



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

## **The Board of Health Meeting Minutes**

<b>Date / Time / Location of Meeting</b>	<b>08-04-2021 / 6:00pm</b>
<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Robert Barrell, John Sullivan, Tracy Gagnon, Michaun Fowler</b>
<b>Members Not Present</b>	<b>Beverly Salate</b>
<b>Guests</b>	<b>Cheryl Rawinski, RN (Public Health Nurse)</b>
<b>Welcome – Call to Order</b>	<b>Time: 6:01 pm - The meeting was held at the West Boylston Senior Center.</b>
<b>This was a special meeting called to address recent increase in COVID-19 cases due to the Delta Variant.</b>	<b>This meeting was recorded and can be accessed via WBPA-TV West Boylston - <a href="https://west-boylston.vod.castus.tv/vod">https://west-boylston.vod.castus.tv/vod</a></b>

- **COVID-19 – Delta Variant concerns**

Dr. Sullivan provided information and led the discussion about the increase in COVID-19 Delta Variant infections.

- Ms. Rawinski explained the number of new cases since 08-01-2021; there have been a total of 21 cases (correction from 19), six of which are youth (ages 2 – 18), six are vaccinated seniors at a local nursing home.
- Governor Baker has mandated that all nursing home staff be vaccinated, in addition to staff at hospitals. At this time, he has left mask recommendations or mandates for residents up to individual municipalities.
- Dr. Sullivan has been speaking with the Superintendent of Schools regarding mask wearing to prevent an increase in transmission once school starts. As of 08-02-2021, there is no mask mandate, but the school will “strongly recommend” mask wearing.
- Dr. Sullivan recommends that COVID announcements and information be posted on the Home page of the Town’s website.
- The Board, concerned about the apparent reluctance of some to be vaccinated, discussed ways to encourage unvaccinated residents to get vaccinated, such as the 12 – 16 age group (only 55% vaccinated).
- Dr. Sullivan addressed the concern that vaccination may negatively affect fertility and pregnancy. He reports that studies show that vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) are safe and effective during pregnancy and have not impacted getting pregnant. 165,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated with no negative effects. Studies of vaccinated men show sperm motility is normal.

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- Dr. Sullivan stressed that as long as people are not vaccinated, new variants can develop.
- Mr. Barrell asked Ms. Rawinski to describe what she is seeing with the Delta Variant. Ms. Rawinski is a Public Health Nurse monitoring COVID-19 for 20 MA communities. She reports that Delta variant cases have surged over the past two weeks, however slowed somewhat over the past two days. West Boylston is “on the edge” of the infection spectrum with regard to the 20 towns she monitors.
- Regarding unvaccinated children becoming infected, the new variant is more contagious and the symptoms more serious, and while there have not yet been any deaths in children from COVID-19 in MA, there are cases of multi-system inflammatory disease.

• **Response recommendations**

Mr. Barrell asked for recommendations as to what steps should be taken at this time to mitigate the spread of infection.

Several Towns in MA are requiring masks be worn indoors.

Dr. Sullivan suggested that the Board at this time “strongly recommend” masks be worn indoors in public places. The Board will revisit the issue at its regular monthly meeting next week. The recommendation of the Board may change if numbers continue to rise.

Another recommendation is that vaccinated people who are exposed to the infected and/or develop cold-like symptoms get re-tested; free testing is still available.

Ms. Gagnon made a motion that the Board strongly recommend residents two years of age and older wear masks in public places.

<b>Motion Originator</b>	Ms. Gagnon
<b>Motion Seconded</b>	Ms. Fowler
<b>Result</b>	Approved unanimously

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

<b>Motion Originator</b>	Ms. Fowler
<b>Motion Seconded</b>	Ms. Gagnon
<b>Result</b>	Approved unanimously
<b>Time of Adjournment</b>	6:39 pm

**Signatures**

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Robert J. Barrell, MPA, Chairman

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John Sullivan, MD

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Beverly A. Salate, RN, BSN

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Tracy Gagnon, MEd

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Michaun Fowler, BSM

**Submitted by:** Margaret Lee  
**Date Submitted:** 08-11-2021

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