



Town of Agawam

Board of Health

36 Main Street Agawam, Massachusetts 01001-1837
Tel. 413-786-0400 x 8207 Fax 413 726-9723

Gladys Fernandez-Largay, MD	- Chairman
Mary Jo Safford, NP	- Vice Chair
Mary Lee Bertrand, BSN	- Member
Michael Theroux	- Health Agent
Sherry Petrucci, RN	- Public Health Nurse
Beth Ceccarini	- Secretary

Meeting Minutes - March 10, 2021

REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM DUE TO THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

Attendance : All Board Members present

Documents distributed at meeting :

-Board of Health Agenda

Meeting Called to Order : 5:01 pm by Chairman Fernandez

Chairman Fernandez read to the Board the policy guidelines for running a municipal meeting remotely. These guidelines are from Governor's executive orders due to Corona Virus. Included with these minutes is a copy of this policy.

Approval of minutes : A motion to approve the February 10, 2020 BOH minutes was made by Vice Chair Safford and seconded by Member Bertrand. Motion to approve minutes: 3-0.

Citizen Speak Time : None contacted the Health Department nor joined in the Zoom remote BOH meeting.

Old Business : New Brewery

Agent Theroux told the Board that Brew Practitioners, which was to be located at McCarthy's plaza on Main street, will not open. They were not able to secure the proper permits needed as they were not located in an industrial zone. The Building Inspector worked with them but to no avail. Without the proper zoning requirements they could not open their doors.

Agent Theroux also reiterated that the new Tobacco Ordinance went out to all the retail stores selling tobacco or nicotine products so they would be aware of the updates the Council passed. Most of the retailers did send back their signature page stating the packet was received and they would review the packet with their staff and employees. We are still waiting on a few signature pages from corporate headquarter locations.

New Business :

Agent Theroux told the Board there were updated COVID regulations for travel in and out of Massachusetts. People who have had both doses of vaccine do not have to quarantine for 14 days upon returning to the state unless they show symptoms.

He also told them that the state is starting a new pre-registration system on Friday of this week for Massachusetts "vax-finder" on-line clinic appointments. It should take the user to the closest vaccination site in their area, schedule the next appointment and be put on a list for contact 24 hours before an available appointment. The person would be notified if an appointment is available then they have the

chance to accept or decline. If they decline the appointment goes back into the system. If it is accepted then they have 24 hours before their appointment. This would put more people on a queue system or a waiting system so they would get a return call when an appointment is available to them at any state vaccination site closest to them.

The Health Department is still receiving large volumes of calls ranging from vaccines, clinics and vaccination site appointment difficulties. We have been directing them to the State's website and the call number 211 as well as the other venues. He is hopeful that the government will start to speed up the production of vaccines so they will be more readily available in more locations.

There is new guidance out by DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education).on school reopening. They are planning on re-opening the schools in tiers or stages. Full time kindergarten through 5th grade will open on Monday, April 5th. Re openings for grades 6-8 full time will be on Wednesday, April 28th. The high school level 9 - 12 late in April or early May. Agent Theroux has been in touch with the Superintendent and her goal is to have ALL grades to be in schools by early April. They are going to try real hard to make that happen as soon as possible.

The Mayor would also like to see the town buildings opening in the near future. There will be a meeting early next week to discuss this topic.

Vice Chairman said that making appointments worked fine for the Town Hall when she needed to make an appointment with the Clerk's office to be sworn-in. The process was a smooth one and she was in and out rather quickly. Agent Theroux stated he is going to suggest that idea to the Mayor that there be some appointment or reservation system in place. People would have time to do their business but be in and out short of the 15 minutes. That would be less personal exposure and smaller crowds. He feels that masks should be required for now also.

School Nurse Activities : Nurse Sherry told the Board she had school nurse interviews on Monday for vacancies we have in the schools. Currently we have 2 unfilled positions which are a full time nurse float and a full time nurse for the Junior High. Unfortunately the 2 applicants were not interested in full time employment but one was interested in substituting with the option of up to 19 hours a week if needed. We are going to offer her the job. There are really no applicants for these positions. Staffing agency nurses are hard to come by due to all schools needing additional staff. We try to utilize them when there is a need and they are actually available.

Public Health Nurse : Nurse Sherry informed the Board that she has been very busy the last month. She still has a few more second dose clinics to complete for the town. She will also be working with the Fire Department again to assist the Agawam Housing Authority with clinics for low income residents. She has also vaccinated quite a few homebound residents. Agent Theroux added that Governor Baker has added teachers with the 65 + clinics so most state and local vaccination site appointments will be very hard to come by in the coming weeks. The pharmacy chain CVS was given word to help vaccinate teachers so they can do weekend appointments which would be more convenient.

Agent Theroux told the Board that local businesses still need to report their COVID 19 positive cases to the Health Department when cases arise, answering a question about compliance checks starting up again in town.

Adjourned: Motion to adjourn was made by Vice Chairman Safford seconded by Member Bertrand. With a vote of 3-0 meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

BOH/bc