



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

The Board of Health Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting	02-09-2022 / 6:00pm
	Meeting available to view at https://www.westboylston-ma.gov/wbpa-public-access-tv
Members Present	Robert Barrell, John Sullivan, Tracy Gagnon, Christopher Whelan, Thomas Mullins
Members Not Present	
Guests	Julie VanArsdalen (CMRPHA), Jonathan Sprague, Kristine Sprague, Cara Cullen
Welcome – Call to Order	Time: 6:00 pm
	Mr. Barrell asked members to introduce themselves for the benefit of the guests.
Approval of Previous Minutes	January 12, 2022 meeting minutes, reviewed via email by members, were approved and signed, and December 14, 2021 minutes, approved unanimously at the January meeting held via Zoom, were also signed by those present at that meeting.
01-12-2022 Minutes - Motion to Approve	Dr. Sullivan
Motion Seconded	Mr. Whelan
Result	Approved unanimously.

- **Annual Report**

Mr. Barrell noted that the draft of the Annual Report for 2021 was emailed to Board members and a copy provided at this meeting. He requested the Board members review the report and be prepared to address at the next Board meeting.

- **COVID-19 Update**

Masking requirements – Dr. Sullivan reported that Worcester Board of Health has rescinded their mask mandate, effective February 18th, and their Department of Education for Worcester schools effective February 28th. He proposed West Boylston follow Worcester’s recommendations.

Mr. Whelan suggested that the date for rescinding the mandate be effective immediately instead of waiting, however the other Board members supported the date to be in keeping with Worcester’s and medical director Dr. Hirsch’s recommendations.

Mr. Barrell noted the reasons for the recommendation to rescind:

- **Biobot reduction (COVID viral count in sewers)**
- **Increase in number of vaccinated children**
- **Increase in availability of COVID test kits**
- **Reduction in infections and hospitalizations**

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The Board recommended that at-risk individuals continue to wear masks and that businesses be allowed to make their own decision regarding requiring masks.

Mr. Whelan made a motion to approve rescinding the mask mandate effective February 18, 2022, in keeping with Worcester's recommendations.

**Motion to Approve
Motion Seconded
Result**

Mr. Whelan

Dr. Mullins

Approved unanimously.

Ms. Gagnon reported the success of the first COVID Vaccination Clinic, noting vaccinations or boosters to 79 individuals. The clinic was organized and effective. The second series will be held Saturday, February 11, 2022 from 11am to 2pm, and there is no need to pre-register, walk-ins welcomed. The clinic is open to all MA residents, and all vaccinations are Pfizer.

Dr. Sullivan reported that the FDA advisory committee will be meeting next week to consider approval of emergency use authorization of vaccinations for children six months to 4 years of age. He noted that approval for Moderna vaccine is one to two months behind Pfizer.

Mr. Barrell noted that COVID infection rates are consistently coming down based on both Public Health nursing reports and Biobot information.

- **CMRPHA Reports (Local & Regional)**

Ms. VanArsdalen provided a summary of Local inspections completed since the last report by our CMRPHA inspectors. The inspectors also continue to follow up on complaints related to mask violations.

A new February 2022 CMRPHA Newsletter was recently received and emailed to Board members.

- **Bill approval, Financial report**

Ms. Lee provided a summary of the most recent financial report, noting invoices received since our last meeting. Mr. Barrell noted that Federal and State grants have been covering the costs associated with COVID-19 Nursing fees, including a new grant to cover COVID related costs starting January 1, 2022. Also, the new grant should cover some of the significant increase in cost of the Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) with Worcester, however the Board will have to explore other funding sources. Mr. Barrell also would like Karyn Clark, Worcester PH Director, to attend a meeting and explain the situation and process. Ms. VanArsdalen noted that the analysis of inspectional costs included in the IMA to participating municipalities is ongoing, and is being completed by someone hired by Worcester for this task. Some examples of the work they do as part of this service were provided. She also briefly discussed the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Alliance communities addressing community health to transportation. She noted that Worcester is fully accredited, the first in MA, and does not know if this is offered in any other communities at this time.

- **Office report**

Ms. VanArsdalen reported the updates in the Title 5 report since last month. She stated design plans for Septic system

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upgrade at 202 Prescott Street are completed, noted no work started for 45 & 49 Central Street, and two Newton Street lots where Soil Tests were completed are still pending; Ms. Lee noted that the Newton Street properties have not yet been assigned addresses. Ms. Lee reported that the new owners of 45 & 49 Central Street have submitted the Septic Abandonment forms and fees, and the Septic Contractor will be following up with appropriate testing, exploration, and disposal of the existing septic contents at 45 Central Street; and that while the plans for the Bethlehem Bible Church septic were approved, no work has started. She reported 117 permits issued to date.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness

PHEP recently held an on-line seminar which Dr. Mullins attended. He briefly related some of what was covered, including Emergency Dispensing Site logistics for handling emergencies, who is involved, and who is notified. Mr. Barrell asked Dr. Mullins to be the Board’s point person for PHEP and he agreed. (Note that Ms. VanArsdalen is West Boylston’s official PHEP representative.)

Guest request

Cara Cullen, of Wachusett Country Club, addressed the Board, proposing a liaison for business owners in West Boylston. She noted that most restaurant owners find it difficult to attend the Board meetings due to conflict with their business hours. Her business is closed for the season so she is able to attend. She would like the Board to have more interaction with business owners relative to situations that affect their businesses, such as the COVID pandemic. The Board indicated receptivity and willingness to engage, noting the meeting agendas are posted.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion Originator Ms. Gagnon
Motion Seconded Mr. Whelan
Result Approved unanimously via roll call
Time of Adjournment 6:42 pm

Signatures

Robert J. Barrell, MPA, Chairman

Christopher Whelan, MEd

John Sullivan, MD

Thomas J. Mullins, MD

Tracy Gagnon, MEd

Submitted by: Margaret Lee
Date Submitted: 03-09-2022

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