

Town of Adams • Massachusetts 01220

Board of Health Department

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Approved

Adams Board of Health – Public Meeting Minutes

1st Floor Mahogany Room and Zoom

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

BOH Members Present: Chairman Dr. David Rhoads, Vice-Chair Joyce Brewer, Member Dr. Peter Hoyt

Others Present: Mark Blaisdell-Code Enforcer, Michelle DeRose-Administrative Assistant, Howard Rosenberg-BOS Member, Atty. Edward St. John – Town Council, Brian Rhodes-iBerkshires

Call to Order: Chairman Rhoads called the meeting to order at 4:00pm and read the notice on the recording of the meeting

In person or virtual participation in this meeting is allowed by Ch.20 of the Acts of 2021 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL c.30 §20. The Zoom information is given below. This meeting will be recorded via Zoom; a copy can be provided upon request.

Notices on Recording & Post-Pandemic Waiver to Conduct Public Meeting Virtually (Above)

Note: if you are having trouble joining, please call David B Rhoads, PH.D. BOH Chair, at 781-507-1627.

Direct link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86583400347?pwd=dk9EdzcrM1prY0RYaTBuTkgrMFRHZz09>

or go to “zoom.us/join” or call 1-929-436-2866 (New York) and enter meeting information

Meeting ID: 865 8340 0347

Passcode: 870451

Covid-19 Report: Current report (#20), other Covid-19 news

Dr. Rhoads shared the latest Covid update that continues to be posted on the website regularly. Dr. Rhoads highlighted that there has been a significant drop in cases and we have been upgraded to “moderate transmission” from “high transmission” being less than 10 cases per week. The vaccination rate has been added to the report. There is less than 80% of Adams residents vaccinated and looking forward to seeing that higher to help reduce cases in town. Berkshire Health Systems is offering weekly vaccine clinics for children ages 5-11 starting Saturday, March 5 from 8am to noon at the BHS Vaccine Center in Pittsfield.

Please note: The Zoom audio recording had technical difficulties during this report and rebooted and lost approximately 2 minutes. There was no one joined in virtually. There was a back-up recording to maintain minutes.

The State, yesterday, relaxed the mask advisory and recommends masks still to be worn indoors for vulnerable individuals.

Mr. Blaisdell said that the Adams senior housing communities had received notice that an allocation of home tests are available to them from Mass Housing.

Dr. Rhoads discussed if the Covid-19 report should be continued and is happy to continue. Mrs. DeRose commented that the Town residents had asked for it. Dr. Rhoads mentioned that he had not received any feedback from Town individuals regarding the report. He asked Dr. Hoyt to update the website page to note the status we are at now.

Dr. Rhoads requested a motion to move a portion of the “For the Good of the Order” here so Selectman Howard Rosenberg and the Board can discuss issues between the Board and the Select Board.

Ms. Brewer motions, Dr. Hoyt seconded, all voted Yes unanimously. See “For the Good of the Order” section.

Public Comment: Comments on Covid-19 responses:

None

Public Comment: Comments on other issues:

None

Public Hearing:

None

Approval of Minutes: February 2, 2022

Dr. Rhoads provided edits with some rephrasing as Mrs. DeRose had told him previously that the recording had cut out at times and was challenging to put the draft together. Dr. Hoyt had one minor typographical change. Dr. Hoyt motioned to approve minutes as amended. Ms. Brewer seconded. All voted yes unanimously.

Code Enforcement Officer:

None

Old Business:

- **Discover Books – Donation Bin Update:** Dr. Rhoads said that Linda Cernik has a name of a contact in which the bin may be located. The name will be shared once confirmed. Updates to follow.
- **Annual Report (added text, picture, FY21 budget):** Dr. Rhoads had shared an updated draft of the Annual Report. Dr. Hoyt approved the changes as written. Dr. Rhoads said that all that is needed now, is the data from Mr. Blaisdell. For the photos planned to be used in the report, Dr. Rhoads received approval from the individuals that are in the photos.
- **Update on Opioid Harm Reduction Services / Syringe Services Program (BOAPC); SAMHSA:**
Dr. Rhoads did send the letter stating that Adams approves the services in our community. We are awaiting response related to next steps. Dr. Rhoads provided a website for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) with the Info Packet for the Board to review. This site offers much of the same approaches of harm reduction.

New Business:

- **Flavored “hempettes”; cannabis paraphernalia**
Mr. Blaisdell said that local retailers asked if hempettes can be sold due to the tobacco regulations in place. The State said they could sell them including flavored. Since they are not tobacco, it does not fall within the tobacco regulations.
- **Training opportunities: BU’s Local Public Health Institute**
Dr. Rhoads said he thought this was a Board of Health option. There are online versions available. Boston University’s Local Public Health Institute offers a series of small free courses. There is approximately 30-35 courses and you are required to take 27 courses which totals approximately 35 training hours. The courses remind us of the scope of our responsibilities and authorities. The website is in the Info Packet provided to the Board and he encouraged the members to review these resources.

- **Continuation of hybrid meetings**

Dr. Rhoads said that remote meeting allowances are available through June. Mr. Blaisdell said based on the webinar he attended yesterday, it is extended till July. Remote meetings releases the members from meeting in person. Originally, under open meeting law, if you joined virtually, you were not able to vote. That part is what was waived during the pandemic and votes could be counted virtually. Once this expires, we will need to meet in person. Mr. Blaisdell will forward the slides of the webinar he attended.

Brian Rhodes of iBerkshires shared his thoughts in favor of having a virtual option for the public as well as reporters to be able to join virtually or to view later when unable to attend in person. Dr. Hoyt agreed and to have the video posted is helpful. He did ask if the plan was to maintain the Zoom option, however, we should stay consistent with what the other board/committees are practicing. Atty St. John said that the Select Board business meetings are televised, the workshops are not. When the virtual mandate was lifted, the Select Board discontinued Zoom meeting with some exceptions for long distant people that had presentations and requested if Zoom was an option. Satisfying the public's ability to come to the meeting is met by notifying the location of the meeting and they can assemble there.

Dr. Hoyt suggested that we follow the Select Board and the Town Administrator's direction and thought Zoom options may have more work involvement in the case of the administrative assistant. Mrs. DeRose said that she finds the Zoom meeting helpful in preparing the minutes as they can be replayed. She also has a back-up hand held recording device that is used. Dr. Rhoads will get more information via Zoom options and discuss at the next meeting.

Local & County Updates:

- **Distribution of PPE**

Dr. Rhoads provided this information in the Info Packet as well. The Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council provided spray disinfectant, wipes, gloves, N95 and surgical masks and was distributed to the 2 elementary schools, Hoosac Valley Elementary and St. Stan's as well as BART.

There was an executive committee meeting today with the Board of Health Association. Two notes to share:

- After Action Report regarding Coronavirus which includes protocol to prepare for the next emergency. What worked? What didn't work? They will send a survey soon and he will ask to include Mr. Blaisdell.
- State action on public health. \$200,000,000 is being dedicated to local Board of Health Depts. Much of it would need to be spent on infrastructure and communications.

Upcoming Events:

none

Review Mail:

- **Sanitary Survey Report to AFD regarding public water system; DEP dated Jan 26, 2022**

Reports were received . There were 5 findings and the water district would address; There was nothing in the report that surprised John Barrett.

- 1) Capital improvement plans and time frames defined in which Mr. Barrett submitted his response yesterday.
- 2) Cyber Security best practices which are ongoing. There was a drill in January.
- 3) Cross connections means one house can contaminate by backflow into the water system. Mr. Barrett assured Dr. Rhoads that we have a closed system. All services have backflow protection and if there is a problem, there won't be any contamination getting into the water system.
- 4) Storage tank needs repair
- 5) Unguarded shaft needs to be guarded

For the Good of the Order

Dr. Rhoads had a conversation with Howard Rosenberg this morning and both recognize the importance of good interaction with the Board of Health and Board of Selectman. It has been realized that both Boards have both independent and overlapping authorities. It is important that we all work together. Dr. Rhoads suggested that there be a separate agenda item listed on the agenda to discuss any Select Board discussions that may impact the Board of Health. Mr. Rosenberg said that the Select Board agenda is public and available. Should there be any agenda item that may have some interest with the Board of Health, then to reach out to him and provide any input. Mr. Rosenberg said, in terms of priorities, if there is any initiative that the Board of Health wants to do, then coordinate with the Select Board especially when it pertains to businesses and its impact to them. Businesses are looking for advance notice so they can adapt to any new business practices and/or regulations that are put forth.

Dr. Rhoads asked about why Zoom options were discontinued with the Board of Selectman. Mr. St. John responded to say that this discussion is happening under the For the Good of the Order and suggests to stop discussion at this point. He appreciates the fact to include a new agenda item in the future and felt it a good idea.

Dr. Rhoads said that Mass Dept of Agricultural resources sent out an alert of avian flu spreading and some domestic birds. It can affect wild birds but are not symptomatic. The Board of Health will monitor. If Board of Health gets any calls regarding this, we will report it accordingly.

Mr. Blaisdell said that the Mass Dep is updating the expansion of the waste bans of textiles, food waste, mattresses and he is coordinating with Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District and Select Board and certain town officials to be ahead of it as it is going into effect in November 2022. This Board should review our Town website of solid waste regulations and update accordingly.

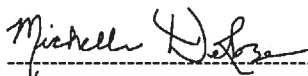
Dr. Rhoads mentioned that there was task force years ago that discussed the Transfer Station and its processes.

Schedule Next Meetings: April 6, 2022

Adjournment:

Dr. Rhoads asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Brewer so moved, Dr. Hoyt seconded. Voted Yes unanimously. Adjourned at 4:51pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Michelle DeRose
Administrative Assistant

April 22, 2022

Date