

BOARD OF HEALTH MINUTES  
TOWN BUILDING  
September 16, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 8:00AM. Present by remote roll call were John Schuler MD (JS), Arnold Soslow MD (AS), Robert DeFrancesco DMD (RD) Susan Green (SG). Also present were Julia Junghanns (JJ) Director of Public Health, Arthur Unobskey (AU) Superintendent, Louise Miller (LM) Town Administrator, Thomas Faye (TF) Board of Selectman, Jeanne Downs (JD) School Committee, Kim Reichelt (KR) School Committee, Kathie Steinberg (KS) School Committee.

SG: Roll call for attendance:

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.

**8:00a.m. Joint Meeting with School Committee**

*\*WayCAM feed begins after the meeting already in progress so no roll call was recorded and time meeting called to order unknown (8:00AM assumed).*

JJ: School committee and JD have been coming to BOH for help crafting a document for metrics for opening or closing Wayland schools. Schools are hoping to have these by October 5<sup>th</sup>. Took some of the existing metrics from the state and DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) protocols to combine them all, as opposed to having separate documents you need to look up. Conversations with the Town Administrator regarding who would be involved with decision making: Designee or potentially board members from BOS, BOH, and School Committee, as well as Superintendent, and ultimately DESE. Number of entities that would be involved with making decision regarding schools closing or opening. Wanted to outline in the document how things would happen.

JD: Fear that if it gets too long, will be hard to follow. Does it make sense put them as an appendix? JS: Might be providing too much information making things more confusing than necessary SG: Something briefer with an appendix may suffice so that people can understand what criteria we will be looking at. We can make reference to specific documents that can be updated if people want to look at the sources. JJ: The state and town continue to be in a declared state of emergency since early March [2020]. In a declared state of emergency, the Health Director can act on behalf of BOH. Things could be facilitated without the need for a meeting,

quorum, or posting agendas. Emergency meetings can certainly take place but this is a good tool to remain aware of.

JD: Agree with TF that shorter is better for understanding, but it's not a single number that is going to make a decision. AS: Think recommendation would come out as: "BOH based on following x,y,z, recommends to school committee that a,b,c be done."

AU: In terms of school compliance, was there discussion about frequency of reporting and nature of data collection? SG: Susan Bottan and I had discussed but came to no conclusions. AU: Believe we need more time to discuss with principals. AS: If there is no data coming from the school re: compliance, board will need to assume a more conservative approach. AU: What do you envision for mask-use metric? AS: Looking for something easy that principals can convey to higher ups in school board. Everything is graded 0-10, to help board see what is happening on ground. AS: A lot of things cannot be done until everyone is in person or hybrid. But generally want to have as limited an intervention the data will allow. KR: Will have some students in school [before October 19<sup>th</sup>] that we can use to start collecting data.

AU: Going under assumption that for every mitigating factor, BOH wants to have metric 1-10, that identifies how effective we and the students are being in following that mitigating strategy. Sounds like we should come up with both criteria and way of measuring. You want proposal from me that would indicate what we are going to do about it? SG: Created a proposal with SB that includes some but not all of these items. Don't think principals should have to review HVAC systems. AU: We'll use our judgement on what are the criteria and how we will gather. How do you envision report? How often to BOH? SG: Do we envision it coming to BOH or just published as a dashboard? JD: Thought just dashboard that BOH would refer to when making a recommendation. AS: Agree, will be valuable internally for school and as one of the variables for us. AU: Dashboard, something that would be displayed in home section of our website? SG: Need to decide if combined data or individual schools? Seems like a great educational opportunity for parents. JS: Should be available to parents online as they are the ones who are concerned about the safety of their children. AU: My understanding is that there are no rubric around mask wearing that you have identified. You want us to decide how we measure that? AS: Looking for a subjective measurement of school performance by the principals. Perhaps put more detail in notes and comments section. AU: Not sure we are comfortable operating this way. Will have to come up with criteria we all agree on. AS: The grade scale did note language associated with scores such as *excellent*, *satisfactory*, and *unsatisfactory*. But agree the principals do need some guidance.

SG: Seems we want a briefer document that is easier to understand with an appendix that points to some of the metrics that the state has been using? JD: Julia noted that perhaps a live link to the state website be included on the document. AS: Most documents should be in the appendix. Perhaps some language included in first page that addresses the process of BOH

recommendation to School Board. JJ: Is board planning on having emergency meetings for these types of things? AS: Yes. JJ: Need to be aware that we (BOH) will have to be on call 24/7.

Discussion follows regarding the situation in Sudbury and all the boards and groups that needed to be involved with decision to cancel the transition to hybrid schooling. SG: We need to be clear about the process and who would be in charge of these decisions. JJ: Any reason why there couldn't be a designee from the boards? AS: Board should try to convene, with as many members as possible.

SG: Language regarding School Committee, BOS, BOH, doesn't include the Town i.e.: various town employees who are going to be involved? JJ: Potentially a designee could be identified from the BOH, BOS, and School Committee. JD: Not comfortable having a designee. KR: Agree, when meeting back in March, everyone was available, see no reason not to do that again. JD: Understand the different boards and committees who will be involved, but less clear on other people in the town who will be involved. JJ: BOS would be involved because there are members of staff that work at the schools that are not part of the school staff. SG: Attempted re-write of decision making process: All protocols and metrics will be examined collectively by the Town Administrator, School and Health Departments, BOS, BOH, and School Committee, or the Designee. AS: Should add: Before final decision is made the superintendent must consult with DESE. LM: It is a consultation with the BOS so they are able to make determinations and weigh in because school closure affects other parts of the town. Not necessarily in order to decide whether schools will close but to understand the consequences on rest of town. TF: BOS has ultimate responsibility to the town's public safety so it does have a role. LM: Last year, the Public Health Director and Public Health Nurse advised the superintendent. Not sure it should be Superintendent making the decision and not sure they want to be the ones making the decision. AU: In case of an outbreak and the need for quick decision making, who exactly is being consulted vs who is making the decisions? LM: Decision still rests with Superintendent. AU: Agree, but wouldn't want to do anything without the recommendation and agreement from School Committee and BOH but do think the actual mechanism for triggering it is superintendent. LM: The Public Health Nurse and Health Director receive info from state regarding cases that have been diagnosed in Wayland. They then notify the superintendent if there is an issue in the schools. That's where initial discussion starts. After that there is a notification of Boards so they understand what recommendation is and then the decision is made. AU: This planned return to school sounds different from emergency decision. Planned return has metrics attached to them with BOH making recommendations to School Committee. So for October 19<sup>th</sup> deadline, that would be a School Committee decision with BOH making a recommendation. JJ: School Committee looking for recommendation by October 5<sup>th</sup>, not the metrics? Only concern is a lot can change. JD: Did talk in the past about BOH making recommendation by October 5<sup>th</sup> knowing full well that something could happen in the following two weeks that would change it. AS: What happened in March was a unique situation. In future should go through the process we are discussing here where BOH makes collective decision.

LM: Do think there are two levels. Emergency closure where a decision has to be made immediately, versus a longer term decision. Superintendent needs to be able to make some decisions very quickly. AU: If there is a safety issue, I need to be able to make that call. JD: Ideally we go through the full process with the knowledge that you can bypass it in the case of emergency. TF: Doesn't seem to be a dispute that decision would be made with consultation.

SG: Working on revised language for how we are going about this process. AU: Perhaps add, "In an emergency situation, the superintendent would consult with BOH and School Committee and make a decision." LM: Need to make clear the difference between Health Director, Public Health Nurse, and the Board of Health. AU: Saying it would be Public Health Nurse and Health Director? LM: Then it would be up to them whom they are contacting within the BOH. SG: Added language: "In an emergency situation the school superintendent would make a decision about school closure in an expeditious manner in consultation with the school and health departments". TF: Think the consultation has to include the Town Administrator, if there is need for non-school personnel to help with the process. LM: Two things to keep in mind: The Emergency Management Coordinator is the Town Administrator according to Bylaw and we do have emergency management procedures that we file and follow that are provided to MEMA (Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency) and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Make sure whatever we come up with here is not inconsistent with what MEMA and FEMA have approved so we are still eligible for emergency funding. Send through JJ so I can check this.

#### **9:10a.m. Covid-19; updates, new information, protocols for school sports**

RM: Have had 2 individuals within their 50s come into queue. Trying to figure out if one belongs with us since they had previously been listed in a different community. The other is symptomatic, taking part in a family gathering and a number of their family have some symptoms with minimal upper respiratory issues. AS: Do we have information on who they came in contact with who may live in Wayland? RM: Yes we already have a handle on that. AS: Can you give us more detail? No younger aged people? Some detail would help us identify whether it is a school situation. RM: If we had a concern in regard to school or did not believe a successful isolation was possible, we would provide that information. That is not the case with this situation. AS: Concerned about getting all the information that you have filtered from us when presenting to the BOH. RM: We cannot discuss specific situations that could lead to someone being identified in a public forum. AS: We're not identifying, no PHI, and yet you're filtering the information you're conveying to the board. RM: Need to exercise caution, if I was to describe a particular family gathering, one could identify the person based off that information. If we had concerns that additional disease was going to come from a particular case, I would share that information.

JS: Are the high risk institutions in town planning on doing surveillance as fall arrives? RM: Our nursing home as well as at least one of our assisted living facilities are conducting ongoing staff

testing. Daycare/preschools and other private schools are also contacting me with questions or concerns, and I have been working with DPH if any of those issues arise where they need additional guidance. Assisted living facilities are given the option of staff testing, nursing homes are required. So although we are pushing, it is not mandated that the assisted living facilities perform staff testing.

SG: Also wanted to talk about protocols for school sports and get an update. JJ: I have reached out to 10+ communities for information regarding metrics and Covid testing but have received zero information. It could change but that's what is happening right now so have less info than was hoping to gather. Will be trying to take some time off next week but will be potentially available for some of the upcoming meetings. Flu clinic this Thursday so we will be very busy with our first drive-thru clinic. Susan has been helping us with the annual report.

AS: Wanted to bring up sports to see if there was a need for BOH to get involved in school sanctioned sports or if it doesn't need BOH evaluation. SG: Seems late for us to get involved unless we disagree with any recommendations. The School Committee has actually already voted to allow sports to go forward. But not in the position of making any comments on that yet. AS: Unfortunate that cohorts don't align with the cohorts of the school. This could eliminate the ability to close only a piece of the school system. TF: Did get contacted by two leaders of the flag football operation which is a non-school organization, interested in starting their season. Is that something that has been discussed or have a role in? SG: Julia just sent Wayland-Weston protocol, as far I am concerned the board has not been involved, but Julia may have been. JJ: Just received that [flag football] document yesterday, and have not been very involved. TF: Seems like they were asking for permission from the BOS. JJ: Are they talking about using town fields? TF: Yes. JD: Just wanted to say that for the school sports, the ones that have started or are doing things like pre-season, following MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) with each sport deciding how they are going to handle COVID. They are all building into their sports as little contact as possible. Regarding cohorting concerns, lots of kids are doing extra-curricular activities already, so the effect of sports on cohorting might be less than AS thinks. SG: Don't know to what extent the high school will be cohorted. JD: The High School cohorts the least.

#### **9:40a.m. General business, approve bills, approve minutes June 8, 2020**

JJ: The flu clinics have kept us busy with online registration, were able to use Recreation program for our appointments. Will be piloting this tomorrow. Have been discussing logistics and traffic flow. Fortunately have intern that was using this program during the summer for the pool program, along with support from front office. Also need to focus on the annual report, catching up on minutes, amongst other things. Still have septic work and building approvals occurring. Usually this time of year have an influx of work, probably will continue to be busy with this for a while. Has been extremely busy with inquiries for information.

JJ: Will send out minutes for next meeting that we were going to approve.

**Next Meeting will be at 8:00a.m. Wednesday September 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

**9:45a.m. Public Comment.**

SG: Public Comment is now open, phone calls received at: 508-358-6812

There were no calls, public comment is closed

JJ reads press release regarding party in Sudbury and school closure. Noting that it was a collective decision involving the school, BOH, and school physician.

**9:50a.m. SG motion to adjourn. AS second. Roll call vote: JS –yes, AS- yes, SG- yes. 3-0 vote all in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted  
Zachary Jonas  
Health Department Staff  
091620minutes  
APPROVED032421