

Meeting Minutes of the Chelsea Board of Health
August 11, 2020

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
CHELSEA, MA
2020 OCT -8 A 11:44

Attendance: Names of members and Participants

Board Members:

- Corinna Culler
- Allen Jackson
- Emmanuel Tellez
- Dr. Dean Xerras

Guests:

- Naomi Zabat, Chelsea City Council
- Garrett Simonsen, Regional Public Health Planner, Cambridge Health Alliance
- Seth Daniel, Reporter, Chelsea Record

City of Chelsea Staff:

- Paula McHatton, Public Health Nurse
- Luis Prado, Director of Health & Human Services
- Strephon Treadway, Asst. City Solicitor
- Pamela Johnson, Law Office Clerk
- Cate Fox-Lent, City Hall staff

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes for June and July. There were technology problems with the digital meeting software that resulted in gaps in the July meeting minutes. However, Pamela Johnson stated the Board would have access to meeting transcripts going forward, which she will provide once requested of her via email (pam.johnson@chelsea.ma.us).

A motion to accept the June and July minutes was made, and seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Board Structure/Elected Officers

Luis Prado gave an overview of the history of the open elected board positions – Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk. Dr. Xerras reviewed his history and experience as board chair, noting that there was no requirement that the chair had to be a doctor. There was also discussion of how Catherine Maas' recent resignation should be considered in the elections process. The board ultimately decided to move forward in filling the Chair and Clerk positions.

A motion to nominate **Corinna Culler** as **Chair** was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to nominate **Allen Jackson** as **Clerk** was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Pending Items – Information on Seasonal Flu

Garrett Simonsen, Regional Public Health Planner, Cambridge Health Alliance gave a presentation to the Board on seasonal flu vaccination plans in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CDC's goals for this year regarding flu vaccination were to 1) increase vaccinations, especially among high-risk groups, and 2) Plan for higher demand for vaccinations, using that experience as preparation for the availability of COVID-19 vaccine.

The vaccination program would begin no earlier than September, and supplies of flu vaccine are expected to be adequate. Vaccine delivery will be impacted by physical distancing requirements. These requirements will make flu vaccine delivery look differently from what we have normally experienced.

The flu vaccine program will use a "drive-through" or "curbside" model where people drive or walk up to the vaccination site to receive the vaccine.

There is expected to be an increased demand for the flu vaccine, and this will give communities the experience in planning for a COVID-19 vaccine.

The board discussed how this model would to reach hard-to-reach populations, identification requirements for seeking a test, what data was available from the MA Dept. of Public Health to track flu vaccination in Chelsea, and the possible need for a public education campaign to reach populations hesitant to vaccinate.

Reports and Items for Discussion

- Updates on COVID-19: Paula McHatton reported 9 new cases in Chelsea, bringing the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Chelsea to 3,142. The rate of positive tests last week was 4.93%, up from 3.76% the previous week. As a result of these trends, Chelsea Public Schools has decided to open the school year using remote learning.
- Stop the Spread testing campaign: All 9 communities participating in the program have signed on to continue the program, which provides testing for asymptomatic individuals. The program has been extended through 9/12/2020. The Board also noted Fallon Ambulance has been doing testing at City Hall, and Dr. Xerras reported that MGH has been seeing about 250 people/day at their testing site. MGH will be moving to providing asymptomatic testing two days per week, with hours from 8am – 11:30am. The MA Dept. of Public Health will be putting city-level testing data on its website.
- Summer Camps 2020: The Chelsea Boys & Girls Club was the only site to complete the application process to operate a summer camp. They were approved to run a summer camp for one month. Two other providers decided against operating summer camps this year.
- EEE and West Nile Virus Control – City Initiative: Luis Prado reviewed the draft version of *Sec. 10-5 Regulation of Nuisances Created by Standing Water*, stating that EEE and West Nile Virus spread are a growing concern. Communities are being encouraged to develop strategies to prevent these illnesses and communicate with the community. After reviewing and discussing the document, it was unclear on what the Board's role and next steps were. Luis agreed to seek further guidance from the City's legal department for clarification.

Other Items

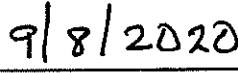
With City Manager Tom Ambrosino's recent declaration that racism is a public health emergency, the Board discussed what that meant for our work. Emmanuel Tellez and Luis Prado attended the event where the declaration was signed and reported that the proclamation was a first step. There will be a position created in City Hall to help the city think through these issues. Luis suggested the Board of Health could look at social determinants of health and additional trainings.

Next Meeting – Date/Time/Venue

9/8/2020 at 5:30pm via Webex.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded, and by unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.


Allen Jackson


Date