



Acton Board of Health

Special Meeting

Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2020

7:30 P.M.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS VIA ZOOM

Present:

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

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

Virtual Staff Present: Sheryl Ball-Health Director, Heather York-Nursing Director, Eva Szkaradek and Matthew Dow

Virtual Present: Peg Mikkola, Dian Oster, David Martin, Terra Friedrichs and Joseph Will

1. Opening

Chair - William McInnis opened the meeting at 7:30 P.M. Mr. McInnis read a script provided by the Town stating why the meetings are virtual during this crisis.

2. Regular Business

Director Update: COVID-19 Updates to Residents -

Ms. Ball updated the Board regarding Health Division activities since the last meeting:

- Educational Information at Arboretum, Rail Trails and Construction Areas - Ms. Ball stated that thanks to Natural Resources and Steve Long and his group we have now completed educational signage and one way paths at the Arboretum and educational signage was also placed along both the ARRT and the BFRT rail trails. The two porta potties are now locked.
- NEW Board of Health Meeting Schedule – Ms. Ball placed a new meeting schedule in the Board packets for this evening. Ms. Ball stated that all regularly scheduled meetings on Mondays were kept and on the off weeks meetings were scheduled on Wednesdays
- State Reporting of COVID-19 Cases Change – The State has begun a new reporting protocol of positive cases of COVID-19. This includes a weekly update of all positive cases listed by community and will be updated every Wednesday.



- Water District Update – Ms. Ball stated that she spoke with the Acton Water District about their emergency protocols during the COVID-19 crisis. The Water District stated that there standard disinfectant practices that will prevent the possibility of our drinking water becoming a vector of COVID-19. The Water District has closed their building for public access, cancelled public meetings and has taken measures to protect their employees, similar to the Town's actions.

1. Nursing Service Update – Ms. York stated that there are 44 positive cases of COVID-19 and 5 of those are new cases since our last meeting. There are also 29 individuals on isolation orders and 15 have been released. Ms. York also mentioned that the State's report is now putting out a listing of all cities and towns. Ms. York believes that the numbers differ slightly than our actuals and suspects that it because there is no hospital in Acton and some of residents may be hospitalized and won't be listed until they are released. Ms. York also spoke about new guidance for non-healthcare essential workers and safety practices for an employee that may have had exposure to a person that may have or be suspected to have COVID-19. This guidance requires that the employers must prescreen workers temperatures, monitor employees, clean and disinfect, require that employee to wear a face mask and social distance. Also, if that worker becomes symptomatic they shall be sent home immediately. Ms. York also stated that she is happy to report that the one Life Care resident tested negative for the virus and also stated that she is pleased with the policies they have in place to safeguard their residents. Ms. York also mentioned that Robbins Brook has one potential positive resident and that resident is currently isolated at the facility and a nurse is now staying overnight to monitor that resident. Ms. York mentioned that Robbins Brook also has one positive case of an employee. Ms. York is also pleased with the protocols that Robbins Brook has in place. The Board thanked Ms. York for her update and asked about PPE supply. Ms. York stated that we still have items from the last delivery and Ms. Ball stated that we have been told we can pick up additional after April 17, 2020 if needed. The Board also asked about isolation orders and follow up of contact tracing. Ms. York stated that they have been able to handle the work load at this time and are currently at 91% of the required contact tracing. She stated that the 9 % are either hospitalized or been mailed letters because they were unresponsive to their phone calls.
2. Clarification of BOH emergency order – Mr. McInnis requested that the Board issue guidance orders to the Health Division so that orders to food establishments governing good hygiene, safety, health and occupancy can be enforced. The Board was in agreement with this enforcement but questioned what staff limitations and provisions for non-enforcement would be. It was stated there can be fines issued. Due to the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak in our community, it is vital that all residents stay at home and



when essential to leave home, take the necessary precautions, hygienic measures and adhere to social distancing protocols to keep our community safe. Due to the evolving public health information and rapidly escalating community transmission of the virus, the Board of Health is recommending additional safety and social distancing protocols for stores. On a motion made by Mr. Conoby, seconded by Ms. Bissetta, the Board unanimously voted to allow the Health Division to enforce all health, safety, hygiene and occupancy guidelines for all essential stores in Acton. The chair took roll call and all were in favor.

3. Construction Order, Cemeteries and Transfer Station Update – Ms. Ball stated that the Building Commissioner drove around again on Wednesday and checked to ensure that construction sites were following the protocol. The Building Commissioner informed staff that he sent two sites home for not having proper PPE. Ms. Ball also stated that the transfer station now has expanded hours to allow for better social distancing and the cemetery department is using PPE for burials.
4. Future Board meetings – Mr. McInnis stated that if future Board meetings are needed for updates only, that in lieu of holding the meeting staff could email the Board an update instead of holding the meeting. The Board asked for any of those updates to be included in their next packet.

3. Minutes:

On a motion made by Mr. Conoby, seconded by Dr. Taylor, the Board unanimously voted to accept the minutes of April 13, 2020. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

4. Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Kreuze, seconded by Ms. Bissetta, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:45 PM. The Chair took roll call and all were in favor.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting:

- Safety practices for non-health care essential workers guidance from State
- Town of Acton script for boards and committees opening meeting
- Coronavirus Disease 2019 cases in Mass.
- Minutes from April 13, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheryl Ball
Sheryl Ball
Acton Board of Health

Wm. McInnis

William McInnis- Chairman,
Acton Board of Health