

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Board of Health
Minutes of the Meeting
April 1, 2021
5:30 p.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 Health Director: Max Schenk.

Also present Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken.

The meeting started at 5:30 p.m.

This meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state Open Meeting Law. Consistent with the Governor's orders suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and banning gatherings of more than 10 people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. If you are calling in on a phone you can press Star 9 (*9) to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or device there is a "raise hand" button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options during oral communications to be recognized to speak.

PUBLIC ORAL COMMUNICATION

Paul Lundberg, former City Councilor, appeared before the board. He thanked the Health Department and Board members for their service. He stated that he is on the board of trustees at Lahey and Addison Gilbert Hospital and he chairs the Quality and Patient Experience Committee and they have been discussing how to transition away from the Covid emergency and how to get back to normal. He stated that they need to make sure that all the people that need vaccinations are getting vaccinated. He stated that just because people are vaccinated doesn't mean they are cured, people still have to wear masks and practice social distancing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Ms. Schweitzer that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the minutes of the Board of Health meeting of March 4, 2021 as written. **Seconded** by Mr. Rosa. **CARRIED.**

MOTION by Mr. Cowan that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the Board of Health Septic Review Subcommittee minutes of the meeting of March 2, 2021 as written. **Seconded** by Mr. Harris. **CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Septic Review Subcommittee report of March 2, 2021-

At its meeting on March 2, 2021 the Gloucester Board of Health Septic Review Subcommittee reviewed and approved variances for the following properties:

102 Concord Street (Map 234/ Lot 4)

Property owned by Christine Corrao and represented by John Judd, Gateway Consultants, LLC.

40 Fort Hill Avenue (Map 136/ Lot 41)

Property owned by Susan Whilton Agusti and represented by Dan Ottenheimer, Mill River Consulting.

MOTION by Mr. Harris that the Gloucester Board of Health accept the Board of Health Septic Review Subcommittee report from the meeting of March 2, 2021 as presented. **Seconded** by Mr. Cowan. **CARRIED.**

NEW BUSINESS

There was no "New Business".

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION: COVID-19 response updates -

Ms. Carroll stated that the Dental Center has been quite busy and they had a temporary hygienist just recently start there. She stated that they are doing fantastic work there.

Ms. Carroll stated that they put in for the Regional Shared Services Grant which will assist with the extension of a mental health program. She stated that the program directs people with mental health issues to a navigator who assists in finding services for individuals. She stated that the program is ending but they are hoping it continues. She stated that the program has been somewhat successful, but it is lacking staff since only one person is available to assist all the individuals who reach out.

Ms. Carroll stated that through a regional grant the Prevention Unit has been working very hard over the last year to launch a Narcan campaign to reduce stigma.

Ms. Carroll stated that the Mass in Motion program has been creatively finding ways to engage seniors who have been isolated during the pandemic. She stated that they are working on a Digital Divide grant to assist seniors with technology. She stated that they have also launched the snowshoe pilot project through Manchester-by-the-Sea's library.

Ms. Carroll stated that they are seeing an uptick in Covid-19 cases. She stated that the positivity rate state-wide went up to 2.5% this week and the hospitalization rate is also increasing. She stated that there are currently 87 active cases in Gloucester and there are 3

people in the hospital and no new deaths. She stated that most vaccines are coming through federally to CVS or other pharmacies and through family health centers. She stated that they are finishing up their vaccine clinics at the affordable senior housing complexes and the homebound program.

Ms. Carroll stated that they have started targeted outreach to people in the community who have been hit the hardest by the pandemic. She stated that she expects vaccine will be offered at Gloucester Family Health Center. She stated that they are seeing new strains of Covid in Massachusetts and in Gloucester and those new strains are spreading more rapidly, especially within households. She stated that they have not yet detected a concentration of the new strains in the wastewater.

Ms. Carroll stated that the travel order has been changed to a travel advisory and people that are two weeks out from their last dose of vaccine or people who have had Covid in the last 90 days are exempt from the advisory. She stated that if you have had Covid in the last 90 days or if you are two weeks out from your vaccine you are not required to quarantine following exposure. Out of state guidelines may differ.

Ms. Carroll shared a new press release that highlights the percentage of people vaccinated in Gloucester. She stated that 41% of Gloucester residents are vaccinated. Over 80% of residents 65 or older are vaccinated.

Ms. Carroll stated that they have begun to prepare the budget for the 21-22 fiscal year. She discussed some line items with the board such as a vaccine infrastructure team, the maternal home visiting program, the skin cancer awareness program, and some public relation support for the Health Department.

Ms. Schweitzer asked if the Health Department was assisting people in finding vaccination appointments. *Mr. Schenk* responded that he has only assisted one elderly person with finding an appointment. He stated that SeniorCare has been assisting with that effort. *Ms. Schweitzer* stated that she has heard positive feedback about the Lahey vaccination site at the Elks.

The board thanked the Health Department for all their work around Covid-19.

Other Department Updates -

There were no "Other Department Updates".

CONCERNS OF BOARD MEMBERS

Chairperson Sagall- *Chairperson Sagall* stated that within the next six months he will be moving out of state.

Next Regular Monthly Meeting Board of Health- The next Board of Health monthly meeting will be May 6, 2021 at 5:30 pm. *Chairperson Sagall* stated that he might not be able to attend the May meeting.

MOTION by Mr. Cowan to adjourn.
Seconded by Mr. Rosa **CARRIED.**
MEETING ADJOURNED – 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____/S/ Bobbi Orlando_____

Bobbi Orlando

Accepted by:

_____/S/ Richard Sagall_____

Richard Sagall, Chairperson

Documents Referenced:

April 1, 2021 Board of Health Agenda

April 1, 2021 Covid Metrics

March 4, 2021 Board of Health Minutes

March 2, 2021 Septic Review Subcommittee Minutes