



## **Acton Board of Health**

Meeting Minutes

October 10, 2023

7:30 PM.

Hybrid Meeting Room 9 Acton Town Hall and via Zoom

### **Present:**

Members Present: Mark Conoby, Chairman and Dr. William Taylor. William McInnis was not present.

Virtual Members Present: Dr. Rekha Singh and Mike Kreuze.

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

Others Present: Stephan Marsh, Sam Bajwa, John Mangiaratti and Alissa Nicol

Others Present Virtually: Call-in user #1

### **1. Opening**

Chairman – Mark Conoby opened the meeting at 7:32 P.M. A script was read that was provided by the Town and this meeting of the Board of Health was called to order.

### **2. Regular Business**

#### **Board Member Future Agenda Items**

None

#### **Health Director Update**

Ms. Ball stated that Acton is currently still identified as low risk for both EEE and WNV, however they are both present in Massachusetts. Ms. Ball also encouraged residents to take precautions when outdoors to prevent both mosquito and tick bites.

Northwest Coalition – Lowell, Dracut, Westford and Acton - This is a grant that the State is funding to encourage regionalization. As part of that initiative we will be hiring a part time regional inspector to assist with all of these committees. It is unclear how many hours we will have with this inspector but we hope to utilize this person for tobacco and/or other needs the Health Division may have.

COVID test kits – State announced they will be supplying COVID test kits to us again. Once these arrive we will be sure to advertise to the public.



## **Nursing Director Update –**

Senior High Dose 65+ Flu Clinic

Human Services and Senior Center – Nursing Office

Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm

Pre-registration required. Actonma.gov or actonnursingservices.com websites have a link to the Color site (used during COVID, required by MDPH)

## **COVID and Flu Cases for September**

COVID 41

Flu 3

### **COVID**

Robbins Brook – No active cases, last case 09/03/23 with a total of 4 residents and 1 employee  
Lifecare – No active cases, 1 case in September with no spread, facility came off outbreak monitoring on 09/24/23

COVID Vaccine - Readily available in the private market. The Board encouraged residents to take precautions.

### **Other**

The Board asked about the Mosquito spraying program and asked Ms. Ball to find out current status. Ms. Ball stated that she would look into it but suspects that the spray program has ended or will be soon due to the colder weather we are experiencing at night.

The Board asked staff to gather current inspections numbers to be presented at the next meeting. The Board expressed concern that with Ms. Ball's departure that assistance may be needed until a replacement is found.

The Board also asked staff to book 2024 Household hazardous waste days. Ms. Ball stated that we have begun asking Clean Harbors to confirm two dates but mentioned that it has taken multiple requests in the past but staff is already on it.

## **92B Willow Street – New Information/Updates**

Ms. Ball provided an update since the last Board of Health meeting on October 10, 2023. Ms. Ball stated that it is our understanding that the Thompsons have not secured alternate housing. Ms. Ball further stated that Town Counsel has filed paperwork for a speedy trial with the Housing Court and that has not been formally opposed as of today. The Town was also notified that the Thompsons have moved to join the Town's case with the Landlord Tenant dispute and



the Town has opposed that motion. Ms. Ball also stated that a fine letter was sent to the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Bajwa, and those fines have been appealed by the owners and that appeal will be heard at the November 7, 2023 Board meeting.

The Board stressed that the Thompson's motion to join the two cases together should not occur as these are two separate matters and asked staff to let counsel know that they oppose this. The Board stated that their next scheduled meeting will occur over 30 days from the last meeting on September 26th where the Board voted to proceed with removal of the tenants but held that order in abeyance with the execution of the appeal that is currently in front of the Housing Court. The Board discussed what actions could be taken at their next meeting which is scheduled for November 7th but mentioned they will seek Counsel's advice on how to proceed plus schedule a discussion for a status update/new information.

Mr. Bajwa stated that he had hoped his tenants had accepted alternate housing as they have stopped paying their court obligated payment. Mr. Bajwa also stated that he is not seeing signs of the tenants packing and mentioned they have a pod with very few items in it. Mr. Bajwa asked the town to continue to assist in helping them find either transitional housing or long-term housing. Mr. Marsh, licensed construction supervisor, mentioned that the Thompson's have not let them into the unit for repairs and has only worked on outside repairs.

#### **Health Director Transition – John Mangiaratti, Town Manager**

Mr. Mangiaratti was present tonight to discuss the Health Director transition plan with the Board. Mr. Mangiaratti recognized Ms. Ball for the work that she has done in the last 35 years stating that Ms. Ball leads with empathy and is respected by Town leaders, the public and has worked hard to act in the best interest of the Town. Mr. Mangiaratti thanked Ms. Ball and wished her the best in her retirement.

Mr. Mangiaratti stated that he has appointed Matthew Dow, Acting Health Director as of October 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Mangiaratti stated that in the next few weeks he is working with other departments and committees to firm up the job description for the vacant Health Director position. Mr. Mangiaratti stated that he is currently looking at the Health Division's roles and is seeking how best to connect other Town services including, Nursing, Community services, Mental health and hopes to have this completed in the next couple of weeks. Mr. Mangiaratti stated that he plans to meet with other committees and then present his ideas to the Select Board so the vacancy can be advertised. The Board discussed this proposal and all believed that this is the perfect time to align the Health Division to better serve the community going forward. The Board also stated that they would love an application that has interpersonal, technical & fundamental knowledge as well as municipal experience in order to fit the goals needed for the Health Division. The Board will also send comments once the job description is written and will send to Interim Director, Matthew Dow. The Board also asked Mr. Mangiaratti to ensure we get broad candidates and look at many organizations that also value diversity and inclusion. The Board also asked Mr. Mangiaratti to please include a member or two in the interview process. Mr. Mangiaratti thanked the Board for their comments.



### **Minutes – September 26, 2023**

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Dr. Singh, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of September 26, 2023 with corrections as noted. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

### **Next Meeting**

The next Board of Health meeting will be on November 7, 2023.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion made by Dr. Singh, seconded by Mr. Kreuze, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:28 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
- Minutes from 9-26-23

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Dow  
Interim Health Director

Mark Conoby, Chairman  
Acton Board of Health