

Board of Health meeting  
Town Building  
May 29 2020

The meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m. Present were Arne Soslow (AS), M.D., John Schuler (JS), M.D., Robert DeFrancesco (RD), D.D.S, Susan Green (SG), Tom Fay (TF) BoS. Also present were Julia Junghanns (JJ) Director of Public Health, Ruth Mori (RM) MSN, RN Public Health Nurse/School Nurse leader and Patti White, Department Assistant.

SG: In compliance with revised Open Meeting Law requirements, we will live stream the meeting on WayCAM, Public Comments will be received by phone at 508-358-6812 for this meeting. The phone number will be active during the public comment portion of the meeting. Thank you in advance for your patience; we intend to address all calls that come in during the public comment period.

Present by roll call: AS – yes, JS – yes, RD – yes, SG – yes, TF – yes

10:20 a.m.

Updates and discussion: Coronavirus (covid19-)

JJ: zoom meeting, we now have the ability to hold public hearings for animal keeping applications for chickens; we will be setting this up at our next meeting.

RM: the last report was 5/23 last Saturday, we had a number of new cases on Friday.  
As of 5/23 there were 102 confirmed positive cases.

As of Wednesday, there were 103 cases per the state. We have 2 new cases for a total of 104. We added a category of aged 19 and below, as we have our first teenager. We are starting to see some stability with numbers at the nursing home. There have been a number of residents from the nursing home that have unfortunately passed away. They are getting ready to take on recovered covid or negative persons from hospitals, long term care/assisted livings. They have individuals on the mend, mostly coming off isolation, and very few new cases. The group home has no additional cases. Individuals are off isolation and quarantine.

We are starting to see residents coming on as confirmed from the community, those numbers are not related to the reopening, those are symptomatic cases that had not been tested earlier. Greater testing availability is bringing these confirmed numbers out. We anticipate we may see additional cases as we reopen, the current cases and contacts are not related to the reopening.

JS has anyone requested antibody tests on the Assisted Living and the nursing home? With antibody testing they may be protected for the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave. RM: we have not heard or seen any movement on antibody testing. This would have to be mobilized, like PCR nasal swab test, we have no information for that being offered at this time.

AS: These are good numbers. Are we reviewing self attestation by nursing homes, that they are ready to reopen and that they have materials, processes and staffing? Do you have this info that you can greenlight them? RM: they are to notify us of their reopening. When they send that to us, we will reach out for their detailed plans, to ensure that. Yes we are reviewing information for processes and planning, some are more forthcoming than others. We are ensuring that we have information to support reopening, I don't think we can refuse reopen.

AS: It is a formality that BOH had verified, we should not approve it they have not met the Government standards, plans and requirements. RM: We are working with all of them, JJ and RM have both spoken directly with the nursing home. We are working with the assisted livings. We will not support it until all information has

been received. This is a slow process, and we expect they will provide all the information that is requested. RM: we collect all info on the cases for the Maven tracking system. AS: Can we show asymptomatic positive numbers?

RM: as we look at school reopen, that asymptomatic piece will bring concerns regarding exposure. AS: regarding the schools, do you have update on this? JJ: I am aware of meetings taking place discussion regarding plans for schools, the only guidance we have seen is from CDC, no DPH guidance yet. Many communities are starting discussion. We think that DPH will have explicit protocols for schools. Info is coming down from Dph after it is being sent to the media, we are to enforce, but do don't have all the details. We have not seen any plans yet (written) there have been verbal discussions. RM: has been participating in some planning meetings on schools, health/wellness/safety group. There are discussions and brainstorming at this point. How to come and go, arrive, buses, how may can be in building, how to handle symptomatic, screenings? We are working with limited guidance to even start planning. Pro side, they are working to look at all sides before staff and contracted staff are no longer required to be available before summer break. They are looking at creating scenarios, meeting each Wednesday.

JS: would it be useful for nursing homes, for employees not positive, to be retested 7 to 10 days to protect the residents? Transmission is occurring through workers, likely asymptomatic. RM: that is a very clear and good question, working with DPH staff employees can refuse testing and can still be allowed to work unless employer will not allow. Onsite testing has been helpful, more people are being tested, I think that should be followed and recommended, how to do that. I don't think it is expensive, state providing kits, nursing home, the nursing staff; risk level puts them at risk. (will advocate for this process).

JS: Statistics of kids, mortality is lower than seasonal flu, not transmitting, but (?) AS: concerns about aged of teachers +50? JS: Europe kept schools open. AS: masks and social distancing,

SG: pediatrician is participating on the school reopening committee meetings.

10:50 reopening plans

JJ: We have sat in on several DPH/state concalls this week. Most of them have not been really helpful. Many locals have been frustrated. Information is coming out to us after they have released it to the public and we get a lot of questions before we get the information. We are hoping communication will improve with roll outs. We have been receiving many calls from businesses with regular questions and mask complaints. Some are typical, septic, nuisance, etc. Business is picking up with residential projects. I had a meeting yesterday with our food inspector who will be doing tobacco compliance checks for the June 1 flavor ban. We are in a good position to meet that deadline. We have paved the trail of compliance with our retailers to expect the ban and inspections. Beth will also be doing inspections for compliance with social distancing and signage. She will look for basic signs in store windows, markings, etc. She will provide a check list for businesses that they have to submit to us, letter was sent last week. There will be a lot of this going forward, we continue (front office as well) we are doing compliance/site visits, we are watching what is happening and trying to educate, this is difficult, business are hurting and trying to get back in business. There are serious problems with confrontation/anger towards officials/locals in western mass. Today police association is expressing their support for local health, reach out to partner to educate and understand what we are asking, working together to educate and avoid escalation. Good to know we have a support system. We have not seen this here, but continue to do our best and stay calm and patient. We are going to stay with a structured process with continued education, we have had some calls and will continue to advise. It will be difficult for people to wear face coverings all day in a store.

JS: as long as a good faith effort is made, we are trying to assist them. Customers are frightened and will support businesses if they are complying with rules. AS: We need to send and distribute to residents and businesses. There is a risk of spray and aerosol beyond 6', there is more info saying to reconsider, exuberant breathing, exercise, talking loudly, these can go beyond 6', more indoor than outdoor. JJ: I have seen information on this, but not being widely discussed. It is still publicly being talked about and all guidelines are following the 6' social distance. It is trying to address people protecting themselves, staff and public, indoors, new norm, with these new social distancing habits. This is especially important in a business setting with customers/indoors.

JJ: We continue to hear about expected plans for restaurants, camps and pools, and likely more with restaurants. We are not sure what to expect, and have not received new information this week. We hear information is out there, and we are asking for it to be shared. They are possibly, only going to expand occupancy by outdoor seating at restaurants. Towns are trying to support this. If done safely with proper safety /distancing measures and face covering. Town planner is looking to see what businesses would be interested in outdoor seating or expanded outdoor seating. Pools and camps are still calling, and emailing daily. We don't have any information from the state yet this may flow over to board members. They want to open pools. We sent out applications for the pools with note: not sure if this will happen at all, if you prepare pools it is at your own risk. We don't know what the rules or guidelines will be for camps. Camp chickami is calling and emailing regularly. We are very concerned, and they have a pool as well. We are also not sure about sports camps. We don't have any information except for a template of what may occur in proposed phases, dates are not solid, depending on data. Town beach is working to get ready to open, they are planning to open tomorrow. A lot of work and preparation has gone in to their plans. JJ will inspect today, the plan looks good conservative, as we go forward, we will handle issues together as they arise. Hair salons were contacted last Friday, in preparation for their opening this week. We had numerous calls with managers, regarding what they are doing and how they are set up. There are some outstanding questions that we need answered by the state, there is a bit of a lag time. They are cooperating with social distancing and face coverings, no calls to date.

SG: re: revised letter, by what date certifications? JJ: no specific date, not sure what to expect. AS: how will this work with submittals and non-submittals? JJ: the letter was sent out on Friday, to all businesses and residents, template from state, language is "town could ask for" if the town asks, they have to submit, it's not difficult to fill out. RD: DPH board of Registration, said the dentists do not have to submit, but need to have it available in their office. JJ: if there is an issue that arises, that document should be ready, if there is a complaint, they can provide it. We are just asking them to send the completed forms proactively/in advance. RD: the Dentists are at the top of the list, under microscope, the board was working to assist offices, but there is not a lot of guidance. JS; it is not reasonable for boh to have a list of businesses to have to inspect, and to respond to complaints. We do not have the staff to do all this on top of other duties. AS: currently we are just asking for attestation form. JJ; we want to advise businesses, that they are on notice. We are asking these documents, and they will need to educate themselves and come into compliance to completed and submit them. JJ: complaints will generate inspections. BG will be going around and while doing inspections for food establishments and stores selling tobacco, she will check for signage, distance marking, (food retail stores). AS: there could be other businesses that are more at risk. JJ: if they do the attestation, it is an indicator of understanding. JJ; we have a good grasp on businesses that we permit, we are sending this out for any permit that is being renewed, there are many businesses in town. The front office has also requested this information from the businesses they are involved in licensing, there may be several requests BOH, BOS. We can have some interns assist, staff does not have time to do this project. We collect information as it is received. Some medical/dental offices are important, but are not licensed by either BOH or BOS, yes, there are a number of places that are not part of phase 1, gyms, fitness clubs, pools, camps, these will not be part of phase 1. We will see what is included in phase 2. A master list can assist in identifying establishments that we need to verify they have gone through the checklist.

AS: received an email regarding a resident complaint. JJ: I had not received this until just recently, will share with front office and will follow up on this. JJ read the email regarding an employee at landfill not wearing mask and not social distancing. JJ just received and will be in touch with the DPW director and TA and individual to address this.

SG: minutes of April 10<sup>th</sup>

SG: motion to approve minutes of April 10<sup>th</sup> as amended. Second RD: rd yes, js yes, as yes, sg yes, All in favor vote 4-0.

JS: JJ handle the chicken keeping applications and septic, if all in order and green cards and locations are all set, staff could approve the application without board meeting? JJ: We cannot approve animal keeping permits

without a BoH hearing. We have town regulations require a board hearing. We have had problems in the past with chicken keeping complaints even with the hearing process. We are hoping to do them all in one meeting,

Meeting dates, front office wants us to schedule future meetings to book room usage.

RD: after next week, with some lead time he can try to work out a schedule. He is working during the week now.

JJ: We will not have in person attendance, only by phone or zoom, we will try to do meetings after work hours so RD can attend, around 5:30 pm on a Monday. There was a general discussion regarding meeting dates and times and scheduling for future meetings.

11:40: public comment. 508=358 6812

Tom fay, wants to express thanks to the staff and board. Wayland numbers are much better than other nearby towns, it's a credit to education and guidance. Bos met Wednesday, and there will be no town meeting in June, probably will take place in September.

JJ: thank you everyone, we appreciate the support from BOH, LM and front office staff, we are glad we are not having Town meeting yet. Currently it is concerning to have a large gathering, it's a bit too soon. Things are still so new with people being out in public. JS: is very appreciative to BOH staff, Ruth and her nursing staff.

11:45 am, public comment is closed.

SG: motion to adjourn, as second, vote RD yes, JS yes, AS yes SG yes

Respectfully submitted

Patti White

Department Assistant

APPROVED 08312020