

**Weston Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2021  
4:00pm-5:38pm**

Present: Laura Azzam, Chair  
Dr. David Kominz, Member  
Dr. Elisabeth DiPietro, Member  
Wendy Diotalevi, R.S., Public Health Director  
Beth Ann Boles, R.S., Health Agent  
Michele Schuckel, R.N., COVID-19 Response Team Public Health Nurse

Others: Brenda DeVito, Amy Conner, Matt Shulkin, Magali & Alan Weber, Linda Angelucci, Gerri, Kathleen Mortimer, Emmert Family, Rachel Stevens, Becky Dempsey, St. Peters Episcopal Church, and Anastasia Melnichenko

I. **Residents' Concerns**

A group of residents/parents/guardians joined today's meeting to ask the Board of Health questions concerning in-person learning in the Weston Public Schools. Dr. Elisabeth DiPietro indicated that the rates of transmission of COVID-19 in schools has been low and the CDC will be providing new guidance tomorrow that could change what is currently in place. The Board of Health provides recommendations and ultimately it is the School Board that makes the final decisions in accordance with the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) guidelines.

Kathleen Mortimer was hoping teachers would have been part of the vaccination of phase 1. If 3ft distancing in schools is adequate then can more students be added to the classrooms and what's the BOH's requirement on deep cleaning?

Public Health Nurse Michele Schuckel indicated that 3ft distancing may occur, but it's not an automatic that everyone would return to school. There are multiple layers to work out. 6ft is preferred and is also considered a close contact and the quarantining guidance still would apply. Public Health Director Wendy Diotalevi also indicated that the movement of students makes it harder to conduct contact tracing. Deep cleaning is being overseen by facilities. Ms. Diotalevi was not sure on the frequency of the cleaning and will revisit the cleaning of the schools with facilities.

Linda Angelucci had a couple questions on COVID-19 cases in the schools. Have we seen student to student transmission? Student to teacher transmission? Teacher to student transmission? Michele Schuckel indicated yes to all these stated that she is glad that there is a framework to work with such as a definition of quarantine, isolation timelines, and a great team of nurses to oversee the contact tracing. Ms. Angelucci added that the school took the BOH's recommendation of

the 6ft in classrooms. Ms. Diotalevi responded that it was a collaboration on decisions made. The Board of Health is not in a place to demand, but makes recommendations and are working with the school. The Board of Health has not ordered the school to do anything, a collaboration and a partnership formed with the school.

Matt Shulkin asked the Board what their answers would be to the following questions: (1) 3ft versus 6ft distancing, (2) can lunches be provided at the schools, and (3) guidance to Wednesdays to allow in-person learning if this day is no longer used as a cleaning day. Dr. DiPietro responded that the DESE guidelines need to be followed, the Board would need to ask the questions if the schools are able to achieve safe eating of lunches and maximize safe in-person learning for students and staff as all those decisions will need additional planning and preparation. Michele Schuckel added that the schools are working on plans for lunches and going back in person. All the planning and research takes time. Once a plan from the school is ready, the Board of Health will have to review it in advance for comment. The process takes time. Ms. Diotalevi agreed that there are many moving parts and an enormous amount of work was done in planning this past fall and any changes will take the same amount of time to prepare. The Board of Health is doing everything to give guidance to the Weston community, schools, administration and Weston has done a great job moving forward. Information is constantly being provided and constantly changing. Mr. Shulkin indicated that he wants to keep moving forward with whatever is available and appreciates all the work being done.

Kathleen Mortimer indicated that the finger pointing toward the Board of Health is from the School Board. Ms. Diotalevi responded that the School Board makes the decisions and the Board of Health helps, collaborates and assists them. Laura Azzam mentioned that the school may have a plan in opening schools possibly by the end of February. Ms. Diotalevi welcomes any ideas or comments.

Linda Angelucci thanked the Board of Health for working with the Council on Aging on requesting volunteers to help seniors get to vaccine clinics should they need a ride. Ms. Angelucci shared that she has volunteered.

In the “Chat” the Emmert Family thanks the Board of Health for all their help, that everyone is doing a fantastic job and that they came on today’s call to obtain more information.

Dr. Kominz asked about the testing at the schools. Michele Schuckel informed him that testing is done Tuesdays and Thursdays. There are additional options and the schools are trying to be flexible with the testing.

Kathleen Mortimer appreciates all of the Board of Health’s hard work.

Ms. Diotalevi thanks the community for their participation.

- II. **Approval of Board of Health Meeting Minutes: Tabled**
- III. **Nomination of Animal Inspector**

The Animal Control Officer position has been filled at the Police Department by Karen O'Reilly. As the Animal Control Officer, one of the many duties is to conduct the barn and animal inspections for the Board of Health.

Dr. Elisabeth DiPietro made a motion to nominate Karen O'Reilly as the Animal Inspector for the Weston Board of Health. Dr. David Kominz second the motion. Vote unanimous. Motion carries.

IV. **Tobacco Permit Fee Increase Proposed**

An increase to the Tobacco Permit Fee is proposed to \$25.00 from \$10.00. An increase in the number of sites selling tobacco and nicotine delivery products has recently come to the attention of the Board of Health. This fee increase will allow for the additional processing of paperwork, permits and the time added for the inspections. This fee was established in 2016 and was not part of the fee increase in 2019.

Dr. Elisabeth DiPietro made a motion to approve the Tobacco Permit Fee to \$25.00 from \$10.00. Dr. David Kominz seconded the motion. Vote unanimous. Motion Carries.

V. **Director's Report & COVID-19 Updates**

Public Health Director updated the Board that the second doses of Moderna COVID-19 will be administered to the First Responders this week and completed by next Tuesday. A COVID-19 vaccine clinic was held January 30<sup>th</sup> at the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-Day Saints in Weston and 100 doses were administered. Another 100 doses were administered at a clinic held on February 6<sup>th</sup> for the Brook School Apartments and Merriam Village communities in Weston. No doses have been lost and the start of the next phase is unknown to date.

Public Health Nurse Michele Schuckel updated the Board on the cases of COVID-19 in Weston. Case numbers have remained steady and the number of positives has dropped. Regis College is running about 2,200-2,800 tests a week. Four clusters on campus have been resolved due to the process of testing, identifying, quarantining/isolation, and contact tracing. The process is working. Cambridge School and Rivers School rates are low. Some cases involving sports related activities (hockey and basketball). Long term care facilities have received their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. With the recent Super Bowl last weekend there may be an increase in numbers due to social gatherings and travelers. The upcoming February and March breaks may also increase numbers.

Lastly, Ms. Diotalevi informed the Board that the Board of Health staff have done an excellent job and are working very hard. Due to the amount of work, Building Inspector John Field has been helping the office with some of the plan reviews. Dr. DiPietro and Dr. Kominz both agree that the Board of Health staff have done great work and Dr. DiPietro is thrilled with the vaccine clinics and the contact tracing in Weston.

- VI. **Next Meeting**  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 4:00PM (Zoom Meeting)
  
- VII. **Meeting Adjourned**