

Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
August 12, 2021, 3:30 pm  
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA

Present: Bob Osley, Chair, Member Liz Kugler; Charlie Kaniecki of the Board of Health; Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator; School Nurse Jean Hobbie; Audrey Weston and John Garreld of the Hatfield Teachers Association; Rebecca Bench, Chair, School Committee; Interim Superintendent Michael Wood

**CALL TO ORDER**                      Chair Osley called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**PUBLIC FORUM**                      No one for public forum

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**                None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**    With the exception of a typographical error in Topic 3, Member Liz Kugler made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 30, 2021, Chair Osley seconded, all in favor, aye, minutes approved.

**POSTED BUSINESS**

**TOPIC 1:**            Charlie Kaniecki gave an update from Claudia Sarti who has been monitoring MAVEN. Claudia Sarti noted one case of Legionnaire's Disease and one case of Giardia. She has been attempting to reach the individual diagnosed with Giardia but has been unable. Claudia Sarti said there have been no COVID cases in the last several days. She will update the Board if it changes. Ms. Sarti informed the Board that in the previous week there were Lyme disease issues but no COVID cases. Charlie Kaniecki reminded parents that children can get Lyme disease as well and be sure to check them for ticks.

**TOPIC 2:**            Chair Osley informed the Board that the Board did not attend the School Committee meeting last night. Chair Osley wants to be sure that all communications relative to COVID and other diseases are clear and not overwhelming to the community. Chair Osley suggested there be a contact person to deal with multiple questions from multiple sources. Chair Osley mentioned that because the Board of Health met today and the School Committee met last night, the Board of Health needs to discuss with the School Committee how to proceed forward. Chair Osley stated that there are different agencies with different guidelines on how to deal with COVID which makes it difficult for the Board of Health. Chair Osley stated that the Board wants to have consistent guidelines and deal with one source. Chair Osley stated that the Board is here to recommend but there are other levels and powers of enforcement. There seems to be a lot of guidelines which are being formulated at this time. Chair Osley informed the Board that some states have already started school down south and those state's vaccination rate is 40%. Chair Osley further stated that the Board wants to base any mandates on scientific fact. Chair Osley said the overall cases in the Town of Hatfield could have been worse but because people

are following the rules and masking when it has been mandated. We are fortunate to have a cooperative community.

The Hatfield Teachers Union, School Committee members, the interim superintendent, Michael Wood, the school nurse, Jean Hobbie, and a parent addressed the Board about their concern to have a mask mandate in school buildings. They informed the Board that last year there were many mitigations in place such as no water fountains, hand washing, distancing, it was a successful school year and kids spent time with teachers. This year, they informed the Board, there are not many mitigations in place - there will be cleaning but there are new custodians; there is no tape on floors for younger kids and they feel as though the school is in between stages. They informed the Board that the school members want to be in school with the kids. For that reason, they would like to have mask mandate in place to keep everyone healthy. They informed the Board that since kids 12 and younger cannot get vaccinated, masking would be the safest way to start the new school year. They also informed the Board that some teachers have been told by their doctors not to show up for class if masking is not mandated if they have a weakened immune system. Chair Osley mentioned that the tape and distancing signs are inexpensive ways to keep kids apart and should be something that the school can do to help mitigation.

Michael Wood, interim superintendent, informed the Board that the school wants to follow same rules as last year. Masks are a strong part of that mitigation process. It will take a number of these strategies to capture all kids and they need the community to support this.

Jean Hobbie informed the Board of Health that a liaison is very important to both the Board of Health and the school. Nurse Hobbie will have a conversation with Michael Wood as to who will be the liaison for the school. We don't want to overwhelm the Board of Health and thank you for all you do. Member Liz Kugler mentioned that it can get crazy with the different agencies each saying something different.

Rebecca Bench, Chair of School Committee informed the Board that the school wants a streamlined approach this year. Our recommendations should align with the Board of Health. She told the Board that the School Committee members are elected to care for the students - which is their top priority. We are not public health officials and we look to the Board of Health for guidance and we want to start off safely.

Member Liz Kugler informed the Board of Health masking does seem to be supported by townspeople and that she supports the mask mandate. Chair Osley asked the School Committee how they felt with just a school mask mandate and Member Kugler said that kids should be wearing masks already because they are unvaccinated. Member Kugler made a motion to accept the COVID-19 Emergency Order and Mask Advisory effective Monday, August 16, 2021 for anyone over 2 years old indoors in any school building, Chair Osley seconded, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

TOPICS 3 and 4: Nurse Jean Hobbie informed the Board of Health that DESE announced yesterday it will be releasing protocols for school next week. DESE is using federal monies to expand school testing. There will be option modes and schools have to reapply.

TOPIC 5: Liaison to the School Department will be Member Liz Kugler. Chair Osley made a motion to appoint Liz Kugler liaison to the School Department, Member Kugler seconded, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

TOPIC 8: Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator, asked about the three COVID individuals and Charlie Kaniecki told her that it turned out they had other diseases. Charlie Kaniecki said COVID has not ramped up in Hatfield but it's out still there.

Ms. Michonski informed the Board that it appears there is new federal funding for COVID. Ms. Michonski has been working with the Town accountant and will advise the Board once she has more information on the new funding. After discussion with Ms. Michonski about mask wearing in municipal buildings, it was agreed that the Board of Health would present before the Select Board's meeting next week to discuss this issue.

TOPIC 6: The Board discussed changing the application for food permits to reflect the heat source and location of food trucks and having the Fire Department sign off on the applications regarding heat source before the applications are presented to the Board of Health.

TOPIC 7: The executive assistant informed the Board that they need to start looking at body arts applications, permits and language as this will be coming up soon. The Board will begin looking into language and laws.

TOPIC 9: Charlie Kaniecki just brought up the issue because he wanted the Board of Health to be aware that this is coming up if COVID ramps up.

TOPIC 10: Charlie Kaniecki said there were no updates on Title V.

TOPIC 11: Chair Osley went by a couple of times and the land was scraped off and the neighbor's yard seemed fine but the smell could come back. Is this a conservation issue, do we tell them it's not adequate, it doesn't smell any longer and nothing is manifesting itself. If it does get worse, it may be a civil matter between two neighbors.

TOPIC 12: Chair Osley informed the Board of Health that people are making efforts on this issue. Member Zgrodnik asked Charlie Kaniecki to take a look at this property. Member Zgrodnik said that he drove by the property but felt it wasn't up to par. Charlie Kaniecki will stop by and if he sees something, he will schedule an inspection for the outside of the property.

Member Liz Kugler made a motion to adjourn at 5:15 p.m., Chair Osley seconded, all in favor, aye, motion approved.

Respectfully,

Karen Brodeur  
Executive Assistant