

**WESTON BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Meeting Minutes for**  
**Wednesday, October 6, 2021**  
**10:02 AM – 11:59 AM**  
**Zoom Meeting**

Present: Laura Azzam - Chair  
Dr. David Kominz - Member  
Dr. Jennifer Kickham - Member  
Michele Fronk Schuckel MBA, BSN, RN – COVID-19 Response Manager, BOH Public Health Nurse  
Kelly Pawluczzonek, RS, MS - Public Health Director  
Beth Ann Boles – Health Agent  
Michelle Hubbard – Administrative Assistant, Meeting Minutes

I. Residents' Concerns

No resident concerns that are unrelated to agenda items.

II. Meeting Minutes

Dr. Jennifer Kickham made a motion to approve minutes from August 4, 2021 and September 15, 2021. Dr. David Kominz 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All in favor to approve the minutes.

III. COVID-19 Report - Michele Fronk Schuckel MBA, BSN, RN – COVID-19 Response Manager, BOH Public Health Nurse – Nursing Report Update

The whole country has a high transmission rate and Massachusetts has high vaccination rates. Getting the vaccine is the best protection against COVID-19. If someone receives a positive at home test, it is recommended that they confirm with a PCR test so that the case gets recorded on the books. There were 70 positive cases in Weston in the month of September which includes residents, students, and employees.

It is recommended to socialize and travel with caution. Travel is not recommended by the CDC for unvaccinated people. A cluster of COVID-19 was reported from carpooling. It included 12 households and 9 positive cases. Three schools were affected by this cluster. People need to have honest dialogue about vaccination status and symptoms that they are having. We are still in an emergency area due to the Delta variant.

Only the Pfizer booster has been approved. The FDA is meeting next week about mixing the booster shot with your original shot. The booster is not considered the same as the third dose. The town will look into the Moderna boosters once they have been approved, but does not have the capacity for Pfizer.

One person who tested positive received antibody therapy, and there have been no hospitalizations yet in October. There are six positive cases in the schools, with nine kids in test and stay. Laura Azzam reported that there have been 40,464 breakthrough cases as of October 6.

Regis College and the Seminary both have mask mandates. The fire station is still conducting PCR testing, but they are not accepting insurance at this time.

IV. Indoor Mask Order/Mandate for Schools: K-12, Public and Private – Update

On August 18, the Board instituted a mask mandate. The next day, DESE made this an order for Massachusetts. On September 27, DESE offered an exemption if the school is above 80% vaccination status. They are able to apply for a waiver, and potentially be unmasked by October 15. The state mandate is in effect until November 11. Dr. Jennifer Kickham stated the numbers are looking stable because people are being safe.

A general discussion was had with multiple residents, some who are for the mask mandate, and some who are against it. Some concerns that were brought up were why the schools are not applying for the previously mentioned mask waiver and where is COVID-19 being spread at schools considering the numbers look good and masks are not required at events such as parties and games. It was also brought up that the cloth and paper masks are not designed to stop the transmission of COVID-19 while being reused, so the correct masks should be mandated.

Some residents brought up that the goal is to have schools as normal as possible and to do 180 days in person. Masks allow for small group work and losing the masks could put up barriers such as having to do classes via Zoom. Masking in the schools also helps to keep the children under 12 who are vulnerable and unable to get vaccinated safe. Dr. Jennifer Kickham stated that the masks allow for in person school, and that the masks won't be around forever. Laura Azzam and Dr. Jennifer Kickham agree now is not the time to lift the mandate and possibly pass the mask mandate process to the state. Dr. David Kominz also agrees to go forward and continue with the mask wearing in schools. Kelly Pawluczzonek said the main goal is disease prevention. The numbers are good, but not where we need them to be. We should keep the mandate for now, and revisit at the November 3 meeting. DESE will be making another announcement next week. Dr. Jennifer Kickham also stated that she favors discussing the mask mandate at the next meeting.

Michele Schuckel noted that cases have not dropped to the rate where there is no concern for outbreaks and that the Delta variant can be transferred from vaccinated people to other vaccinated people. If Weston schools go unmasked, we could expect positive cases in the schools and there may be outbreaks, meaning transmission in school transmission involving members not of the same household. Masks are not complication free, but they are a public health measure to prevent disease. School are

compelled to follow the Department of Education recommendations. Questions about the individual schools should be directed to the school committee/heads of school. The Board made no change to the K-12 School indoor mask mandate for Weston at this time.

V. Indoor Mask Advisory for Town Buildings – Issued by Town Manager

The indoor mask advisory was going to be put on this agenda to be discussed, but the Town Manager, Leon Gaumond, passed it for workforce protection. Kelly stated that Leon wants his employees to be able to continue working, and he is trying to keep his workforce safe and protected. Michele stated that it was a message from leadership that workers are valued.

Laura Azzam questioned when the mask signs on buildings will be taken down? A lot of stores have similar signs, and most people are staying masked, but some people are not. If there is a strong need for masks, people pay attention. Dr. David Kominz stated that as long as the Delta variant is here, the signs should stay up. A resident brought up that he enjoyed being able to go to the Council on Aging without having to wear a mask, and now he must wear a mask inside the building. The email from Leon does not come off as an advisory and the signs at the Council on Aging make it sound like a requirement. He requested the Board of Health rescinds the mask requirement for fully vaccinated individuals and to make it very clear on the postings that it is voluntary. Kelly stated she could ask the director at the Council on Aging to change the wording on the sign to an advisory. Dr. Jennifer Kickham pointed out that not everyone is diligent, and some will show up unvaccinated and still not wear a mask. The Board of Health did not take a stand at the last meeting due to it not being on the agenda to hear public comment.

VI. Director Monthly Review – Kelly Pawluczzonek, RS, MS – Public Health Director

The flu clinics for Wednesday October 13 are fully staffed. There are 35 of 120 spots left for the clinic at the Council on Aging. There are 135 spots filled for the afternoon clinic at Town Hall. Thirty-one individuals that signed up for the clinics were not from Weston, but they were from local towns. There are 280 doses of the regular flu shot and 10 high dose, 9 of which are spoken for. There is a possibility of a mini clinic to use up the remainder of the doses. Michele stated that schools are offering their own clinics and they are getting their doses from the state or an outside provider. The Brook School Apartments have contracted with CVS.

There is a signed letter of commitment for the Shared Services Grant. There is another possible grant for contact tracing. The state CTC program will expire in either November or December. Michele stated the Board has used this as little as possible. Having us answer directly helps the residents and we keep it more local.

The registered nurse position has been posted. There is one applicant that Kelly would like to meet with.

The department is working well with the transition of new staff and is very busy. Kelly and Beth are both scheduling soil testing 3-4 days a week.

Kelly is looking into the \$500 payment for the raptor rescue.

VII. Next Meeting

November 3, 2021 at 10:00 AM via Zoom.

VIII. Adjourn

Dr. David Kominz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Jennifer Kickham 2<sup>nd</sup> and Laura Azzam adjourned the meeting at 11:59 AM.