

**LEXINGTON BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 26, 2021
6:30 pm
Conducted by Remote Participation**

Approved 2.23.2021

Board of Health Members in Attendance

Wendy Heiger-Bernays, PhD, Burt Perlmutter, M.D., John “Jay” Flynn, J.D., Susan Wolf-Fordham, J.D. David Geller, M.D, Mark Sandeen, Select Board

Office of Public Health Attendees

Alan Perry, Interim Public Health Director
Maureen Adema, Health Department Assistant

Others

Dr. Julie Hackett, Superintendent of Lexington Schools, Michael Cronin, Director of Public Facilities, Robin Chapell, and other interested persons

Documents:

Power Point prepared by Chair Wendy Heiger-Bernays

Meeting Called to Order

Chair, Wendy Heiger-Bernays called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

Participation was remote via ZOOM.

Chair Wendy Heiger-Bernays read Governor Baker’s executive order regarding Open Meeting during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Chair, Wendy Heiger-Bernays declared a quorum via Roll Call.

Jay Flynn – Yes, Burt Perlmutter, M.D. – Yes, Susan Wolf-Fordham – Yes, Wendy Heiger-Bernays – Yes. Chair, Wendy Heiger-Bernays stated Dr. Geller will attend the meeting, but will be a few minutes late.

Chair Wendy Heiger-Bernays stated the remote meeting rules for the record.

1. Health Office Staffing

Chair Wendy Heiger-Bernays welcomed and introduced Alan Perry, Interim Health Director and Maureen Adema, Administrative Assistant.

Mr. Perry informed the board that he is a retired health director and will be with Lexington until the permanent health director is in place, which is likely to be April. Mr. Perry has 32 years in public health, his last position was with the city of Attleboro. He has worked with many kinds of Boards of Health and stated he is happy to be in Lexington to work with the board on the needs and goals for the Town.

Ms. Adema informed the board she was hired to be the administrative support for the board and Town’s health staff. She stated, she has 13 years in municipality administrative experience, her last position was with the Town of Groton.

Chair Wendy Heiger-Bernays asked Robin Chapell, also in attendance to introduce herself.

Ms. Chapell stated she has 34 years of experience in Public Health and has returned to Town on an interim basis to work on and execute the Emergency Dispensing Site Plan (EDS) and vaccine clinics. Ms. Chapell has an Environmental Science Master's Degree from the Harvard School of Public Health.

2. Community Health

a. Environmental Health Update

i. Pooled Surveillance Testing Report/Update

Dr. Julie Hackett Superintendent of Lexington Schools was in attendance to report and update the board on the Pooled Surveillance Testing.

Dr. Hackett first addressed the term of Pooled Surveillance, stating it is was a technical term. Pool testing can identify and isolate asymptomatic carriers of COVID-19.

The Lexington Public Schools started the free COVID-19 testing program. The preparation for the testing getting underway is due to great work from the community, parents groups and staff. The launch of the program was successful effort putting together 2,200 test kits with 100 volunteers over two Saturdays.

The program is led by Karen Rufo, Director of School Health Services. It will run for 8 weeks, the cost is \$229,000.00 which will be funded by the Town of Lexington CARES ACT.

The testing partner is Mirimus Clinical Labs. Mirimus Clinical Labs was vetted by the PTA, PTO, School Committee members, Nursing Staff and the Superintendent's Office. Mirinus is being used in many other communities.

Dr. Hackett acknowledged the Board of Health's recommendation and support for have the testing. The board's input moved the program forward.

The testing results are available in 48 hours, all results are 100% confidential.

The goals of the pool testing are to minimize the risk of infection and spread, develop policies and procedures to keep the community safe and to maximize the opportunity for in person instruction.

Testing started January 12th with staff members. All staff tests were negative. Testing was done January 18th on the Lexington High School students, Clarke School and Diamond School. All tests were negative.

It was noted that the participation in the testing program was as not as high as desired. The Task Force is working on a plan to increase participation.

Dr. Hackett noted all nurses have been vaccinated. The nurses have been doing a tremendous job this school year.

Members Questions and Comments

Mr. Flynn - *No Questions*

Ms. Wolf-Fordham - *Why do you think the participation in testing is low? Is it because teachers need to get coverage for classes? And what steps will be taken to increase participation?*

Not sure, why staff members have not submitted a test. Possibly, the logistics of getting a testing kit and returning it for mailing may be an issue. Working on utilizing a student courier program. Some ideas to increase participation is to make the testing fun, possibly have a raffle or acknowledge participation with stickers, similar to the “I VOTED” sticker.

Dr. Perlmutter - *No Questions*

Dr. Geller – *How is the data from the Pool Testing going to be used?*

The testing is to provide knowledge of infection. It is not being done to support return to classrooms or not returning to classrooms. It is one management tool of many in making decisions regarding schools. *Do you know or can you show behaviors of those tested?*

No, the testing does not indicate behaviors. But noted that the State’s in school transition data does not include Lexington data, Lexington did not submit the data.

Chair Heiger-Bernays – *How will the data be merged with the overall Town data regarding COVID-19?* Karen Rufo stated that there is a data sharing through Mirinus.

Karen stated she works daily and closely with David Neylon, Lexington Public Health Nurse to ensure the data is reported and tracing in done.

ii School Buildings Ventilation Status

Mr. Michael Cronin, Director of Public Facilities informed the board that the ventilation status in the school buildings are all good. The ventilation systems are checked twice a day, at 6am and 11am. The first check will normally have a “reset” but by 11am all equipment works well without a failing.

On Wednesdays, in person checks are done that include the schools and other Town buildings. There is concern with the outside temperature becoming colder in the upcoming weeks the ventilation systems will be affected in cases where the equipment is located outside the building.

Members Comments and Questions

Mr. Flynn – *Are other Town buildings being monitored?* Yes, all the schools, Public Buildings, DPW, Public Safety Buildings and Lexington Community Center.

Ms. Wolf-Fordham – *No Questions*

Dr. Geller – *No Questions*

Dr. Perlmutter – *No Questions*

Mr. Sandeen – *No Questions*

iii **Mask/Face Covering Update**

Chair Wendy Heiger-Bernays screen shared a presentation stating the importance of wearing masks. Masks should be a well-fitting and must be comfortable. Masks also should be accessible. And masks must be worn even after vaccination.

Members Comments and Questions

Mr. Flynn – *Has there been any mask compliance issues reported to the Town recently?*

Alan Perry communicated that there has not been any new mask/face covering issues reported to the Town. The mask/face covering issue last reported has been resolved.

Mr. Sandeen – *Has there been any changes to mask rules and regulations like the other countries have adopted?* Robin Chapell stated that the new administration in Washington DC is asking for a 100 days mask up from everyone in the country, but there has not been any “ruling” on masks. Although there are new designs/products of masks being manufactured.

Dr. Perlmutter – No Questions

Dr. Geller – No Questions

iv **Disinfectant Update**

Chair Heiger-Bernays screen shared a PowerPoint of a Conceptual Model of transmission in a classroom/shared spaces. Highlighting the ventilation and disease spreading through the air.

Chair Heiger-Bernays reviewed the Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) reviews regarding toxics in the Commonwealth.

Quaternary Ammonium Compounds were discussed at last TURI meeting. New data of evidence of human exposure issues are being reviewed by TURI. There is a review of where they are being used and the frequency of use.

Chair Heiger-Bernays asked Michael to share his knowledge on the cleaning products and cleaning procedures in the Town.

Michael Cronin said there is a committee reviewing cleaning products and what is used in the Town buildings. He will provide an update/report on the cleaning products and how, when and where use in the report to the board. Along with confirming proper protection being used when cleaning.

Members Comments and Questions

Ms. Wolf-Fordham – *Are these cleaners only available for commercial/industry use or are they used in households?* Chair Heiger-Bernays stated that before COVID they would have mainly been found only in commercial use but since COVID use in households and have even been found in Clorox Wipes.

Chair Heiger-Bernays stated, making the TURI “list” does not mean “do not use”. It only means records of uses and manufacturers are required.

Presentation/Shared Documents, attached below.

b. Epidemiology Update – COVID-19

Alan Perry received reports from Casey Mellin, Health Agent and David Neylon, Public Health Nurse to share with the board.

The Health Department has not received any COVID-19 related complaints since the last meeting.

Health Agents have been working on new food establishments and pool permits. Casey Mellin is also fielding inquiries about summer camps and farmer markets.

COVID Vaccine

The Town has started the COVID Vaccine Rollout. Lexington staff participated in five first responder clinics in Arlington and Watertown vaccinating over 600 individuals.

A vaccine clinic is scheduled on January 27th at the Arlington High School gym for those in Phase 1. Four Lexington Public Service Nurses will administer the vaccines.

As of today, January 26th, 6 new cases of COVID reported. The State reports Lexington is at 2.7% infection rate. The stats for Lexington are 905 cases with 48 new cases. Lexington is “yellow” per State and trending lower.

c. Non-COVID disease update

David Neylon submitted a report regarding non-Covid disease for the month.

Alan Perry informed the Board the housing case at 42 Brandon Street is resolved. The owner has received a letter of compliance from the Health Department.

3. Emergency Dispensing Site Plan (EDS)Updates/Next Steps

Robin Chapell stated that there has been lots of activity with many Town Departments stepping up and working together on the EDS plan.

Lexington is collaborating with Arlington and Belmont regarding the COVID-19 vaccine administration.

Arlington is the lead in the collaboration. Arlington will be doing the vaccine ordering.

Going slow in Lexington has proved to be the way to go, the vaccine order was for 1000 and only 300 were received.

After the site visit and review of the Field House, it was determined Lexington would not have drive through clinics. After a shot is administered there is a 30 minute patient observation. Best to not have individuals in their cars for the observation time.

The Field House is a wonderful location of for a COVID-19 clinic. It has high ceilings, an easy one direction traffic flow, two bathrooms, areas that can be designated for individuals requiring special accommodations and an area for the after shot observation.

Robin said that, she, Alan Perry, Health Department staff, Fire Department staff and Town Nurses will be at the Arlington clinic.

Robin stated she is working EDS plan document and has spoken with the Town Manager about the document. She stated things are moving in a positive direction.

Members Comments and Questions

Chair Heiger-Bernays – *What has the communications been from Town residents?*

Robin say many seniors have been calling looking for information on getting a vaccine shot. Most callers want to receive the vaccine in Lexington. Robin is working with other Town employees in planning a Community Forum. Hope to have it done next week, the Town Manager is involved in the planning for the Community Forum. It will be a Zoom presentation.

Mr. Flynn – *Can you give some details on the registering for a vaccine shot?* Robin said that the clinics are open to anyone in the State that is in Phrase 1.

Ms. Wolf-Fordham - *Is there is plan to maintain notes from the Health Department regarding the observations at the Arlington clinic?* Robin believes documentation will be done.

Dr. Geller - No Questions

Dr. Perlmutter – *Being a member of the Task Force was frustrated in previous meetings but tonight has a positive view on the EDS and vaccine rollout. He thanked Robin. He will be available to answer questions at the Community Forum and asked if Dr. Geller would join him.* Dr. Geller said he would join him at the forum if available.

Chair Heiger-Bernays asked Alan and Robin if there is anything needed from board.

Alan agreed with Robin the Field House is a great site to host clinics. Alan's one concern is the amount of vaccine inventory.

Town employees will help with registration at clinics using State computer program.

Andrea Fribush, 61 East Street. *What vaccine is being used in Lexington?* Robin Chapell stated that State in sending the Moderna vaccine. She also stated that David Neylon is trained in administration of the Moderna vaccine. Moderna is a good choice, there is no refrigeration issues.

Mr. Sandeen, Select Board - *How much vaccine will be received?* Robin stated the Board of Health will be told on Fridays how much vaccine will be shipped to Lexington. The lead time is short on getting knowledge of the amount. It is a week by week situation as this time with the State.

Mr. Flynn - How are the second shots managed/received? Robin said the second shot does not need to be ordered the State sends the second vaccine 4 weeks out from the first shot.

4. Environmental Health

- a. Inspection update - Regular performed routine inspections have not been performed due to the COVID-19 increased efforts.
- b. Sustainability Committee - moved to next meeting.

5. Public Comments

Sarah Lewis

Asked if the Town/School staff that do not live in Lexington would be allowed to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at the Lexington vaccine clinics.

Robin Chapell stated when the Lexington clinics are running an employee that does not live in Lexington would be able to get a vaccine shot as long as an appointment is made and the individual is in their allowable “phrase”.

Sarah Lewis

Stated that the LEA have made statements of concern about safety of the QAC, PC105 cleaners. Teachers clean their classrooms a number of times through a school day. They are cleaning in their regular masks, some may be using gloves and some may not be using gloves. Chair Heiger-Bernays stated there will be follow up on the cleaners used.

6. Additional information

- Alan Perry will rework and streamline the Board of Health report from the Health Staff and distribute prior to the next meeting.
- Chair Heiger-Bernays and Alan Perry will review issuing/signing/closing permits and other Health Department processes and procedures. Having applicants meet with the board should return in the future.
- Chair stated that housing issues and evictions and the like should be communicated to the board.
- Alan Perry will send the members a copy of Health Staff report used at tonight’s meeting.

Next Meeting

Date to be determine by Chair Heiger-Bernays and Interim Health Director Alan Perry.

Adjournment

Dr. Perlmutter made a motion to adjourn at 8:28 pm. Motion seconded by Dr. Geller.

Roll Call Vote. Flynn – Yes Wolf-Fordham – Yes, Perlmutter – Yes, Geller – Yes, Heiger-Bernays – Yes. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Chair PowerPoint

Masks Update, TURI Presentation



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