

SUDBURY BOARD OF HEALTH

Minutes of Board Meeting March 11, 2020

Attendance: Board Chair Carol Bradford, Board Member Susan Sama, Health Director William Murphy, Public Health Nurse – Phyllis Schilp, Social Worker Bethany Hadvab and Admin. Beth Porter, Sudbury BoH's Consulting Physician – Peter Hoenig, Director Sudbury Senior Center/COA - Deb Galloway

Meeting commenced at 4:00 pm.

4:00: Opening comments – No Public Comments Chair Carol Bradford calls meeting to order.

VOTE: Motion to Nominate Animal Control Inspectors: Jennifer Condon, Michael Albanese, Donna De Wallace and Sarah Macone, by Susan Sama. Seconded by Carol Bradford. Motion passed 2-0-0.

4:02: COVID-19

Coronavirus is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. Sudbury was notified of its first presumptive positive COVID-19 case by the Mass Dept of Public Health (MDPH) on 3/9/2020. Dr.Hoenig presented a chart to demonstrate the value of slowing the progression of the virus and the effort to manage the inflow to hospitals.

Senior Residents at highest risk: The CDC and DPH have identified people ages 65 and older to be at the highest risk of contracting COVID-19 and becoming sick. It was suggested that individuals that have compromised immunities, (respiratory, cardiac, liver, kidney issues) **not** congregate at events or gatherings that would promote close contact (less than 6 feet) which the CDC and DPH strongly urge people to avoid. Also, if seniors need to shop or refill medications it is suggested that they use delivery services. Less direct exposure to COVID-19 is strongly encouraged. Senior Center Director Deb Galloway determined that it would be best to suspend all Senior programs for 2 weeks. The Board supported this decision.

Schools: The schools should be deep cleaned. If students start to contract the virus, closures will be inevitable. The Board will continue to track and evaluate the progression of the virus in the schools to determine the next course of action. MCAS and SAT testing may pose challenges. Town wide school closings being discussed.

Sudbury Town Services: Discussion of how COVID-19 will impact town services. The Board reviewed the implications of closures, extended sick leave, coverage of under manned departments, additional supplies and equipment needed and the overall expense incurred by COVID-19.

Health Care Implications: Metro West Free Clinic held weekly at Beth El may be an at-risk site to spread COVID-19. The space used in Beth El is confined and does not allow for the 6 feet of separation recommended by the CDC. The health care workers need to wear personal protective equipment(costly). Concerns are that if the clinic closes during the COVID-19 outbreak, under insured families will **not** seek out other health care facilities, when sick, in order to avoid costs.

Hospitals: An Influx of COVID-19 positive patients with severe symptoms have been hospitalized globally creating a grid lock to the services that hospitals and health care facilities supply. Fall out of this influx is that health care workers are getting sick, leaving an already burdened system stretched thin. Additionally, other areas of health facilities are understaffed because COVID-19 is a priority.

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Outreach: Concerns that residents who live alone, are handicapped and are already isolated, will require wellness visits, food, medicine and supplies. Physical and emotional needs, of this vulnerable demographic, are in the process of being identified.

Overall Concerns: Testing is not available for all residents. Conflicting messages are being communicated to the public. Shortage of medical, food and household supplies. Support services that are offered to the public (Meals on Wheels) will be strained. Number of COVID-19 investigations that the Health Department will handle will become a burden. Keeping the public's concerns and expectations at a reasonable level. Economic fallout will be significant.

Public Health Nurse Reported:

The total number of communicable disease investigations performed in the 2019 calendar year was 141. For the 2020 calendar year the Public Health nurse has performed 47 communicable disease investigations. Concerns that there will be an influx of cases that need to be investigated all at once. Support nursing staff discussed.

Health Director Reported:

COVID-19: Town departments are acting independently. The Health Department is and will work with all departments impacted by COVID-19 to make decisions and find resolutions. Schools, if they decide to cancel after March 15, 2020, do not need to make up time at the end of the school year.

Hydronic Heater: Sudbury by-law prohibits the installation of hydronic heaters. There is one home in Sudbury that has a hydronic heater. Updating the regulations has been suggested to require the home owner to remove the hydronic heater prior to selling the property.

Correspondence:

February 11, 2020 Board of Health Meeting Minutes,

Meeting Adjourned 6:00 PM