

# LEICESTER BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES

January 25, 2021

6:00 PM

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LEICESTER, MASS

## **Board of Health Members in Attendance:**

Chris Montiverdi, Richard Spaulding, Diane Moffat

## **Office of Public Health Attendees:**

Francis Dagle, Board of Health Agent

Kelly Conroy, BOH Administrative Assistant

## **Speakers:**

Marilyn Tencza, Superintendent of Schools

Michelle Buck, Director of Inspectional Services/Town Planner

## **Documents:**

Agenda

Minutes 12/21/20 Meeting

Collection Box Amendments

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Meeting called to order at: 6:02 PM

Chris Montiverdi did a roll call. All members present.

Motion: R. Spaulding moved to accept minutes dated December 21, 2020 as presented.

Second: D. Moffat

Discussion: None

**Roll call vote:** All in favor (3-0-0)

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH**

COVID-19 Updates: Health Agent reviewed the case trends from the past month, noting a surge one week after Thanksgiving. The BOH discussed the probability of this trend continuing through Christmas and New Year celebrations. The age trend in the most recent cases have been younger residents. The number of cases at the local assisted living facility remain low currently. There has been an increase in daily calls related to COVID-19. Most calls have been complaints about private gatherings. The Health Agent noted that most complaints were business related in previous weeks. COVID-19 exposure plans will still be reviewed with the PIC during food inspections, despite the decrease in business complaints. C. Montiverdi inquired about daily call volumes. Calls received were after the fact (weekends) and were mostly large gathering complaints. Health Agent informs callers that they should alert the LPD if there is an immediate violation after hours. The Office of Public Health provided a citation template to LPD if an active event does occur.

Marilyn Tencza, Superintendent of Schools, met with the BOH to discuss a return to school date for students. The BOH discussed concerns about the new quarantine and testing guidelines provided by the state. D. Moffat noted that the schools have witnessed students testing negative initially and then on day eight become symptomatic and test positive. The new quarantine and testing periods are not sufficient for transmission prevention. If the students return to school too early, positive cases could increase significantly. M. Tencza requested a recommendation from the BOH on a return to school date. The BOH is invited to attend the next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting to answer any questions that the Committee or residents will have during their deliberations.

Motion: D. Moffat made a motion for the Leicester Public Schools to implement the DPH quarantine and testing guidelines published on November 18<sup>th</sup>, in place of the new guidelines. Based on these guidelines, it is recommended that LPS does not resume in person learning till January 19, 2021.

Second: R. Spaulding

Discussion: None

**Roll call vote:** All in favor (3-0-0)

Superintendent discussed the upcoming indoor sports season. MIIA protocols are being used to inform local decisions on operations. Concern has been expressed regarding participation in indoor sports during the pandemic. Superintendent requested a recommendation to help inform a decision with the School Committee. The BOH collectively agreed that a delay or cancellation of indoor sports would be most appropriate at this time, given continuous increase of positive COVID-19 cases. Chair requested that any members of the public provide their concerns or comments about the discussion. The BOH will attend the next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting to review recommendations with the Committee.

Motion: D. Moffat made a motion to recommend the cancelling winter sports throughout the LPS system.

Second: R. Spaulding

Discussion: None

**Roll call vote:** All in favor (3-0-0)

Nursing Services: Health Agent reported that Leicester's nursing services contract will be expiring on December 31, 2020. This contract will not be renewed. The Office of Public Health has posted an employment ad on municipal forums for a part time Public Health Nurse position. Three applications have been received since posting. Start date is anticipated to be the end of January.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

Food Inspection Program: Health agent reported that most food establishments received one inspection during 2020. Although this does not meet the state mandate, the State of Emergency waives the minimum inspections requirement. During the month of January Health Agent will compile list of establishments that have not been inspected since the beginning of the State of Emergency. The identified establishments will receive priority before resuming a regular inspection schedule.

Tobacco Control Program: Permit renewals are due the last day of February. Health Agent inquired if the BOH has worked within a tobacco collaborative or partnership for tobacco control in previous years. Chair discussed a Tobacco Coalition, which was a collaboration of 15-20 communities. Worcester DPH was the lead, which received grant money from the state to work with each community on tobacco control efforts. These efforts also included performing stings for buying and purchasing tobacco products. It is the Chair's understanding that Worcester DPH had submitted, through the state, a grant to continue with the Tobacco Control Program and Leicester being one of the communities regardless of leaving the Alliance. Health Agent spoke to Worcester who stated they were no longer working with Leicester on Tobacco Control Program. Health Agent will reach out to the state to inquire about other regional programs or local funds available to conduct program.

Title V: There is a moratorium on Title V that began on December 15<sup>th</sup>. No new system installations unless it is an emergency condition. Emergency conditions will be reviewed on case by case basis.



State Sanitary Code Case Review; Town Planner, Michelle Buck, met with the BOH to discuss ongoing reports at 11 Hankey Street. It is reported that people are sleeping in the building, despite it being zoned for business operations only. They are also running businesses out of the building without authorization or permits that would allow it. The Planning Office has issued a Cease and Desist Order. Planning, Building, Fire, Health, and the Town Administrator will be conducted a site visit followed by a meeting with the building tenants next week.

Collection boxes; Health Agent is currently compiling a comprehensive list of collection bins in the Town. An annual application, and fee structure will be presented at the next regularly BOH meeting date.

Lead Paint; Health agent received a report of residents who had to vacate their home due to the presence of lead paint. Residents had to rent an apartment because they could not afford to remediate. Agent directed residents to Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. This program provides financial assistance for lead remediation. Health Agent discussed creating a web page on the Town's website to inform residents of the hazards of lead in homes. This page would include an education component, as well as specific financial resources available to remediate lead.

COVID-19 Webpage; Health Agent published a webpage for the Town's Website with information pertaining to Coronavirus and vaccination efforts. This webpage will serve as an informational hub for providing updated information to residents during this State of Emergency.

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

The Worcester Regional Alliance has agreed to submit a report for the BOH to review before submission. Annual Reports are due January 15, 2021.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

The Regional Coordinator, Jamie Terry, contacted the Office of Public Health requesting a date to review the EDS Plan during a practice drill. Health Agent will be meeting with the Coordinator and other vested departments to conduct a drill and review the EDS Plan together.

R. Spaulding motioned that the meeting be adjourned and D. Moffat, seconded.

**Roll call vote:** All in favor (3-0-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM.

It was noted that the next meeting will take place on Monday, January 25, 2021 at 6PM