

Town of Mansfield
Board of Health
February 3, 2022 Minutes

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Mission Statement: The mission of the Mansfield Board of Health is to protect, preserve and improve the public health, environment and wellbeing of our citizens through the enforcement of federal, state and local statutes and regulations, education and promotion of sanitary living and working conditions, and protection of the environment from disease and pollution.

Present: Antonia Blinn; Chair, Michael Healey, Ryan Maxwell, Graham Wilson, Kasia Frenette, Amy Donovan-Palmer; Health Agent, Jess Aptowitz; Select Board Member, Kevin Dumas; Town Manager
Guests: Cheryl Sbarra; MA Association of Health Boards (MAHB), Dr. Michael Valkanas; Emergency Room Physician, Good Samaritan Hospital

I. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting of the Board of Health (BOH) was called to order at 7:31pm by Antonia Blinn.

II. BOH Reorganization

Position of Chair: Antonia Blinn Nominated by Kasia Frenette, 2nd by Michael Healey; Antonia Blinn accepts nomination. **Nomination Passes 5-0**

Position of Clerk: Graham Wilson nominated by Michael Healey, 2nd by Kasia Frenette; Graham Wilson accepts nomination. **Nomination Passes 5-0**

III. Consent Agenda

- **Motion to approve the consent agenda made by Mr. Healey, 2nd by Ms. Frenette.**
 - **VOTE 5-0 Passes**

IV. Acceptance of Minutes

January 6, 2022

- **Motion to approve the minutes from January 6, 2022, made by Ms. Frenette, 2nd by Mr. Wilson.**
 - **VOTE 5-0 Passes**

January 12, 2022

- **Motion to approve the minutes from January 12, 2022 made by Ms. Frenette, 2nd by Mr. Wilson.**
 - **VOTE 4-0-1 Passes**

V. COVID-19 Updates/Community EMS Program Updates

Chief Desrosiers not available for BOH meeting. BOH was provided some monthly data, but complete data will be compiled and discussed at next meeting. Ms. Donovan-Palmer inquired whether we needed a vote to put something on to another meeting's agenda. Select Board Member Jess Aptowitz commented that typically requests to put something on an agenda is run through the Chairperson, but a vote isn't needed.

Amy Donovan-Palmer presented a review of the purpose of masks, how they work, and different types of masks available for use. Transmission risk in Mansfield is still in the High category according to CDC Risk Categories. Michael Healey presented analysis of percent positivity data between towns with and without mask mandates, specifically comparing Mansfield to surrounding towns. Ms.

Donovan-Palmer increased town-wide information updates from 3 times a week to daily to bolster public education. Schools are switching from test-and-stay program to at home weekly testing. Students take a weekly test at home and if it is positive, they stay home.

Cheryl Sbarra from the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards spoke on the authority of the BOH to impose a mask mandate. The BOH's authority is covered under MGL Chapter 111, Section 31 and Section 122. Ms. Sbarra also noted that the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court has consistently upheld board of health authority to enact health regulations.

Dr. Michael Valkanas spoke on the status of COVID related hospitalizations and ICU admissions.

After presentations, Cheryl Sbarra fielded questions from the Board regarding BOH authority to impose regulations.

VI. Reassessment of the current BOH orders regarding mas mandates(s)

Antonia Blinn noted the outreach received by the Health Agent both in support of, and opposition to, mask mandates.

- **Motion to end emergency mask mandate effective 2/4/22 made by Mr. Healey, 2nd by Mr. Wilson.**

Discussion: Kasia highlighted that despite the absence of a mask mandate, it is still a recommendation to wear a mask, when possible, to prevent illness. Ms. Blinn has concerns over the immediacy of rescinding the mandate and that it takes time to communicate with all proper channels to make sure everyone has the information regarding the mandate coming down. Ms. Donovan-Palmer echoed the same sentiment. Mr. Healey asked regarding willingness to retract his motion to change it, replied in the negative.

- **Motion to amend the current motion made my Mr. Healey to begin on 2/7/2022, 2nd by Mr. Maxwell**
 - VOTE passes 4-1
- **Revised Motion: Motion to rescind the emergency mask mandate Monday, 2/7/2022.**
 - VOTE passes 5-0

VII. Waste Reduction and Recycling Committee

Met earlier on 2/3/2022, discussed mission changing from how to handle upcoming trash contracts to how are we going to reduce trash production in town. 2 Companies submitted the RFP, RFP had to go back out as part of the original RFP was not answered regarding replacement of trash barrels. Trash budget would see an increase if we replaced all trash carts proactively and a smaller increase if we only replace barrels as needed due to unrepairable damage. Committee is planning to meet first Thursday every month. Mr. Healey asked if there is any discussion around a town swap type of program. Mr. Wilson affirms that this is something to discuss going forward. Mr. Healey also brought up the idea of income generating processes from our trash and recycling as opposed to an expense.

Ms. Blinn brought forward that a formal motion is required for Mr. Wilson to continue representing the BOH on this committee.

- **Motion to nominate Mr. Wilson to represent the BOH on The Waste Reduction and Recycling Committee made by Mr. Healey, 2nd by Ms. Frenette.**

- VOTE passes 5-0

VIII. Municipal Mask Mandates

Ms. Blinn brought forward the idea that we should look at and reconsider the mask mandate for municipal buildings considering rescinding the town-wide mandate. Ms. Donovan-Palmer states that she has not heard anything regarding the municipal mandates. She states that the feeling from town management is that masks indoors are important. Mr. Dumas, Town Manager, states that for employees that have health related issues and feeling protection that the mandate is advantageous for the BOH to further the municipal mask mandate. Hearing no motion, the current municipal mask mandate stays in place.

IX. Department Updates

Bristol-Norfolk Public Health partners Coalition Grants Update: meeting held with Town Administration and Health Agents to discuss intermunicipal agreement being developed. Hiring process for the Public Health Excellence Grant Program for Shared Services and Local health support for COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing is moving forward. Aim is to have intermunicipal agreement signed by end of month.

E-Permitting: First season using new system is complete. Next step is to work on sewer plans integration.

FOG: Shared Services Food Inspector will be able to help take over some of the work around FOG permitting and inspection.

PFAS: Nothing to report

Website/Social Media Update: A lot of COVID related postings online to help community with what they can do to protect themselves and one another.

Housing Inspections: Had a couple inspections, nothing unmanageable.

Grant Applications: No additional grant applications to report on.

X. Visitor Comments

No visitors or pre-submitted questions or comments.

XI. Items not known 48 hours prior

Mr. Healey wants to thank Ms. Donovan-Palmer for her work in putting out great information regarding COVID-19.

Mr. Healey requests to see presentation from the Fall Intern as he has some questions.

XII. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn at 9:11pm made by Mr. Healey, 2nd by Mr. Wilson.
 - VOTE 5-0 PASSED

Clerk

Kasia Fentle

Date

5/10/22