

Board of Health Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2020

The Board of Health Meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm by Stephen M. Fiore, Chair.

In keeping with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law" – The Board of Health Meeting of December 21, 2020 was held by Remote Access through ZOOM.

Those participating were Stephen M. Fiore, Esq., Chair; Julie C. Lemay, MPH, Vice Chair; Donna S. David, R.N., M.N.; Member; Wesley B. Chin, Health Director; Diana Ekman, Assistant Health Director; Suzanne Trasavage, Animal Care and Control Officer; Lindsey Sharp, Environmental Health Intern.

Also present for part of the meeting were David Neylon, RN, Public Health Nurse; Michael Patti, Youth Commission Coordinator.

There was no public participation.

David Neylon, Public Health Nurse, provided a COVID-19 update:

- David said case investigation and contact tracing is going well with the extraordinary help of Lindsey Sharp, Suzanne Johannet, and Heather Nahas. David said this is a great team.
- Steve Fiore extended thanks to David from the Board of Health and Belmont residents. David's efforts have benefited the entire Belmont community.
- David is working with MDPH for guidance in connection with vaccine distribution.
- Wes asked David about vaccine availability. MDPH is following the CDC and MA Governor's tiered COVID vaccine distribution plan. February may be the earliest date for vaccine distribution to senior residents of Massachusetts.
- Donna David asked if Belmont has a vaccine distribution plan. David said he is closely following MDPH for guidance, and once a plan is in place it will be communicated to the residents.
- Julie Lemay asked about CVS' role in vaccinating. David said CVS and Walgreens are actively vaccinating people at long term care facilities. He also foresees a COVID vaccine would be available at these pharmacies in the future, similar to flu and other vaccines offered by them.
- Steve Fiore asked if there are significant differences between the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine. David said there is no difference in efficacy, and said you need to receive the second dose by the same company as you received the first dose. Moderna is easier to store.

Michael Patti, Youth Commission Coordinator was introduced to the Board members.

- Michael began employment with Belmont in mid-October 2020. He is attending UMass Boston and will graduate in May with a Master's Degree in School Counseling.
- Michael has already coordinated a number of successful events for Belmont's youth including a drive-thru Halloween goodie grab bag, and a food insecurity initiative in partnership with Dustin O'Brien, Director of Nutrition at Belmont Public Schools. An outdoor story walk had to be postponed due to a snowstorm.
- Julie Lemay asked Michael if he has a target age group, and if he can offer programs to different groups. Michael said thus far the target group has been younger youth, as there are more challenges to engage older youth due to their academics, sports and other extracurricular schedules. There are high school board members on the Youth Commission. A number of activities have been mentioned including TikTok and trivia challenges.

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Mr. Myron Kassaraba, Belmont's appointed representative to the Massport Community Advisory Committee (the "Massport CAC"), discussed the Logan Flight Paths issue in Belmont:

- Board members were provided documents outlining current and past efforts of Massport CAC.
- Mr. Kassaraba has been Belmont's appointed representative for 7.5 years.
- Massport CAC is a quasi-state agency.
- Belmont realized a significant change in 2013 of flight path departures.
- There is a 2:30 a.m. departing flight negatively affecting some Belmont residents. Studies have shown this disruption in sleep is probably not good for anyone.
- Steve Fiore asked if Belmont has seen an increase in nuisance noise complaints. Wesley Chin said he is not aware of complaints since the beginning of his employment in 2015. Mr. Kassaraba said Massport receives complaints directly, and he has a link to the webpage. He will share the link with Wesley.
- Donna David thanked Mr. Kassaraba for his continued perseverance, and for providing detailed documentation.
- Julie Lemay asked where to file complaints. Mr. Kassaraba said there is a link on the Town's website, as well as a Massport CAC app.
- Mr. Kassaraba said older airplanes are noisier and are being retired. Unfortunately the older airplanes are bought by freight delivery service companies. The freight aboard these older planes is heavier, resulting in more noise. And the flights depart more frequently during late night hours.
- Mr. Kassaraba said there is a meeting scheduled on January 14, 2021. The hope is the FAA will respond to a letter signed by Congresswoman Katherine Clark requesting further evaluation of alternatives to reduce air flight noise.

The Board thanked Mr. Kassaraba for attending the meeting.

The Board voted 3-0 to approve the November 23, 2020 Meeting Minutes.

The Receipts report was reviewed.

The Director/Assistant Director/Public Health Nurse/Environmental Health Agent report was reviewed with the following discussed:

- Staff at the Attorney General's Abandoned Housing Initiative continue to work with a housing matter to avoid receivership of the property.
- Tobacco hearings update: The owners of Star K have entered into a payment plan through the Treasurer's Office. Number One Food Mart has paid the violation in full.
- Lindsey Sharp reports limited rodent activity in Town. Julie Lemay asked if any of the recent complaints received are connected to the high school building project. Lindsey said the department has not received rodent concerns relating to the high school project since October.

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Stephen Fiore welcomed Mr. Bill Trabilicy to further discuss Logan Flight Path issues in Belmont:

- Mr. Trabilicy said the air flight noise is a public health issue. He would like the Board of Health looped in to this issue. He asked the Board to consider sharing information with residents to encourage their participation in resolving the issue.
- Mr. Trabilicy suggests the Board of Health author a message to include in Belmont Light bills. There are 140 characters available on the bill for free messaging.
- Steve Fiore said the Board of Health likes to educate the public, but the department has not received complaints about this issue. Steve also acknowledged that no records of complaints doesn't mean a concern doesn't exist.
- The Board of Health will include Logan Flight Path information on the Health Department webpage, as well as other social media maintained by the department.

The Board thanked Mr. Trabilicy for attending the meeting.

Discussion of the Director/Assistant Director/Public Health Nurse/Environmental Health Agent report continued:

- Wes provided an overview of COVID matters including - assisting the school department to review protocols for various events, and attendance of a meeting with a COVID testing company; town building occupancy as a result of positive tests and close contact situations among some staff; continued concerns of face coverings not being used by school students in Belmont Center, particularly on Wednesday afternoons; and sign board messaging.
- Diana Ekman summarized common COVID questions the department has received – protocol for private gatherings at home; face covering requirements in business establishments; guidance for COVID positive employees at Belmont businesses; factors that are keeping Belmont in the “yellow” zone.
- Lindsey Sharp talked about contact tracing efforts and the benefit of the extra staff the department has. A daily email list is generated by Donna Moultrup and is very helpful to disseminate information. The email list is also a benefit in getting case information to the schools faster.
- Belmont Health Department will partner with surrounding towns to vaccinate first responders. The clinic is expected to begin the week of January 11th.

The Youth and Family Services report was reviewed. Janet has been quite busy helping residents in need. She is also assisting Michael Patti by providing him a history of programming the Youth Commission offered.

The Animal Care and Control report was reviewed. Suzanne Trasavage provided an update to last month's dog hearing – 3 of the 4 tasks ordered by the Board of Health have been completed. The behaviorist appointment had to be rescheduled due to weather. Suzanne will visit the property to confirm the Board's Order is complete once the behaviorist report is received.

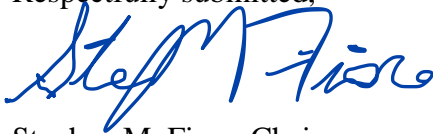
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The Veterans' Services Officer report was reviewed. Bob Upton has added a new Veteran recipient to the monthly benefits roll. Bob continues to work fully remote.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

The Meeting adjourned at 6:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen M. Fiore", is written over the typed name.

Stephen M. Fiore, Chair