



Acton Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

January 25, 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: Prasad K, Giovanna Williams, Peg Mikkola and Dian Oster.

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 –

WR Grace – Informational Meeting

Ms. Ball asked the Board if they would like to join the WR Grace meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 7 PM. Some Board members expressed interest in attending and Ms. Ball indicated that she would post the meeting.

First Responder Vaccinations

Ms. Ball stated they worked with the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health and conducted a First Responder vaccination clinic and completed the first dose of vaccinations for all First Responders at the Boxborough Regency this past week. We had a significant amount of First Responders receive the vaccine. Ms. Ball stated that we are still looking to see how many fire fighters were vaccinated as some went elsewhere to receive the vaccine.

Vaccine Eligibility

Ms. Ball stated that there are two subgroups left to be vaccinated in Phase 1 which includes, healthcare workers doing non covid care and congregate settings. The State also announced today that they will allow Phase 2 -75+ subgroup only to be eligible on February 1, 2021. The State also restructured Phase 2 subgroups and brought the 65+ up higher on the list and added



those with 2+ comorbidities which are currently listed under bullet #2. Ms. Ball further stated that the best way to sign up for the vaccine is through the State website if residents are currently eligible and there are locations at Fenway, Gillette and local hospitals. The State is working on getting up to 165 sites open including retail locations such as Big Y, Hannafords, Walgreens, CVS and Wegmans but most are not active yet. The Town is looking to obtain vaccine to help our residents but we are unclear if we will get it. The process is such that we request the vaccine through the state survey and they submit that to the Federal Government for approval. It is also unclear if the State is still requiring us to regionalize with other communities. If we are approved for vaccine, we are prepared and ready to go and can set up clinics. We have an active MRC(volunteers), school nurses, Heather's staff, paramedics and EMT's offering to assist as well as other town staff. The State's Prep Mod software is required to be used and will assist us in setting up clinics, sending out links for those that are eligible to sign up and for confirmations that are automatically sent to its users. This system will also allow us to know how many vaccines we need to bring to the clinic so there is no waste and if we find that we have additional, we can call those who sign up on the Town's list and are eligible for the vaccine.

The Board asked if you can get the vaccine after you get COVID . Ms. York stated that as long as you are recovered you are able to get the vaccine. The Board also asked if the State is relying on cities and towns to disburse the vaccine and Ms. Ball stated that there are hospitals, large mass vaccination sites, businesses and cities and towns that can vaccinate. The Board also asked about a vaccine refrigerator and if we have enough storage. Ms. Ball stated we have one and vaccine is only released for one week at a time so we can only store one weeks' worth at a time.

Nursing Service Director Updates-

Ms. York stated that Acton currently has a total of 663 total cases, 39 in isolation, 594 recovered and 30 fatalities. She stated that we are still seeing trends in family units and noted that out of 39 in isolation there are 3-5 family members within the same household. Ms. York noted that we are still working with the Schools on a weekly basis and their nurses are instrumental in helping us identify those before they come through the state MAVEN system. Ms. York, stated that the State Prep Mod software is helping us to make appointments which helps to better understand the need. Additionally some of our First Responders declined the vaccine so some of those extra vaccines were used to vaccinate all of her staff. Life care center had one employee test positive over the weekend and no identified residents as contacts. Benchmark is still dealing with some cases there for a total of 9 cases in the memory impaired units with 3 staff positive. They tested others that don't reside in the memory care unit last week and no new cases were identified.

Ms. York also mentioned that Sheryl, Anita Arnum, Emergency Management director, and one of her staff will be taking the Prep Mod training tomorrow.



The Board thanked Ms. York and asked if the Board could assist with obtaining the vaccine. Ms. York stated that we are good and just waiting to see if we will be given an allotment. We are giving our residents all pertinent information and are referring our residents to the mass.gov website which has the most up to date locations on where eligible residents can obtain the vaccine. The Board asked if our congregate care facilities have received the vaccine, Benchmark is in the process and Life care has completed their first and their second doses should be given the first week in February.

Board of Health Vaccine Information Letter

Ms. Ball mentioned that the Town is working on a letter to distribute to our residents that will also include a resident sign-up sheet. The sign-up sheet will not guarantee the vaccine but will allow us to identify residents that are interested in obtaining the vaccine when they are eligible. It will also allow us to notify them as they become eligible or utilize the list if we find that there are extra vaccines during a clinic so this sign-up sheet will act as a call list. The Board reviewed the letter and made suggested changes that included: separating information into phases, add locations that are currently offering the vaccine, letting people know that Acton is trying to obtain vaccine, make sure that residents know that this is an informative letter only and not the right to get vaccine, that there is no cost and that we strongly recommend that everyone receive the vaccine. The Board suggested that this letter be sent out via a reverse 911 call. Ms. Ball will edit the letter and get it sent out to our residents.

Emergency Beaver Trapping Permits – 183 Arlington St and 40 Brook St

Two requests have been made for emergency permits for beaver trapping due to beaver activity at the 40 Brook Street and 183 Arlington Street. As the Board may recall these two applications were approved in November 2020 unfortunately, the trapper utilized the approval of 10 days plus the extension, but weather issues prevented the trapper from trapping for the 20 days. The Health Department has confirmed that in accordance with the Rules and Regulations that a threat to Human Health and Safety caused by surface water encroachment to the septic system and barn exists at 40 Brook Street and flooding of multiple residential septic systems at the property located at 183 Arlington Street with flooding occurring on multiple Houghton Lane properties also exists.

Based on this information, the Health Department recommends that the Board of Health approve a 10 day emergency permit, beginning on January 27, 2021, giving the licensed trapper and its agent the right to use restricted traps and breach the dams or dikes subject to the conditions of the Conservation Commission.

The Board also requested that staff schedule a meeting with key personnel at a future meeting to discuss the use of non-lethal beaver solutions. Ms. Ball stated that she would schedule this.



On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Ms. Bissetta, the Board unanimously voted to reissue these two emergency permits effective, January 27, 2021 for a period of 10 days. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Minutes

On a motion made by Ms. Bissetta, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of 12/14/2020 with corrections. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

On a motion made by Dr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Kreuze, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of 1/11/21. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Next Meeting

The next BOH meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2021.

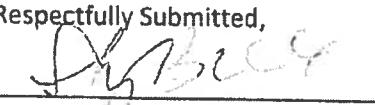
4. Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:50 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 letter for vaccine information
- Application and memo from staff for Beaver trapping permit
- Minutes of 12/14/20 and 1/11/21

Respectfully Submitted,



Sheryl Ball

Acton Board of Health



William McInnis

- Chairman,
Acton Board of Health