



## **Acton Board of Health**

Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2022

7:30 PM.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS VIA ZOOM

### **Present:**

Virtual Members Present: William McInnis, Dr. William Taylor, Dr. Jacoby and Michael Kreuze. Mr. Conoby was not present.

Virtual Associate Members Present: Dr. Singh voting for absent Mark Conoby

Virtual Staff Present: Sheryl Ball-Health Director, Jill Salamon, Nursing

Others Present: Marion Richardson, Himaja Nagireddy, Select Board liaison and one call in user.

### **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**

#### **Health Director Update**

Ms. Ball stated that the current percent positivity rate for the State, Middlesex County and Acton are all running around 1.7%. Ms. Ball also mentioned that after the last meeting, the CDC changed all of Massachusetts to be at low transmission risk for COVID down from high risk. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) is looking at the combination of three metrics that include, new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the last 7 days, the percent of occupied inpatient beds at hospitals by COVID patients and a total new cases of COVID per 100,000 population in the past 7 days. The Board questioned if there was a set percent positivity that would bring us at a higher transmission rate. Ms. Ball stated that the percent positivity number is calculated by looking at Acton's total cases divided by total tests and there is no set number that will trigger an increase in risk. Ms. Salamon, Nursing Service stated that while they look at these numbers that Ms. Ball mentioned they are also looking at the strain on the health system in the event of a COVID surge.

#### **Nursing – Update**

Ms. York was unable to join this evening and Ms. Ball stated that we currently have 26 cases that we are aware of from documented testing. Ms. Ball stated the following:

1. We have seen an increase in numbers over the last 2-3 days and this is the only trend we have seen lately.



2. Emerson Hospital is seeing 1-2 admissions of COVID cases at any one time but it is unknown if these are Acton residents. Most admissions are in for 3-5 days and are home after recovery. ABRSD has 6+ cases since the mask mandate was rescinded at the end of February.
3. Benchmark the Inn at Robbins Brook last positive case was on March 4<sup>th</sup> and all residents were asymptomatic and found during their surveillance testing. LifeCare last had a positive case on Feb 10<sup>th</sup> and will continue surveillance testing for staff weekly as a preventative measure.
4. We are still following the DPH list of prioritization and asking those that are positive to contact their close contacts as per MDPH and CDC. Ms. Salamon stated that we are contact tracing for congregate care facilities, the very young and the older population. The school nurses are helping with school age children.

#### **Emergency Beaver Trapping Permit – 14 Freedom Farm and 2 & 4 Houghton Lane**

The Health Division has received two requests for an emergency permit for beaver trapping due to beaver activity with flooding occurring on two properties (14 Freedom Farm & 4 Houghton Lane) that are impacting multiple homes in close proximity to septic systems, residences and driveways located at 4 Houghton Lane, 98 Charter Road, 73 Arlington Street and 14 Freedom Farm Lane. The Health Department conducted an inspection of these areas along with the Natural Resources Director and has confirmed that in accordance with the Rules and Regulations that a threat to Human Health and Safety by beaver or muskrat-caused flooding of a residential septic system/driveway/home exists at all these properties.

Unfortunately, it was also determined that these sites are not a candidate for alternative solutions other than trapping due to the location of the beaver activity and the surface waters of the water bodies. All impoundments are level and in order to use alternative methods (i.e. pipes installed into the dam) the flooded area needs to be higher in one location rather than level to help with water flow. These sites are badly flooded and multiple properties are impacted.

Based on this information, the Health Department recommends that the Board of Health approve a 10 day emergency permit, beginning on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 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.

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to grant an emergency beaver trapping permit for 10 days beginning on March 23, 2022 with the ability to extend for an additional 10 days for the property located at 2 & 4 Houghton Lane. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Dr. Jacoby, the Board unanimously voted to grant an emergency beaver trapping permit for 10 days beginning on March 23, 2022 with the ability to extend for an additional 10 days for the property located at 14 Freedom Farm Road. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.



### **Minutes – February 10, 2020 & February 23, 2022**

On a motion made by Dr. Jacoby, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board voted to accept the minutes of February 10, 2020 and February 23, 2022. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

### **Next Meeting**

The next BOH meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2022.

### **4. Adjournment**

On a motion made by Dr. Jacoby, seconded by Mr. Kreuze, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:01 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
- Emergency Beaver trapping application and recommendations
- Minutes from 2-23-22 & 2-10-2020

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheryl Ball  
Acton Board of Health

William McInnis- Chairman,  
Acton Board of Health