

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: January 11, 2022
TIME: 9:05 AM

Board of Health Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2021

The Board of Health Meeting was called to order at 4:32 pm by Donna S. David.

In keeping with Chapter 20, of the Acts of 2021, the extension of the remote participation portion of Governor Baker's Executive Order from March 12, 2020; - "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law" – The Board of Health Meeting of December 6, 2021 was held by Remote Access through ZOOM.

Those present were Donna S. David, R.N., M.N., Chair; Julie C. Lemay, MPH, Vice Chair; Adrienne Allen, M.D., M.P.H., Member; Wesley B. Chin, Health Director; Diana Ekman, Assistant Health Director; Lindsey Sharp, Health Agent; Suzanne Trasavage, Animal Care and Control Officer; Maria Reddington, Clerk.

The Meeting was recorded.

Public Participation:

- Mr. Alex Thurston discussed Purecoat North construction work, which has been ongoing since the fire event in May 2020. He said there are piles of debris in the parking lot, the Town has not issued building permits, and he wants to know who has oversight for this construction. Excavation work began, and it's near a contaminated area. Mr. Thurston was told by a Community Development member to contact the Board of Health concerning matters at Purecoat North. Julie Lemay emailed a DEP contact when this matter was first brought to the Boards' attention, but has not received a response. She will follow up. Donna David said Health Department staff will get more information from the State and Community Development. Mr. Thurston said odors escaping from the open doors can be detected throughout the residential neighborhood. Health Department staff and Board of Health members will follow up with Mr. Thurston as information is learned.
- Mr. Elshad Kasumov asked if the Board of Health would address additional recommendations and/or mandates in connection with the rising case numbers of COVID-19 cases from the Omicron variant.

The next agenda item introduced Ms. Rotem Aloni, Regional Tobacco Control Program Coordinator.

- Diana Ekman introduced Ms. Aloni to the Board members, and made a request for the Board to vote to deputize Ms. Aloni as an Agent for the Board of Health. This will allow Ms. Aloni to conduct tobacco compliance inspections in Belmont.
- Donna David said Belmont always values and appreciates the person working in this role, and that Board members will rely on these compliance checks to insure that establishments do not sell tobacco products to minors.
- Wesley Chin held this position 10 years ago, and provided a brief history of this regional program.

Motion: The Belmont Board of Health appoints Rotem Aloni an Agent of the Belmont Board of Health for the purpose of tobacco control.

The Motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

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Agenda item to discuss metrics for the use of face coverings:

- Lindsey Sharp reviewed data including November case counts and school vaccination data. Middlesex County remains firm in the high transmission category.
- The transmission calculation for Belmont = new cases over 7 days divided by population size multiplied by 100,000.
- Belmont is in the high transmission category. The transmission categories are: "Low" transmission is considered no more than 10 cases per 100,000 people, or a test positivity rate of less than 5%. "Moderate" transmission is 10 to 50 cases per 100,000 people, or a positivity rate between 5% and 8%. "Substantial" transmission is 50 to 100 cases per 100,000, or a positivity rate between 8% and 10%, and "high" transmission is 100 or more cases per 100,000 people or a positivity rate of 10% or higher.
- Dr. Allen asked Lindsey a number of questions relating to the data presented, one being whether the data of breakthrough cases included people who received a booster, a third dose plus booster, or both, and approximate time post-booster they became infected. Out of the 11 breakthrough cases, 8 tested positive 2 weeks or more after receiving a booster.
- Wesley Chin received a question from the public asking what type of masks should be worn.
- Board members agreed that a proper fit, a properly worn mask (cover nose and mouth), replace the mask after excess wear and washes, and 3 layers are the best recommendations.
- The CDC website may also have good guidance on which type of masks are best.
- Mr. Kasumov said the City of Cambridge Health Department has an informative mask graphic.
- Mr. Trabilcy agrees with Dr. Allen, proper fit of the mask is most important.
- The present goal is to keep the face covering mandate in place.

As a result of continued increase in COVID-19 cases, Adrienne Allen would like to discuss a requirement for upgraded airflow ventilation for public buildings. She would like Glenn Clancy to attend a future meeting. Upgraded ventilation in many buildings is needed since COVID, and this may be a good time to explore and learn about the current regulations. Donna David suggested that Health Department staff explore this issue with the appropriate departments and report their findings to the Board.

The November 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes were reviewed.

Motion: To approve the Meeting Minutes of November 8, 2021.

The Motion passed by a vote 3-0.

The Director, Assistant Director, Public Health Nurse and Public Health Agent report was reviewed.

- There have been 2 new housing cases referred to the Health Department since last month's meeting. One is a squalor situation, complicated by the occupants choosing not to provide heat for themselves.
- Staff continue to plan vaccine and testing clinics.
- Diana Ekman talked about the FDA Food Program Standard Grant she applied for to improve the effectiveness and uniformity of inspections. The 1st level of the grant compliance is to complete an assessment.
- The first meeting with Mojin Solutions went well, and thus far the quality of the inspections have been great.
- There have been 42 rat sightings reported this year, which is a significant decrease from prior years.
- Staff have been in discussions with Arlington's Health and Human Services Director to hold community clinics after the new year.
- The budget meeting with the Select Board is scheduled for December 16th.

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The Receipts report was reviewed.

The Youth and Family Services report was reviewed. Janet Amdur is busy connecting families in need, especially during the Holiday season.

The Animal Care and Control report was reviewed. Suzanne Trasavage completed 27 chicken permit inspections, which were paused last year due to COVID. Families do a great job with their chickens. Suzanne is working with the Recreation department to compile off leash permit program data for one year. Approximately 100 unpaid non-criminal citations were sent to Court.

The Veteran's Services report was reviewed. The Veteran's Day breakfast had another good turnout, and the food and entertainment were great.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2022 at 4:30 pm.

The Meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna S. David, Chair