

Approved February 10, 2022

Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2022 at 5:30 pm
59 Main Street, Hatfield, MA
Virtual GoToMeeting

Present: Bob Osley, Chair, Member Liz Kugler; Vice Chair Jeffrey Zgrodnik; Health Agent Charlie Kaniecki

CALL TO ORDER Chair Osley called the meeting to order at 5:33p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Member Kugler made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 9, 2021, November 15, 2021 and December 7, 2021, Vice Chair Zgrodnik seconded, no discussion, all in favor, aye, minutes approved.

POSTED BUSINESS

TOPIC 1: Mask Mandate: Chair Osley informed the Board that the mask mandate was implement for businesses on January 10, 2022. Member Kugler said essentially, we had a meeting to talk about the mask mandate scheduled for January 3, 2022 but one Board member had a family emergency. With the mutual agreement of the Board, we decided to cancel that meeting and readdress it later. Chair Osley stated that on January 5th, the Covid Team Committee met. The Committee consists of a Select Board member, Town Administrator, Fire Chief, Police Chief, the Board of Health Chair and Health Agent. Because of the uptick in COVID cases, the mask mandate was discussed. Also, at that time we had deaths in Town related to COVID which heightened the concern that additional measures need to be taken to curve some of the numbers. That is where the mask mandate originated. Our Health Agent put a draft copy to address masking in Town Hall and Town facilities as there was concern expressed by the Town Administrator that people wanted guidance. Then we felt we needed to expand that to the general public. The draft was circulated through the COVID Committee and was made a reality. The draft was written initially in effect through January 31st without provisions for extension and it is felt by the COVID team that waiting to see what the course of COVID will be. Member Kugler informed the Board that DESE extended masking for school to the end of February. Last week and this week there was a large number and there will probably be another large number of cases. Member Kugler thought it a good idea to extend it beyond January 31st. We are trying our hardest to keep the schools open. There are people in Town who are compromised. Further, she informed the Board you can't find a home test, people are spending 3 to 4 hours in line for PCR tests. The longer this virus finds a host to replicate, there will be another variant. We could extend it and then decide it at our next meeting in March. Vice Chair Zgrodnik stated that it is another two months of masking and I'm not in favor of a mandate for

that long. The original Order was to January 31st, now you say you want to extend it to March? What then? Extend it to May? Chair Osley stated that masking is not an end all or close to 100%. Chair Osley mentioned that the problem he is seeing are people not wearing a mask properly - at the gym, people don't wear masks properly. Member Kugler stated that the number of cases have to do with the mask mandate. Vice Chair Zgrodnik said that the number of cases are being incorrectly reported: you have people doing home tests, testing positive and those cases do not go into MAVEN. Some people test positive once then their employer tells them not to come back to work until they are negative, so they keep retesting. If they retest positive, MAVEN picks it up again. Chair Osley said that if a home test says your positive, get a PCR test and if the PCR test is positive then they go into the system. Chair Osley hopes that people have morals and realize they can spread it and have the moral obligation to follow the rules. Vice Chair Zgrodnik mentioned another problem is if you don't work - you don't get paid. Chair Osley said that we can't fix if people don't have sick time. Our job as the Board of Health is to mandate and protect the health of residents and prevent disease in our population. Chair Osley informed the Board that MAVEN is now coming out with 2 new reports: probable cases and youth and adults. There will be new levels. We, as a Board, understand that there will be some confusing numbers but at least it will give us a clear picture where our Town is relative to a week before. Those are the kind of things we base our future decisions on whether it's mask mandates or other mitigating procedures. Health Agent Kaniecki told the Board that Member Kugler needs a pat on the back as she has been putting together vaccination clinics and we need to keep moving that. Chair Osley reminded the Board that before Christmas he was getting calls and emails expressing concern about not having a mask mandate. As soon as the number started skyrocketing and seeing deaths, we reached that decision where there were no other alternatives. Member Kugler made a motion that we extend the mask order mandate to March 1, 2022; Vice Chair Zgrodnik-nay, Chair Osley seconded, all in favor, two ayes, one nay, motion approved. 2-1 in favor of extending the mandate to March 1st at which time it will be reassessed. If the Board of Health has not extended the Order, it will automatically be rescinded.

TOPIC 4 Chair Osley asked the Board to go out of order on the Agenda. Chair Osley mentioned Member Kugler has been doing vaccination clinics and working with the school administration; I commend her and thank her for your hard work. Member Kugler told the Board that when adults could be vaccinated, we did a clinic for the elderly, then teenagers, then the younger group. We will be doing booster clinics soon. Once these clinics have been scheduled, we will let you know.

Member Kugler informed the Board that Governor Baker has informed resident that you can now get your vaccination card at MyVaxRecords.Mass.gov. Chair Osley said there are towns that are considering vaccine passports but I'm not in favor of that but we will have to wait and see.

TOPIC 2: Food Inspections Discussion: Charlie Kaniecki informed that Board that food inspections are normally done twice a year. However, because of COVID and the mask, he would not be driving from one place to another. He informed the Board that Double B's has been sold and the new owners want to put in brick oven pizza.

TOPIC 3: Housing Inspections Discussion: Health Agent Kaniecki informed the Board that there is only one housing issue. He informed the Board that the owner is having a hard time

trying to find someone to do the work. Vice Chair Zgrodnik informed the Board that the Board has granted him two extensions only because can't find workers. Health Agent Kaniecki also told the Board there is one other business in Town and the re-inspection is in two weeks. Mr. Kaniecki is also waiting to hear from the Building Inspector about that business.

UNANTICIPATED NEW BUSINESS:

OLD BUSINESS:

ADJOURN:

Vice Chair Zgrodnik made a motion to adjourn at 6:13 p.m., Chair Osley seconded, all in favor, aye, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully,

Karen Brodeur
Executive Assistant