



TOWN OF BURLINGTON, MA
BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES
Main Meeting Room, Town Hall

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

Board Members Present: Ed Weiner, PhD, Chairman; Vice Chairman David McSweeney; Dr. Wayne Saltsman, MD, PhD; Maribeth Welch; and Libby Walendziewicz, RN, MSN

Board Members Not Present: None

Staff Members Present: Susan Lumenello, REHS/RS, CHMM, Director of Public Health; Christine Mathis, Environmental Engineer; and Sarah Courtemanche, Board of Health Administrative Assistant

Dr. Weiner called the Board of Health meeting to order at 7:05 PM. This will be a remote meeting of the Burlington Board of Health. All votes will be taken by a roll call vote.

Mr. McSweeney read a statement that due to the current State of Emergency for the COVID-19 virus the Governor has issued an Executive Order on March 12, 2020 authorizing remote meetings under M.G.L c. 30A, Section 20. This meeting is being held via Cisco WebEx as a virtual/electronic meeting. Residents can join the meeting via the WebEx meeting number or by the phone number published on the Town of Burlington website. Residences can also leave questions on the BCAT Facebook page or they can call the Board of Health office.

Ms. Walendziewicz recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizen's Time: No one called in.

Chairman's Report:

Dr. Weiner stated that the Board of Health continues to work with the Police, Fire and Town Administration on the COVID-19 issues. The Town employees are still working remotely and he would like to thank the Police and Fire Chiefs, the Town Administrator and the Board of Health staff for all their hard work during this trying period. Dr. Weiner stated that a subcommittee has been created with himself and Dr. Saltsman that will work with the Town Clerk to make sure procedures are in place for Town Elections and Town Meeting to keep everyone safe.

Mr. McSweeney stated that he would like to thank staff and the Chair for coordinating these remote meetings so that people can stay informed. This is a great way to communicate to the residents. Ms. Welch agreed and added that this has brought the Health Department closer and it allows residents to stay up to date on the changes that are happening. Ms. Walendziewicz stated that the coordination between all the Town departments has been wonderful and she would like also thank the Burlington Volunteer Reserve Corps (BVRC).



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Subcommittee Reports:

There were no subcommittee reports.

MOTION: Mr. McSweeney moved to discuss Staff Reports first. The motion was seconded by Ms. Welch and unanimously approved. On a roll call vote, Mr. McSweeney, Ms. Walendziewicz, Ms. Welch and Dr. Weiner voted in favor. (4-0-0)

Staff Reports

Environmental Engineer

Ms. Mathis presented her report:

- Inspections are still occurring for building occupancy, test pits and septic removals. Reviews for building renovations and demolitions are still being conducted
- The Department of Labor and Standards (DLS) has issued cease and desist orders for non-essential businesses and has requested that local Boards of Health assist in executing them. Ms. Mathis has been making phone calls to assist DLS with this effort.
- Ms. Mathis has been conducting investigation of COVID-19 complaints including essential businesses not practicing social distances, businesses that are open that shouldn't be and people not wearing masks. This has included inspections of local grocery stores.

Mr. Weiner inquired about the status of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Day. Ms. Mathis stated that the event originally scheduled for April was canceled and they are hoping to hold one in late September but they will have to see. The facilities in HHW collection facilities in Lexington and Clean Harbors, Braintree are also closed.

Dr. Saltsman joined the meeting at 7:24 PM.

Mr. McSweeney asked what the procedures are for wearing masks in grocery stores and pharmacies. Ms. Mathis stated that the Governor and the (Department of Public Health) DPH have issued orders that the employers must do as much as possible to protect the employees and customers but masks are not mandated as of today. We recommend that people should wear masks at grocery stores and pharmacies but it is not mandated.

MOTION: Dr. Saltsman moved to approve the Environmental Engineer's report. The motion was seconded by Ms. Walendziewicz and unanimously approved. On a roll call vote, Mr. McSweeney, Ms. Walendziewicz, Dr. Saltsman, Ms. Welch and Dr. Weiner voted in favor. (5-0-0)

Director of Public Health

Ms. Lumenello presented her report:

- The Director's report also includes reports from the Health Agent, Supervising Nurse and Associate Health Inspector.



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- The majority of duties are responding to COVID-19. Staff has been trained on MAVEN to help with contact tracing. There is a steady flow of new cases every day and it has not gone down.
- On May 1st, DPH will be helping out with contact tracing. They currently have 10 BVRC volunteers including nurses, school nurses, a Nurse Practitioner, a Physician's Assistants and a MD.
- A new streamlined process has been set up to help permit restaurants that want to sell grocery items along with their take out orders.
- They have reached out to their volunteers to make masks to handle the requests that they are getting. They have hand delivered masks to residents in need and they will provide them to the poll workers.

Ms. Welch asked for an explanation of the letters that were sent out when people could not be reached in the contact tracing. Ms. Lumenello stated that they are not always given the correct contact information so if they could not reach someone by phone, they sent a letter. There have only been a couple of letters sent and they received responses from those letters. She is very proud of the job that the staff and BVRC nurses have done.

Mr. McSweeney asked if there has been an influx of calls on a certain subject. Ms. Lumenello stated that the recent topic is antibody testing. This test is not 100% accurate and no one knows how long the antibodies last in a person. Dr. Saltsman stated that the testing refers to a test of how much virus is in the body. It measures the viral DNA. The antibody testing checks to see if the body responded to the virus. They are not accurate or sensitive.

MOTION: Dr. Saltsman moved to approve the Director of Public Health's report. The motion was seconded by Mr. McSweeney and unanimously approved. On a roll call vote, Mr. McSweeney, Ms. Walendziewicz, Dr. Saltsman, Ms. Welch and Dr. Weiner voted in favor. (5-0-0)

Discussions:

- *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update*

Dr. Weiner thanked the BVRC members and the school nurses that have been helping with contact tracing for the Town of Burlington.

Dr. Saltsman stated that he has been giving weekly updates on BCAT. He reminded people not to use disinfectants internally for any reason. The clinic trials are ongoing with specific medications that might help with COVID-19. Science will pave the way to understand the virus but the public needs to be patient. They are doing testing and hope to have a vaccine by next year. Dr. Saltsman stated that the peak in Massachusetts was supposed to be tomorrow but it may have happened last week. They are studying the numbers and people will still get sick but those numbers are going down. We still need to be responsible to each other. We should wear masks in public, wash our hands, protect our coughs and sneezes, maintain social distance and clean common surfaces frequently. Social distancing might be part of our lives for a while. There is a Mass General Hospital model that shows if we go back to normal on May 25th we may



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have a second wave in July. The State is handling this appropriately by establishing steps to get back to altered normal routines.

Ms. Lumenello stated that she is also getting a lot of calls with essential businesses not practicing social distancing and not protecting their employees. The Attorney General has a telephone number that people can call about employer questions/complaints and that is on the BOH website. When a complaint comes in, staff has been contacting the management of the company. Some of the other calls involve masks. As Ms. Mathis stated, masks are not mandated but they are providing guidance that it is the right thing to do in public. The Board of Health could mandate it but that would become an enforcement issue. Dr. Saltsman stated that the Town of Reading put that in place but he doesn't believe we should. Mr. McSweeney stated that he is a strong advocate of wearing masks in public but if we order it, then people may become vigilantes so we should not mandate it. Ms. Welch agreed it should not be mandated. Ms. Walendziewicz also agreed that masks should be worn in public but we should not mandate it because enforcement would be impossible.

Dr. Weiner stated that the BVRC has 180 medical and non-medical volunteers who drill several times a year "just in case". We are now living the "just in case" and we are blessed to have them as well as the Board of Health staff and Board members. Dr. Weiner ended with be safe, be smart and be well.

Adjourn

MOTION: Dr. Saltsman moved to adjourn the Board of Health meeting at 8:00 PM. The motion was seconded by Ms. Walendziewicz and unanimously approved. On a roll call vote, Mr. McSweeney, Ms. Walendziewicz, Dr. Saltsman, Ms. Welch and Dr. Weiner voted in favor. (5-0-0)

*Respectfully Submitted by Dawn Cathcart,
Recording Clerk*



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DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT MEETING – TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

Agenda

Chairman's Report: None

Subcommittee Reports: None

Discussion:

- **Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Actions:** None

Staff Reports: Environmental Engineer's Report; Director of Public Health's Report