

Wenham Board of Health Joint with Hamilton Board of Health  
Meeting of January 28, 2021  
Wenham Town Hall, 138 Main Street

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Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, § 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a joint meeting of the Wenham Board of Health with the Hamilton Board of Health, was held Thursday January 28, 2021 at 5 pm. *Due to the COVID19 Virus pandemic, and restrictions concerning in-person gatherings ordered by the Governor, this meeting took place virtually on Zoom.*

The Wenham Board of Health (BOH) makes regulations as it deems necessary for the public health and safety of the Town. The Wenham Board of Health is responsible for the enforcement of State Sanitary Codes, State Environmental Codes and Wenham Board of Health Regulations. Areas of responsibility include: septic systems, housing and dwelling units, food service establishments, private wells and recreational camps for children.

BOH members: **Gerald T. Donnellan (2021)**; Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair (2022); Regina Baker (2023)

- Wenham BOH call to order - *With a quorum present, Dr. Ting called the Wenham BOH meeting to order at 4 pm.*

Board members present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Regina Baker, Gerald Donnellan

Also present: Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative Services; Maribeth Ting, Public Health Nurse; Interim Town Administrator, Tom Younger; Selectman Cheeseman; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

- Hamilton BOH call to order - *With a quorum present, called the Hamilton BOH meeting to order at 4 pm.*

Board members present: David Smith, Chair; Christopher Small; Not present: Dr. Giselle Perez

Also present: Rachel Lee, Public Health Nurse; Leslie Whelan, Health Agent

- Public Input - There was none.

- Wenham Update – Maribeth Ting, Wenham Public Health Nurse reported the current total case count in Wenham is 228, of which 19 are active positive Covid cases. Ms. Ting noted that household transmission is high. Families with a covid positive member were encouraged to isolate as best as possible and continue COVID protocols.

- Hamilton Update – Rachel Lee, Hamilton Public Health Nurse reiterated the importance of mitigation to stop the spread of Covid. Currently Hamilton has 28 active cases. This is down from earlier in January. Hamilton and Wenham are partnering to provide a testing site at the middle school. As vaccines are made available, the town will be providing information on vaccine clinics.

Mr. Smith mentioned that he follows Covid hospitalizations at Beverly Hospital and North Shore Medical Center, and the covid trend appears to be going down from the peak post holidays.

- HW Testing site update - The towns are hosting a testing site for residents in the Miles River School parking lot, Bay Road, Hamilton. Beaufort provides the testing service in partnership with Hamilton and Wenham. Because CARES Act funds are being used, testing is limited to those residents with symptoms and close contacts, those testing for travel, etc. must pay for the test (\$85). Results are taking less time now and usually available in 24 to 36 hours.

- Update on HWRSD cases and protocols - The State is offering school districts in the commonwealth funding / resources for 6 weeks to do “pool testing” after which the school/ town would be responsible for the costs. Pool testing is a single saliva COVID test for a group of people as a way to monitor covid for those with no symptoms. If the test is positive, individuals in the that group are tested. This reduces cost to test individuals.

Mr. Smith informed the Boards that the schools are interested in possibly doing “pool testing” and has requested input from the Boards of Health. Mr. Smith asked for someone to work with him to formulate a response to the Superintendent / School Committee Wednesday’s meeting. He spoke about the possible implications of “pool testing” e.g. increased testing and potential burdens on the public health nurses.

Ms. Ting added that “pool testing” is a highly discussed, and an important topic; it is known to be a lot of work. “pool testing”.

Ms. Lee and Ms. Baker offered to work with Mr. Smith on the recommendation to the School.

- Update on vaccinations to date
- Update on expectations and plans for Phase Two

Ms. Bresnahan reviewed that Wenham is planning a drive through outdoor COVID vaccine clinic at Pingree Park. As soon as the town has the vaccines, appointments for residents will be made.

The Council on Aging is acting as a call center on week days to assist residents with making appointments and use the interactive state map to get a vaccine.

The town of Wenham has initiated Code Red to keep residents informed on the vaccine via robocalls, emails, texts. Eligible residents were encouraged to find the fastest and most convenient place to be vaccinated.

Hamilton is also working to bring the vaccine locally for residents.

Consideration of requests from local community organizations for permission to hold events

The Hamilton BOH received a couple request to hold outdoor events at Pingree Park. Because Pingree Park is in Wenham, Hamilton has no jurisdiction and Mr. Smith will refer the Community House to Wenham.

- Adjournment -*The Wenham Board of Health unanimously adjourned by roll call at 5:55 pm.*

The Hamilton Board of Health continued in open session to discuss the Health Inspectors and customer complaints regarding the Weathervane Tavern violating the state's regulations for restaurants. Mr. Smith referenced the state's guidance for Municipalities on Enforcing COVID 19 Orders. After a lengthy discussion, the Board were unanimously in favor that the BOH chair write a letter to the Weathervane, directing them to be in compliance with COVID 19 orders within two days, and the Health Agent reinspect the restaurant.

Respectfully Submitted By  
Catherine Tinsley  
2.2.2021