

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Board of Health
Minutes of the Meeting
April 10, 2020
11:00 a.m.
Remote Meeting Via Zoom

Board members virtually present courtesy of a system organized by the City's IT Department: Chairperson: Dr. Richard Sagall; Vice–Chairperson: Robert Harris; Frederick Cowan; Joe Rosa; and Claudia Schweitzer. Present from the Health Department: Health Director: Karin Carroll; Assistant Director: Max Schenk; Public Health Nurse; Kelley Ries Hiland.

The meeting started at 11:00 a.m.

This virtual meeting was recorded by audio in accordance with State Open Meeting Law.

PUBLIC ORAL COMMUNICATION

There was no “Public Communication”.

NEW BUSINESS

Emergency order placing a temporary moratorium on home evictions and business evictions (If the business is considered an essential service under the Governor's declaration)-

Mr. Schenk stated that this matter was brought forth to the Health Department by Peggy Hegarty-Steck the Director of Action, Inc. and her associate Lori Fonseca. He stated the State legislature is putting forth a proposal for preventing any evictions for the duration of the Covid-19 crisis but unfortunately the order only accounts for evictions that started after the emergency declaration was made. He stated that Action Inc. reached out and asked if they would follow suit with other communities to ban any evictions during the state of emergency regardless of when the process started.

The board discussed the proposed order: [Gloucester Eviction Moratorium](#)

Lori Fonseca of Action, Inc. appeared before the board. She stated that this is a public health and safety issue. She stated that if people are being evicted they would be going against the Governor's stay at home order and would put themselves and others at risk. She stated that Danvers, Cambridge, Somerville, Peabody, and Beverly have already placed a ban on all evictions and other communities are having discussions regarding the ban. She stated that another concern they have is maintenance, inspections, and real estate showings.

Mr. Rosa asked if *Ms. Fonseca* knew of any residents in Gloucester that this issue had already affected. She responded that they know of two residents who did receive an eviction in 48-hours-notice who they assisted and there are many more who could be affected.

Dr. Sagall asked if there were some residents that would be prevented from being evicted by passing this ban. *Ms. Fonseca* responded most definitely.

Mr. Cowan asked how residents would become aware of the ban if it passed. *Ms. Fonseca* responded that other communities have used social media to get the word out and that seems to be the best mode of communication.

Peggy Hegarty-Steck appeared before the board. She stated that this is being looked at at the state-level, but it is tied up by the Housing Bill.

Mr. Schenk stated that usually when a renter receives an eviction notice they call the Health Department for information, so if the ban passes they will be able to inform residents that way. *Mr. Schenk's* direct line for questions is 978-325-5268.

Mr. Harris asked if there was any discussion about relief for landlords as far as the financial burden this could put on them. *Ms. Fonseca* responded that there are discussions on that issue at the state-level.

Mr. Schenk stated that the Mayor is aware of the issue and gives it her full approval.

MOTION by *Mr. Cowan* that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the emergency order placing a temporary moratorium or hold on evictions and business evictions if the business is considered an essential service under the Governor's declaration. **Seconded** by *Mr. Rosa*.
CARRIED.

Emergency Order requiring all members of public and those designated as COVID-19 Essential Services workers to wear face coverings when in public and other measures for the protection of public health and human safety-

Mr. Schenk stated that other Health Departments have passed an order that requires anyone going out in public to wear a mask or face covering and all essential service workers as well. He stated that many residents have been calling regarding the workers at the grocery stores not wearing masks. He read through the proposed order: [Gloucester Emergency Order - Use of Masks and Other Protective Measures](#)

The board discussed the proposed order and enforcement of the order. They agreed that face coverings should not give people a false sense of being protected and the best way to prevent the spread of Covid-19 is by social distancing.

Mr. Schenk thanked *Brian Meuleman*, the Food Inspector, for his work during the pandemic.

Ms. Carroll stated that if the board decides to require essential service workers to wear masks, employers are going to turn to the Health Department as to where they can acquire masks.

The board stated that it could be any kind of face covering, made at home from a tshirt if needed. N95 masks should be reserved for persons in high risk for infection professions such as healthcare and emergency service providers.

Ms. Hiland stated that masks can be reused and should be put directly into a tupperware container when they are not being used. *Mr. Cowan* stated that laundering the masks is sufficient to make the mask reusable.

MOTION by Mr. Cowan that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the emergency order requiring all members of public and those designated as COVID-19 Essential Services workers to wear face coverings when in public and other measures for the protection of public health and human safety including modifications made by Mr. Schenk. **Seconded** by Mr. Rosa. **CARRIED.**

Emergency Order regarding entrance/access requirements for high-rise elder housing units-

Ms. Carroll stated that Ms. Hiland has been working closely with the Housing Authority and other City high-rise buildings because they are high risk areas. She stated that David Houlden and Ms. Hiland have been coordinating check-ins with residents and food resources. She discussed the proposed order that would prohibit non-essential visitors from entering these large complexes.

The board discussed the proposed order: [Emergency Order Regarding Elder and Congregate Housing](#)

Ms. Schweitzer stated that some residents of these buildings might need to talk with someone who is not a service worker. *Mr. Rosa* stated that this order would not prevent that but would prevent multiple people from visiting at the same time.

David Houlden of the Gloucester Housing Authority appeared before the board. He stated that they are trying to limit the number of visitors with this order. He stated that all the residents at the high-rises are high risk. He stated that they are doing well-check outreach through the telephone to reach these residents.

Ms. Hiland stated this order would also allow them to track visitors if they become a confirmed case.

The board agreed to include Central Grammar and the Action shelter in the order and to implement the order no later than Thursday, April 16, 2020.

MOTION by Mr. Cowan that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the emergency order regarding entrance/access requirements for high-rise elder housing units including Central Grammar and The Action Shelter. **Seconded** by Ms. Schweitzer. **CARRIED.**

Update on COVID-19 Response -

Ms. Carroll stated that twice a week they have interdepartmental virtual meetings to discuss the pandemic. She stated that this week the State has provided a hotel in Lexington, transportation, behavioral health, food, etc. for any person to go there if they need to be in isolation.

She stated that Gloucester has 54 confirmed cases of Covid-19, many of which have now been cleared. She stated that the numbers have seemed to slow down. She stated that any cases in Gloucester that require medical attention will be seen in Beverly, not at Addison Gilbert Hospital. She stated that Beverly Hospital has reported that they have sufficient PPE. She stated that one of the Health Department's main priorities is making sure people have food. *Mr. Cowan* stated that the Open Door Food Pantry provided food for over 1100 families last week.

CONCERNS OF BOARD MEMBERS

Next Regular Monthly Meeting Board of Health- The next Board of Health monthly meeting will be TBD.

MOTION by Mr. Cowan to adjourn.
Seconded by Mr. Rosa. **CARRIED.**
MEETING ADJOURNED – 12:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobbi Orlando

Accepted by:

Richard Sagall, Chairperson

Documents Referenced:

April 10, 2020 Board of Health Agenda

[Emergency Order Regarding Elder and Congregate Housing](#)
[Gloucester Emergency Order - Use of Masks and Other Protective Measures](#)
[Gloucester Eviction Moratorium](#)

