

Town of Concord
Board of Health

Minutes of the Meeting
Tuesday, March 16, 2021

1. OPEN MEETING

Mark Haddad, Acting Chairman opened the public meeting at 7:00 p.m. stating that it was being held on the Zoom Platform in accordance with the Town of Concord's Policy Directive and Guidelines on April 1, 2020 as amended. He read a brief statement outlining meeting protocol and noted that the meeting was being recorded and would be available for later viewing on the Town's website. All Board votes will be taken via a roll call. Mark Haddad introduced himself and conducted an attendance roll call.

Roll Call for Meeting: Mark Haddad, Acting Chairman, present
Jill Block, present
Alma Healey, present
Ray Considine, present

Susan G. Rask, Public Health Director, present
Karen Byrne, Administrative Assistant CBOH, present

Audience: Jane Hotchkiss, Select Board, Liaison; Patty Keane, COA, Liaison

2. DISCUSSION COVID-19 (UPDATES)

Revised Mandates from MDPH & Governor Baker & Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

PHD Rask provided the Board with a summary provided by DESE dated March 9, 2021¹. Ms. Rask noted that the plan was to return with in-person learning for elementary schools grades K-5 by April 5, 2021. Families will be able to decide whether to send their children to school in-person or have them learn remotely through the end of this school year. Some districts may apply for a waiver, but it was her understanding based upon conversations with Superintendent Dr. Laurie Hunter that Concord would be moving forward with the goal of April 5, 2021 for K-5; things are always fluid and that may change but as of this point that was the plan.

The Lincoln Board of Health is having challenges with getting vaccines for the 2nd dose clinics and Ms. Rask and Public Health Nurse Tricia McGean were pressuring MDPH to honor its commitment to provide adequate vaccine supply to complete the series (i.e., 2nd dose clinics); the Town of Concord provides public health inspectional services to the Town of Lincoln via an inter-municipal contract.

The Town of Concord Health Division, in conjunction with Fire Chief Tom Judge (Emergency Management Coordinator) has been exploring options for implementing a regional approach for Covid-19 vaccination clinics based upon the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's continued severe limitations of providing vaccines to Local Boards of Health (100 max with certain percentages needing to be utilized prior to new orders) following months of urging municipalities to prepare for large scale clinics. These large scale clinics would have be held (5) days a week, minimum 750 people per day and any resident of the state could attend; it would be a

¹ Guidance on In-Person Learning and Student Learning Time Requirements – 3/9/21

huge undertaking, but because Concord had already purchased and leased a tent, mobile office and a lot of supplies, it was being discussed with Health Departments in Acton, Carlisle, and Sudbury. Updates will be made to the Board via email if anything changes between now and the next meeting.

3. DISCUSSION GRANTS

The Town of Concord, in conjunction with the Towns of Carlisle, Bedford, Lincoln, Sudbury and Wayland have applied for a Public Health Excellence Grant Program for Shared Services (Public Health Director Bill Murphy – Sudbury has taken the lead) designed to address improved effectiveness and efficiency of local and regional public health by expanding opportunities for sharing of public health services (nursing, environmental health, etc.). Ms. Rask will update the Board as things move forward.

Ray Considine thought it was a terrific idea to pursue it, but noted that because the Town of Concord was a fairly “resourced” community in comparison to some of the towns throughout Massachusetts it may be a long shot.

4. BOARD CALENDAR & MINUTES

The next regularly scheduled meeting for the Board of Health is April 27th (to accommodate April School Vacation conflicts).

The Board reviewed the January 20, 2021 meeting minutes and deferred approval until such time Dr. Greene was available to review and comment.

5. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Jill Block noted that she had observed several mask violations on school property during some sporting events (Thoreau) that were of concern to her, particularly because the coaches were not wearing masks. She recommended that the Health Division staff reach out to schools/sporting activities to urge compliance. PHD Rask stated that Health Division staff fields many mask complaints throughout each day and do the best they can to convey both state and local mandates. Apparently, the Thoreau Tennis Courts are another place in town that adherence to mask mandates is not being followed and difficult to enforce. Ms. Rask said it was next to impossible to run out each time a complaint comes into the office; however, she would reach out to the School Department to remind them of the policies. She recommended that people take pictures and we could forward them to the facilities where staff is not enforcing Covid-19 mandates.

6. STAFF REPORTS

Nothing further was added from previous discussions.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Acting-Chairman Mark Haddad asked for a motion to adjourn if there was no further discussion. Alma Healey moved to adjourn the meeting. Jill Block seconded it. All VOTED in favor to adjourn. (Block, Considine, Haddad, and Healey – YES; Motion carried 4-0).