

BOARD OF HEALTH



TOWN OF HEATH
Massachusetts

HEATH BOARD OF HEALTH MONTHLY MEETING - MINUTES Meeting Held January 5, 2022 – 3:30 – 5:00 via Zoom

- I. Board members in attendance: Randy Crochier (FRCOG), Gene Garland, Barbara Gordon, Susan Gruen, Elissa Viarengo, Kate Peppard (Clerk); Board members absent: Lorraine Berger. Meeting guests: Kate Barrows (Library Director), Deb Porter (Library Trustee), Sue Lively (BOS)
- II. Meeting called to order 3:30 PM (Garland)
- III. Agenda reviewed. New Items:
 - a. Privacy concerns regarding the public distribution of BOH Board Member contact information (Gordon/Gruen request)
 - b. FRCOG budget process and timeline clarifications (Gordon request)
- IV. Review/approve minutes:
 - a. December 15, 2021 – amended by Barbara and Susan.
 - b. December 20, 2021 – no amendments.
 - c. **Gene moved to accept the December 15 and December 2021 minutes as amended (Garland), seconded (Gruen). Approved: Garland, Gruen, Gordon, Viarengo.**
- V. Chairman's Report (Garland)
- VI. **MEETING was Zoom Bombed. All guests exited the meeting and came back in. Reconvened at 3:46 PM with waiting room enabled.**
- VII. Board & Committee Reports (brief update each)
 - a. Monthly Reports/Updates to Select Board: Kate and Gene working on a template for the February meeting.
 - b. CPHS: No meeting since last month
 - c. COVID Coalition
 - i. Need second BOH member to get meeting going
 - ii. Need to set meeting date Gene will contact SB to identify who will represent them and what their scheduling availability will be.
 - iii. Actions: mask mandate update – no changes at this time.
 - iv. Library protocols: Kate Barrows, Library Director presented concerns during uptick in COVID cases.
 - 1. Current protocols are more stringent than what is required. Have been continuing to check in with the library assistant and board on protocols. Want to know the circumstances in which library services should be reduced to pick-up window, etc. Have reduced the number of patrons allowed and have K95 masks available.
 - 2. What guidance should be followed in terms of close-contacts for library staff and testing.

BOARD OF HEALTH



TOWN OF HEATH

Massachusetts

- a. Barbara noted that BOH had previously recommended that a positive case be treated as though that person was not vaccinated: isolate and wait 5 days for a test. She suggests that we continue this practice, especially in the context of a public facing position.
3. Susan Gruen brought up that Franklin County is at a 21% positive rate and hospitalizations are going up. Agrees that protocols need to be established to keep staff and patrons safe.
4. Randy noted that there is no State established protocol for libraries. He recommends limiting numbers of patrons, require masks, recommends vaccinations and boosters for staff. Randy noted window service should be encouraged. Barbara concurs and suggests going to full window service for the next 2-3 weeks.
5. Deb noted that they might want to work with us to establish levels of service linked to case counts (green to red).
6. EXPOSURE GUIDELINES (per CDC): You are considered a *DIRECT CONTACT* if you are exposed to someone who has COVID or has symptoms (within 6 feet for more 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period); if you have been around them up to 48 hours prior to symptoms or their positive test.
7. Deb supports Kate and Lyra deciding whether to go to window service for two to three weeks and noted that the Trustees do not need to approve/vote on this. Susan agrees window service only for the next three weeks. Elissa supports this decision as well.
8. Kate wants clarity on when the window service restriction should be lifted. Elissa noted that there are many variables and recommends saying the service restriction will be re-evaluated in 2-3 weeks. Deb asked if BOH can help guide them when they want to re-open. Gene agreed that BOH will assist with the decision path for service restrictions.
9. **Barbara Gordon moved that based on current trajectory of COVID in our region, we recommend that the Heath Public Library go to window service until further notice. Seconded: Gruen. AYES: Garland, Gruen, Gordon, Viarengo. Motion approved.**
- d. MDPH: Gene attended. Discussion was held on Omicron vs. Delta, noted current dominant strain in our area is Omicron, and that throat swabs appear to be more accurate than nasal swabs.
- e. Purchasing Test kits:

BOARD OF HEALTH



TOWN OF HEATH

Massachusetts

- i. the town needs to pay for test kits if we want them. Gene will attend a webinar to get more information on pricing. State is suggestion ARPA funds be used for the purchase. BOH does not know how much ARPA funding Heath has left.
 - ii. Barbara noted the required quantities for ordering discounted test kits from the state are huge – can FRCOG help with this? Randy noted that FRCOG is not currently prepared to do this. Barbara had broached the subject with Hilma and Mary who noted the town is not currently intending to purchase test kits, but they suggested that the BOH could order kits with their own budget funds if they chose to do so.
 - f. MAPHCO (Garland) – next meeting coming up, will report in February.
 - g. LBOH (Garland) – next meeting coming up, will report in February.
 - h. MVP (Viarengo) – reported out at the previous BOH meeting that BOH may be able to work with Heath Council on Aging to help with at-risk residents.
 - i. Mosquito Control District – report on public education because Heath filed for Opt-Out of aerial spraying is due by the end of January, but Barbara has not been able to get any guidance from the state. Gene recommends sending a communication to the state on letterhead return receipt. **ACTION: Barbara to draft letter on BOH letterhead.**
- VIII. Board of Health Clerk Update (Peppard)
- a. Little communication through the office through the holidays.
 - b. Budget is currently on-track – percent spent as of 12/31/21:
 - i. Chair 14%, Clerk, 37%, Expenses 2%
 - ii. Revolving fund listed at \$9,054
 - c. Well, Pumping, Title V Reports & Property transfers (that need Title V): none discussed.
 - d. BOH Select Board report template is in process, hope to have it done for February.
 - e. Move to Jacobs Road – Kate noted that she was required to move to Jacobs Road (she had stated preference to remain at Sawyer Hall). Kate noted that the town is requiring move hours be paid for by BOH Clerk budget and noted BOH clerk hours are tight and that it would be good to have the move hours put under a different budget category.
- IX. Nurses Report/Nursing issues (Susan Gruen)
- a. Nurse Report (December 2021) – report distributed.
 - b. COVID case impacted one of our elderly people, worked with them to make sure they were safe.
 - c. Test kit distribution
 - i. Were given 90 test kits and worked hard to make sure the people who needed them got them. The requirements: lived in town, either getting

BOARD OF HEALTH



TOWN OF HEATH

Massachusetts

- food stamps, heating subsidies or were home bound. Collaborated with Charlemont and Hawley at Hawlemont Elementary School and sent test kits home with the kids. 36 test kits were given to Heath students at the start of the Christmas break.
- ii. Kits were also given to Heath Residents at the Friendly Neighbors Food Pantry December distribution
 - iii. Susan, Barbara and Elissa contacted all those listed on their Fragile Residents lists and delivered kits to all who responded with interest. The small number of remaining kits are now with Claire Rabbit to use or distribute as needed.
- d. 57% of patients at Franklin Baystate are COVID cases. GCC is doing a great job with the testing center. Susan noted that they are making calls and a number of people still do not want to be vaccinated and boosted.
 - e. Collaborated with Lisa White to identify people who need a home visit to be vaccinated and boosted. 6 families in Heath were identified.
 - f. Have been talking with Sheila Litchfield regarding boosters for kids 12-15.
 - i. Randy noted that the state agreed to 5 more Vax buses (Buckland week of 1/18 – 1/25)
- X. Regional Health Agent Updates (Crochier)
- a. FRCOG Updates – busier than ever with COVID. 67 cases were reported into Maven as of 1/5/22. Home tests mean that many positive cases are likely not in the system. New FRCOG staff have been doing very well.
 - b. Properties Under Review by Randy/FRCOG:
 - i. 3 Ledge Road – plywood is being removed from the windows (Randy approved); owner is working with Sean Kimberly and met with the health agents. With barn removed there is room for a more affordable septic plan.
 - ii. 38 Bray – Excessive trash report. Randy was there for a Title V inspection. Person purchasing has been doing some clean-up. It did fail Title V, but people bought it as is, will need to fix the system.
 - iii. 594 Route 8A – order to correct after inspection. Ongoing.
 - iv. 612 Route 8A – camper on property. Ongoing.
 - v. 434 Route 8A – roof repair/home condition. Ongoing.
 - vi. 7 Flag Hill Extension – Excessive trash. Ongoing.
 - vii. 25 West Branch Road – May need to send a housing order for septic upgrade.
 - viii. 124 Branch Hill Road (Fire Department). Office moved, remove from list.
 - c. BUDGET PROCESS: FRCOG needs to have budgets to communities by early February. CPHS meeting will be moved to the 20th so that budget information can be submitted to the FRCOG Council on the 21st. Deerfield is leaving the district, but

BOARD OF HEALTH



TOWN OF HEATH

Massachusetts

Randy does not think this will severely impact the assessments for each town. It will still be less than what was approved at the 2021 Heath annual all town meeting.

- i. Heath representatives to the council were listed as Brian DeVries and Gloria Fisher. Barbara noted that per Hilma Gloria is not the alternate anymore, just Brian should be on the list.

XI. New BOH Business

- a. PFAS Chemical presentation – Susan sent the information to Doug Mason for the fire department. Randy noted that Tim Lively was in attendance.
- b. Privacy of BOH board members – postpone discussion to next meeting.

XII. Old/Ongoing Business:

1. Idling in Town Center (Gruen): Susan called Hilma, fourth request to install signs since October 2021. This item is still on hold as there seems to be issues with installing (per Hilma). Barbara noted the “No Idling” signs previously seen at 18 Jacobs Road are not there anymore, those may need to be replaced and might be in storage somewhere.
2. At-Risk Resident List (Gruen): Susan added people, removed some people and service providers are satisfied with the list. Susan will distribute the updated list.
3. Heath Herald BOH Corner (Viarengo); Elissa is coordinating with Claire so they don’t cover the same subject(s) in their columns. Subjects suggested: VAX bus, clarifications for at home COVID test use, “close contact” clarification.
4. COVID-19 Issues for Discussion
 - a. Vaccinations boosters for eligible people: Anyone **above 12** as of 1/5/22
 - b. Future meetings at Community Hall – *ON-HOLD for the foreseeable future.*
 - c. FRCOG CPHS has a Google Doc for Heath to report on our test kit distribution. **ACTION: Randy to send Barbara the link and Barbara to complete the report.** Randy suggested the report does not require intricate detail, more general information about distribution requirements established/followed.
 - d. Gene noted that UMASS has test kits, and that maybe we could get a number of them. Gene goes down twice a week and could return the test kits (must be returned to the lab within 24 hours of collecting the sample for processing), This may be a good back-up if we are not able to purchase kits for the town.

XI. Suspended/On-Hold:

1. 4 Apache Drive
 1. 20 Judd Road: update on Order to Correct
 2. 21/27 West Brook trash issue
 3. Abandoned and dilapidated buildings project
 4. Godek complaint to BOS for Flagg Hill standing water

BOARD OF HEALTH



TOWN OF HEATH Massachusetts

- XIII. Public Comment – NONE
- XIV. Susan moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:16. Barbara seconded. AYES: Garland, Gruen, Gordon, Viarengo. Motion approved.

Meeting minutes produced by Kate Peppard, BOH Clerk.