-19, the timing and duration of antibody response and how the antibody correlates to protective immunity
    - If this test is ordered, it is also recommended that a molecular diagnostic test be done at the same time.



1. Nursing Service Update – Ms. York stated that the Town has updated the way we report COVID-19 cases to be more transparent to the public. Ms. York also stated that we have 151 COVID-19 positive with 68 in isolation. Ms. York also indicated that Chris Foye, executive director of Life Care of Acton is on the call tonight if the Board would like to speak with him. Ms. York reiterated the new testing guidance that Ms. Ball stated earlier and also spoke about the antibody tests. Ms. York stated that with this new guidance, she is required to contact all residents that have taken the antibody test and received positive results and had to place them on isolation. Ms. York indicated that some residents do not understand the reasoning and she has to ask them to go get the nasal swab to confirm whether they are positive or negative before they can be taken off of isolation. Ms. York also reiterated the face covering order by the Governor. The Board thanked Ms. York for her updated and stated how impressed they were that she keeps up with the constantly changing updates/guidance's. The Board asked if she is seeing any trends and she stated no. The Board also asked if there is a reopening plan for Town Hall. Ms. Ball stated that staff has been actively working on one but will ensure that the updates that the Governor outlined today will be included in the plan.
2. Chris Foye – Executive Director of Life care Center of Acton, was present to discuss COVID-19 issues at the center. Mr. Foye stated that on April 27 & 28<sup>th</sup> they decided to test 100% of their residents and found that 22 residents tested positive for the virus. Those residents were isolated and moved to another part of the facility. After that initial test, some residents that were previously asymptomatic became symptomatic and were retested. That retest identified more positives due to the shared bathrooms. After the second round of testing, residents were separated into areas that suited their current needs. Unfortunately, this separation took some time to get everyone situated because most were initially asymptomatic; however, for anyone that was symptomatic they were placed into the quarantined room immediately. The Board asked Mr. Foye if they are currently sharing staff between facilities and Mr. Foye stated no as everyone is most comfortable staying within one facility. Mr. Foye also stated that he is grateful for the assistance from Town staff and that has made a difference. The Board also asked Mr. Foye if the center is accepting new residents. Mr. Foye stated that they are not, however, if a current resident has to be transported to the hospital, they are allowed to return. Mr. Foye also stating that their current goal is to focus on a recovery plan and once everything has stabilized, then they will consider new admissions.



3. Annual Town Meeting – Mr. John Mangiaratti, Town Manager was present to talk to the Board about the Town’s plan for holding their Annual Town Meeting on June 29, 2020. Mr. Mangiaratti stated that he will be presenting the plan to the BOS tomorrow evening. The plan includes, using the gymnasium as the seating capacity is larger and easier to allow for social distancing, requiring attendees to wear masks, social distancing, supplying hand sanitizer, no tabling allowed, non-touch microphones, and the town plans to mimic the plans that the Governor outlined today for worship facilities. The Board thanked Mr. Mangiaratti for presenting this plan and added some recommended additional guidelines that included; placing higher risk people outside, utilizing other areas for overall, creating a plan for people leaving at the end, social distancing at check in, leave doors open to bathrooms to limit touching and before and after deep cleaning of the school. Mr. Mangiaratti also stated that we have town election scheduled for June 2, 2020 and even though we are asking people to vote absentee, we will utilize the Town meeting plan at this event. Mr. Mangiaratti also stated that it is very important for the Town to have a budget going into the new fiscal year, and we plan on reducing the warrant articles as much as possible to ensure this event will be one day only. It was also stated that the date of Town meeting is being held as late as possible to allow for time for additional guidance from the State.
4. Affirmation of BOH orders: The Board reviewed the memo from the Health Director, outlining the COVID-19 BOH orders. The Governor’s order that was effective today outlined new guidance for some of the Board’s order. Mr. McInnis recommended that the Board meet again on Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup>, so the Board has adequate time review the changes prior to the implementation date of May 25<sup>th</sup>. The Board did state that the construction order should be modified tonight as this went into effect today. On a motion made by Mr. Conoby, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to amend the recent BOH construction activities order related to COVID-19 to update, amend and incorporate the new requirement and restrictions of the new Commonwealth of Massachusetts Order dated 5/18/20 which are inconsistent, superseded or additionally required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Order. The Board took Roll call and the vote was 4 Ayes to 1 Abstained. Motion passes.
5. Non-Contact Athletic Activities: The Board stated that these activities which include tennis and pickle ball will only be allowed in Phase 11 and that it is pretty clear that only players in the same family will be allowed to utilize the courts before phase 11. The Board stated that they will discuss this again as there is clearly conflicting information on this subject.



6. Drive –Thru’s – Mr. McInnis stated that he asked to put this topic on the agenda as CDC has guidance to drive thru’s should be utilized during this Pandemic. David Martin, BOS, provided a history to the Board about drive-thru’s not being allowed in Acton. This request has gone before Town Meeting many times and it appears that there is some support for pharmacies but not for restaurants, however, it has been defeated. In order to make this zoning change it would need to be approved by other departments and our residents at town meeting by a 2/3 majority. The Board asked that Mr. Martin, bring the Board of Health’s recommendation to the Board of Selectmen meeting tomorrow evening.

2. **Next Meeting** – The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2020.

**3. Minutes:**

On a motion made by Ms. Bissetta, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to accept the minutes of May 11, 2020. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

**4. Adjournment**

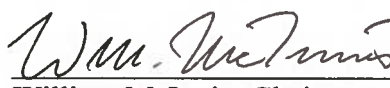
On a motion made by Dr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Kreuze, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:33 PM. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

**Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting;**

- Town of Acton script for boards and committees opening meeting
- Board of Health agenda
- Governor Baker – Reopening Plan
- Memo from Planning – Re Drive Thru’s
- MDPH Revised Testing Criteria
- BOH Recreation Facilities Closure memo
- Minutes from May 11, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
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Sheryl Ball  
Acton Board of Health

  
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William McInnis- Chairman,  
Acton Board of Health