



Acton Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

February 22, 2021

7:30 P.M.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS VIA ZOOM

Present:

Virtual Members Present: William McInnis -Chairman, Mark Conoby, Michael Kreuze, Dr. William Taylor and Joanne Bissetta.

Virtual Associate Members Present: Dr. Thomas Jacoby and Dr. Rekha Singh

Virtual Staff Present: Sheryl Ball-Health Director

Virtual Present: Diann Oster, Sara McBride, John O'Connor, James Berhard, Marie Alteri, Jody Bourdon, Liz and Peg Mikkola.

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 Operational Updates –

Ms. Ball updated the Board regarding a vaccination clinic that was held on Saturday, February 20, 2021 at the Jr High that served the 80+ population. We received 100 vaccines and we were able to inoculate 110 people. We plan to hold any future clinics at this location and had transportation from the parking lot to the door to assist those in need. We had lots of volunteers that made this day a huge success. Unfortunately, it appears that the State will not be giving us additional vaccine. We are however, looking to regionalize with 8 other communities and have petitioned the State and will be sending a letter of intent. If approved we will need to vaccinate 750 people per day for 5 days per week. Each town will host a day and we expect the approval process to take some time. If approved by the State, we would need to be a mass vaccination site.

The State has also asked us if we would like their assistance to vaccinate our homebound or if we would like to handle it. We will be providing this service ourselves. We have had multiple mobile clinics and Ms. Ball encouraged all that are listening to let us know if they are homebound or know someone that is.

The Board agreed that the letter from the State indicating that Local Board of Health's will no longer be eligible to receive vaccine is disappointing.



Mr. Kreuze asked how many town employees have received the vaccine. Ms. Ball stated that approximately 92% of police and just under 90% of Fire. Mr. Kreuze was pleased with this result and thanked us for following up.

Nursing Service Director Updates-

Ms. York stated that Acton currently has a total of 757 total cases, 35 in isolation, 691 recovered and 31 fatalities. Ms. York updated the Board about the vaccine clinics at Life Care and Benchmark at Robbins Brook and stated that they have vaccinated a high percentage of staff and residents. Ms. York spoke about hockey and the 5 teams with 16-17 players per team on quarantine. Ms. York stated that the school nurses worked all last week and identified those students. The Board asked if we are seeing a downward trend. Ms. York mentioned that we are seeing a decrease of exposures amongst positive cases. The Board asked if we expect to see a surge and Ms. York stated that she hasn't heard anything indicating that was happening. Ms. York stated that she is concerned with those that are traveling during school vacation and that she is still seeing household transmission as a trend. Dr. Taylor asked what age the hockey players are. Ms. York stated that it is a mix amongst all ages. Dr. Singh asked about the variants. Ms. York stated that we have not received notification from the State about the variants being in Acton at this point but mentioned there was one in Middlesex County. Mr. Kreuze asked what percentage of Acton residents is vaccinated. Ms. York stated that we have done a few clinics and since some are making their own appointments we do not know this number. Ms. Ball stated that we are using our vaccine interest list and we are noting who has got the vaccine on that list and this may help us in the future to identify those percentages. Mr. Conoby asked Ms. York if the positivity rate has gone down and Ms. York stated that it has gone down. Mr. Conoby asked how many are testing and Ms. York stated that the tests are about the same 2200-2500/week and number of positive cases is going down in Acton and Statewide.

Hockey

Ms. Ball stated that there continues to be an uptick in Covid cases amongst hockey teams and is concerned with the increase in cases that we are seeing. In conjunction with the Nashoba BOH, a letter was drafted to send to the hockey organizations as we have seen these cases lead to quarantine of nearly 100 students. The AB School District is concerned with the potential spread in the schools and the educational disruption this is causing and has asked for assistance from the Board. The letter will inform those leagues of our concerns and ask those involved to follow the measures outlined below:

- Everyone involved in the sport should check for symptoms before practice and games, showing up with even slight symptoms puts many people at risk of getting the disease as well as having the team and classrooms quarantined.
- No one should arrive for a game or practice who is sick.
- If your child or a family member has symptoms that resulted in you getting them tested, the individual should stay home from practice and games until you have the results.



- The transportation of players to games and practice should be done by those living in the same household; carpooling should be discouraged but if it happens everyone should be masked and keep the windows in the vehicle opened
- Follow all public health protocols: maintain social distancing, wear masks (correctly) and practice good hand, cough and sneeze hygiene.

Ms. Ball asked for Board input on this letter. Ms. Ball also noted that the school asked for this to be discussed but the request was not representative of the district. The Board suggested that the letter include that equipment should be cleaned and sanitized after each use and to add detail so the teams and players understand how bringing home the virus affects members of their household. Representatives from hockey were present and stated that they have been working hard to create preventative measures to keep players safe and to reduce transmission. There was also discussion on the ages and positive cases of hockey players and Ms. Ball stated it was both the school team and youth leagues that we are seeing issues with. The School District was present and discussed the impact hockey is having on the district and also mentioned due to quarantine, their hockey season is over. Ms. York mentioned that when we are notified of cases, we spend considerable time teaching those impacted about the COVID protocols to keep their family members safe. The Board was polled and all agreed to send the letter.

Minutes

On a motion made by Ms. Bissetta, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of 2-8-2021. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Next Meeting

The next BOH meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2021.

4. Adjournment

On a motion made by Ms. Bissetta, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:30 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
- Draft Hockey letter, email from Dr. Dawn Bentley
- Minutes of 2/8/21

Respectfully Submitted,


Shery Ball
Acton Board of Health


William McInnis

William McInnis- Chairman,
Acton Board of Health