



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

The Board of Health Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting	11-30-2022 / 6:00pm / Room 120, Town Offices
	Meeting was recorded and available to view at https://www.westboylston-ma.gov/wbpa-public-access-tv
Members Present	John Sullivan, Robert Barrell, Tracy Gagnon, Thomas Mullins, Christopher Whelan
Members Not Present	
Guests	Cherry Tangri, CMRPHA Tobacco PH Prevention Specialist; Charles Faucher, Owner Wachusett Wine & Spirits, and Michael Faucher, Manager Wachusett Wine & Spirits
Welcome – Call to Order	Time: 6:00 pm by Chair Dr. Sullivan

Approval & Signing of Previous Minutes

Motion to approve
Motion Seconded
Result

October 2022 Board of Health minutes were reviewed by all via email; approved and signed by those present.

Mr. Barrell
Ms. Gagnon
Approved unanimously

• COVID-19 updates

Dr. Sullivan reported that as of the latest Biobot sewerage report, the good news is the numbers are down, with 600,000 to 800,000 copies per liter as opposed to previously running one to two million copies per liter. COVID variants BA4 and BA5 are still in circulation and account for more than 95 percent of the current cases. UMass is reporting 69 COVID cases currently inpatient throughout their facilities, which is the lowest number since the summer months. However, there are several new variants related to the BA5 variant that are starting to show up – BQ 1, BQ 1.1, and BF7, none of which are sensitive to the monoclonal antibodies used to treat the original Omicron variant. These new variants are currently present in small numbers in the Commonwealth and we need to keep an eye on that and hope that the immune response to BA5 will enhance T-cell immunity and help to mitigate the effect of these new variants. It is important to keep monitoring the sewerage report as a predictor of what will be happening down the line, usually two to three weeks in advance of when we begin to see increased hospitalizations. Mr. Barrell stated it is his understanding that someone could have had a COVID infection, have recovered and with the new variants, could get it again, and how many times could someone be re-infected? Dr. Sullivan responded it's becoming increasingly clear that re-infection is possible, however with vaccination, the re-infection symptoms are unlikely to be

The information contained in this electronic message is legally privileged and confidential under applicable law, and is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, copying or disclosure of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please immediately notify the sender and delete this communication without copying or distributing it.

serious and require hospitalization. Dr. Sullivan also noted that we still have the drug Paxlovid, and that while a few who have taken it get re-occurrence of symptoms upon completing the treatment, the re-occurrence symptoms are usually very mild. Paxlovid has a rapid effect (2 days) in relieving symptoms, including against the new variants, which don't respond to the monoclonals. So as long as people are fully immunized, which means having the latest booster, they will be protected against developing serious symptoms and hospitalization. Mr. Whelan asked if Dr. Sullivan has any information regarding several new variants identified. Dr. Sullivan indicated that while the vaccines cannot prevent infection, they reduce the severity of the symptoms to prevent serious illness and hospitalization. Mr. Barrell asked how soon after having a COVID infection, can someone get the latest booster if they have not had it. The current thought is to wait 4-6 weeks after recovery. Dr. Sullivan noted that it is likely vaccination will be a yearly event; the focus now seems to be on developing a vaccine that can be combined with the annual flu vaccine; both Moderna and Pfizer are working on and testing these vaccines. It is likely that in a year or two we will have one vaccine to cover Flu, COVID and respiratory syncytial virus.

- **CMRPHA**

Mr. Barrell reported that Ms. VanArsdalen has resigned, terminating her position with CMRPHA as of Friday 12-02-2022. Previous Inspector Philip Leger, who had retired, has agreed return temporarily to cover any Title 5 concerns and inspections until a qualified person is hired. Other inspections will continue to be handled by Micah Blondeau. Ms. Lee reported that there is no recent CMRPHA report.

- **Tobacco Sales Violation**

Ms. Tangri reported on the sales violation at Wachusett Wine & Spirits and explained how the new regulations require that the business be fined \$1000.00, which the owner has paid, and that the sale of Tobacco products be suspended for a minimum of one day, to be determined by the Board at this meeting. The business owner and manager attended to explain how this violation occurred, due to the poor decision of a new employee who has been dismissed. They also noted that all current employees have participated in training, are scheduled for TIPS recertification training, and they have improved their signage at the register. The owner expressed to the Board that they take this matter very seriously.

Ms. Tangri coordinated the suspension with the business owners to oversee the process.

Dr. Sullivan recommended the required minimum one day suspension of Tobacco sales. Mr. Barrell made a motion to approve this recommendation.

Motion to Approve
Motion Seconded
Result

Mr. Barrell
Mr. Whalen
Approved unanimously
Suspension date agreed upon = Tuesday December 6, 2022

The information contained in this electronic message is legally privileged and confidential under applicable law, and is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, copying or disclosure of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please immediately notify the sender and delete this communication without copying or distributing it.

- Office report

Ms. Lee noted she does not have the financial print-out this month, noting that the grant from Worcester is now in its entirety, entered under a different account number than the general BoH Fund and covers only the IMA contract with Worcester for Inspectional Services, not including Title 5. She also noted that about half of all 2023 permit applications are in (54), and she plans to email a reminder to those not yet received, as they are due by mid-December. She reported that Brown Rice II is reopening their former location as a Ramen and Rice bowl venue, and hopes to open before the end of the year; a Food Plan Review will be done when they are ready. She provided the status of Title 5 projects. She noted she has not received any information about 104 Shrine Avenue, where the owner had stated intent to do an exploration to determine whether the old septic tank was properly abandoned when they hooked up to the sewer; Ms. VanArsdalen had said she was going to follow up but never reported anything; our office sent a letter to the property manager in July. October invoices for the IMA with Worcester and COVID Nursing Services were both submitted for payment.

- Next BOH meeting date

Proposed for 01-11-2023 after a brief discussion. Ms. Lee will email Board members for confirmation.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion Originator	Mr. Whelan
Motion Seconded	Dr. Mullins
Result	Approved unanimously
Time of Adjournment	6:28 pm

Signatures

John Sullivan, MD , Chair

Christopher Whelan, MEd

Tracy Gagnon, MEd, Vice Chair

Thomas F. Mullins, MD

Robert J. Barrell, MPA

Submitted by: Margaret Lee
Date Submitted: 02-08-2023

The information contained in this electronic message is legally privileged and confidential under applicable law, and is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, copying or disclosure of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please immediately notify the sender and delete this communication without copying or distributing it.