

DRAFT
BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES
TOWN BUILDING
December 30, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 5:00PM. Present by remote roll call were Arnold Soslow MD (AS), Brian McNamara (BM), John Schuler MD (JS), and Susan Green (SG). Also present were Ruth Mori MSN RN (RM) Public Health Nurse, School Nurse Leader, Julia Junghanns (JJ) Director of Public Health,

SG Roll call for attendance: *Not recorded on WayCAM Video*

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 508-358-6814 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.

5:00PM Covid-19 report and updates, new information, acknowledge question regarding Cochrutuate playground.

RM: Since December 25th, (closing report for this week this afternoon), have 40 new cases. Only 10 individuals are not currently associated with another case. In addition, we are working with our three assisted living long term care facilities as well as our nursing home. Nursing home has no cases. One assisted living has two residents, and a second has one staff member within the last two weeks. The third has 15 positive residents and 12 staff. 8 of the residents have symptoms and 7 do not. They are conducting ongoing surveillance testing and after this week they'll be able to do twice a week. All of our assisted livings have been requested per the BOH decision to start doing testing twice a week. We have had three assisted living residents need additional care, taken to hospital, and all three have returned. SG: Those 15 positive and 12 staff, are they counted as part of the 40 new cases? RM: Some of the residents have not come into queue yet, however we are often informed of and are working on cases before they arrive in MAVEN queue. I have also been working with at least one daycare, providing guidance and information. Also have a restaurant situation we have been made aware of and are working on, press release will be going out soon.

AS asks for clarification of antigen vs PCR tests in regards to suspect and confirmed classification of cases. He also asks for clarification again of what in-school transmission is defined as. RM addresses both concerns.

JS: A lot of data suggests that transmissions amongst and from that age range (student → teacher) is quite rare. RM: In regards to our elementary cases, there is in-home transmission from children to parents. BM: How many cases are there of that? AS: Sure there is no other family/parental variable that explains the spread? RM: Based off three cases/families that we have followed, we have a child who potentially had low grade symptoms, was positive, other family members kept testing negative, and then positive. Have to remember it is incredibly difficult to quarantine a child of that age. BM: Do you know that the child was the primary case and transmitted to siblings? Or did they test positive at different times? RM: We did not have parents who were symptomatic or exposed from some other way, the child became positive and other family members became symptomatic and positive. BM: The child was contact traced to something outside of the household? Or whole family exposed? RM: We don't know where that child may have originally become positive.

SG: Updates on new variant? JJ: State mentioned it on yesterday's conference call. It's being seen in the country, although we haven't received anything officially yet. The new strain is easier to transmit, but we don't have a lot of other information. SG: We should assume that it is in most places in the US. Perhaps we want to ask people to be especially wary and cautious. JS: I've heard more data from physicians on TV suggesting there's no evidence for asymptomatic people transmitting the disease. AS: I think there is increased awareness that symptomatic people have higher viral load which is picked up by the test. Asymptomatic (not pre) have perhaps as much as half the viral load. But this doesn't solely decide if someone can transmit. Everyone in a high risk group needs to step up in terms of prevention with this new strain in mind.

JS: RM do you refer any new cases and have them call their physicians? RM: We provide general information, and if someone is symptomatic we recommend they follow up with physicians. Oftentimes we call every day to monitor symptoms to see if they are getting worse. JS: The other reason to do that is because there are new treatments that are available now.

RM: We have had one death. Older individual who lived in the community with Covid-related complications. I know a lot of people are frustrated with Covid, but these dangers still exist.

AS: Any vaccine updates? JJ: We are still waiting to hear about when the vaccine will be available for our first responder vaccinations. We have partnered with Natick to meet our 200 minimum. There was a state sponsored webinar where most communities participated to talk in general about the vaccine. First responders are currently the only group that Local Boards of Health will be handling. RM: Answers keep changing for where our vaccine is and have not received an official starting date. JS: Do you know numbers at 4 facilities in Wayland of residents and employees who have not had Covid, so you know who needs it? JJ: All our assisted living facilities and nursing homes are contracted with CVS, supposedly vaccinations occurring

on the 30th. JS: Are you being made aware of their progress? JJ: I do ask as part of our weekly email.

SG: Discussion of Cochituate Playground. JJ: Mike Wegerbauer from Board of Public Works reached out to RD to see if we wanted to join an upcoming meeting regarding the playground. RD not able to attend but SG says she probably could. The concern is people coming from other towns. I know there is signage, have not visited the playground but the town administrator has shared that with me. Not sure what else could be done about policing who is actually at a playground. SG: So the concern is higher Covid rates from outside towns? AS: All we can do is stick to our cleaning schedules as promised. People need to be personally responsible. BOH is not going to comment on who is allowed to use it.

5:45 General Business, approve minutes December 16, 2020, approve bills if any.

JJ: Update on Dudley Chateau. A few staff and patrons tested positive over period between December 21st and 28th. If anyone has been there between those dates we advise people to quarantine and make arrangements to get tested. Owner voluntarily closed until at least January 6 and staff are being tested and quarantined. They have done a deep cleaning. When things reopened after everything was closed, they opened an outdoor area. Beth has been in touch with them in regards to new 25% occupancy rule from after Christmas. AS: Are Beth or Darren implementing unannounced visits to check compliance? I think we need to have a higher level of scrutiny and monitoring. JJ: We have done inspections, I can look into ability to do spot checks for restaurants that are open, this is another job for staff. JS: I would think they are all aware of the rules, and if they don't comply they'll be a center of spread and they'll have to close. AS: Do we have any penalty for frequent non-compliers? BM: Do we think these non-compliers exist? AS: If we are having these closures, I think it's our responsibility to show that they are monitored post-incident, rather than just moving on. JS: Haven't they already been penalized by being closed for 2-3 weeks? JJ: I really thought Baker should have changed the rules sooner for these restaurants. From our interactions, people take things seriously, and when they don't we hear about it.

5:55 Public Comment

Sejal Srinivisan (SS): Sejal Srinivisan 35 Covered Bridge Lane: I strongly suggest getting a note out to residents underscoring the significant increase of cases in Wayland, specifically also round the transmission within families we are seeing because that is newish in Wayland. And it's important for residents to understand, and underscore the safety measures. We all know the safety measures, but I think a reminder about the importance of continued vigilance, regardless of the fact that we are in month 10, and will have a vaccine soon, we are in the middle of a surge, and a reminder to the residents would be very helpful. Secondly, and I say it with respect to the

board, but it's distressing to hear a lack of understanding of some of the science that I've heard expressed today. There is research that indicates children transmit Covid, we may not have seen it in Wayland but that is not new. It's not as common but it's not new. There are a number of reports that have looked at children transmission, very well documented. As BOH contributes to school committee decisions, it is important that this is understood at a greater level than I've heard expressed today. I know there was mention of asymptomatic carriers, don't know if that was related to the Lancet article that was released but it's also really well documented. Just think that people will grab onto little nuggets of information especially if it's more convenient. There's just not enough science to back claim that asymptomatic can't transmit. There is a lot of data to suggest that they do transmit, and this has been the basis for our testing programs. I would encourage a greater focus on science, it's disconcerting to hear this.

SG: I wanted to ask if you could give us an update on the testing program. SS: We launched communications to the school parents as well as the staff. Enrollment has been a bit slow, although launching right before holidays, not surprising. Got about 500 students and 120 staff enrollments to date. We will have a much bigger push after next week and school reopens. The bids were due in for RFP on Dec 28th. Haven't seen them released to the public yet but heard we got three bids including one from one of the vendors we really liked. I'm waiting for results to become public. Believe meeting next Monday to review the bids and make a decision.

JS: I have heard more changed opinions in the minds of experts over the past 9 months than of any disease I've treated myself, so there are a lot of changing and evolving thoughts about this disease. There are studies coming out all the time that may change our opinions. The testing will be very useful and will improve the margin of safety in our school, and will help show occurrence and transmission within our school either to or from children. Applaud Wayland residents who are proceeding with the testing program.

JJ: Just wanted to mention the email I had shared regarding the Claypit Hill School. Received an email from Nancy Seward, regarding the positivity rate in the school. RM and I are working with Louise Miller, and the public buildings director and we are working on looking at their protocols at Claypit to review what they are doing in regards to Covid protocols to see if possible changes are needed. There could be a problem with the gaga pit. RM: GaGapit is a dodgeball arena on a trampoline and does not support the ability to social distance. When our school physician found out about them, said they should be closed until Covid is over. JS: Only school that has one? RM: Think all elementary schools have them. JS: But Claypit is only one with higher positivity. RM: Yes. Playgrounds in general need to be examined. We are not finding potential close contacts in the classroom and lunchroom, but we are constantly looking to the playground to find contacts. JS: Have any of the children of Wayland become ill? RM: In general most of our residents and all of our school aged have not. AS: Can we have school physician review what the schools are permitting to be sure there aren't dangerous activities? BM: Wouldn't it be the

principal? JJ: It is the school committee that creates their guidelines and protocols. RM had been in touch with Dr. Mahoney about that.

SG: Public comment is closed.

AS: Assuming we meet next Wednesday, are the school committee planning a joint session with us? SG: Emailed Jeanne Downs, voted to look at all-in kindergarten after February vacation. JJ: As we approach that date, I think that would be a good idea.

BM Motion to Approve December 16th Minutes. JS Second. Roll call vote: AS - yes, JS - yes, SG - yes. (BM-abstained -wasn't at meeting so isn't involved with approval). 3-0 vote all in favor minutes approved.

Next Meeting will be Wednesday January 13th.

Motion to adjourn meeting. AS second. Roll Call Vote: AS- yes, JS- yes, BM - yes, SG - yes. 4-0 vote all in favor meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted
Zachary Jonas
Health Department Staff
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