

Sudbury Board of Health

Virtual Meeting April 6, 2021

Attendees: Carol Bradford – Board Chair, Linda Huet-Clayton – Board Member, Susan Sama – Board Member, William Murphy – Health Director, Patty Moran – Health Nurse, Bethany Hadvab – Social Worker, Beth Porter – Health Admin, Kay Bell – Comm on Disabilities, Janie Dretler – Select Board, Jennifer Roberts – Select Board, Pat Lewis – Council on Aging, Taryn Trexler – Resident, Jordan DaSilva – Social Work Intern

Meeting called to order 4:00 PM

Public Comment: None

Patty Moran – Public Health Nurse Update:

COVID Cases: 47 positives under the age of 20. Most cases are preschools, daycares, work place, families, school and sports. Variants maybe contributing. B117 is 70% more contagious than original COVID virus. There have been no Sudbury Long Term Care Facility cases reported recently.

Nursing Hours: Nursing staff is trying not to utilize the CTC (Community Tracing Collaborative) in an attempt to closely monitor cases. Nursing hours continue to increase. Contact Tracing will increase when schools return full time in-person learning . It is important that contact tracing be effective and thorough in order to mitigate spread of infection. Ms. Moran would like to see messaging to the students regarding mitigation and gathering limits.

Schools: LSRHS will return to full time in person learning after April vacation. There are several challenges to keeping schools safe. DESE guidelines require 3 foot student separation minimum. There will be times during the day where students will not have assigned seating making contact tracing difficult. Spread is also impacted by behaviors of students outside of school. Susan Sama is concerned with those who are not vaccinated - school aged children and young parents.

Pool Testing: Pool testing will be a key deterrent to keeping COVID from spreading. Carol Bradford stated that Noyes school has signed up 75% of the student body for pool testing and the faculty and staff are strongly encouraging remaining families/parents to sign up.

LSRHS: Wants to mandate pool testing for all sports and activities. The Board agrees that pool testing will be an effective mitigation tool. 1 to 2 clusters can jeopardize a sports season and the larger school population. There are COVID tests that can be taken prior to school, activities, and sports that produce immediate results. Linda Huet Clayton feels that testing would be dependent on individuals administering the tests properly.

Families Traveling: the attitudes of people are relaxing. Dining out, gatherings, carpooling and traveling are increasing. The state has modified the travel order for COVID testing from required to an advisory. For schools, pool testing will be effective in detecting positives. For workplaces, it may be advantageous for employers to mandate testing for those who are returning to the workplace and are increasing risk of exposure.

COVID Vaccines: On March 31st (9:00 AM – 2:30 PM) the Health Department, Senior Center, Fire Department and Sudbury Pharmacy collaborated to vaccinate Sudbury seniors and qualified individuals. 100 people were vaccinated. Second dose Clinic is scheduled for May 5th. The Clinic was staffed accordingly; 5 Health Department employees, 3 Senior Center employees, 2 EMT's FD and 3 Sudbury Pharmacy employees.

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Patty Moran – Public Health Nurse Update Continued:

Vaccine Mandates: Kay Bell questioned why the flu vaccine has been mandated for specific sectors but the COVID vaccine is not? Mr. Murphy stated that the CDC and Mass Dept. of Public Health do not mandate the COVID vaccine and Sudbury follows state and federal guidelines. Regardless of mandates there are always exemptions. Patty Moran stated that COVID does not mutate as quickly as the flu. The Vaccines seem to be holding up against the new variants.

Bethany Hadvab – Social Worker Update:

March Numbers: Over 200 residents assisted, 283 referrals, 635 resource needs. People are unable to access resources without case management oversight.

Global Trauma: The numbers of mental health issues that are systemic of the pandemic are staggering. The needs of many will need to be addressed.

Interns: Bethany has had difficulty recruiting interns from the schools. She is unsure why. She would like to explore using volunteers and community leaders to assist in connecting organizations to make basic goods easily available to residents.

Gift Card Drive: Sudbury volunteers and organizations recently raised \$46,000.00 in gift cards to be distributed to those in need. Distribution of the cards is currently under way.

Marlborough Rotary Club: Has been buying meals for Sudbury residents. Their charity is greatly appreciated.

Bill Murphy – Public Health Director Update:

Grant Application: Mr. Murphy spent a large amount of time writing a grant application for shared public health services with other towns. There was data collection and data analysis that went back several years. The application has been challenging but if successful will be worth the time and effort. He has been informed that the application is being reviewed. Should this grant be approved, it will fund the hiring of inspectors for septic, camps, food, tobacco etc. and they will work in multiple communities. The remainder will be used for additional nursing support and community messaging.

Multi Community Vaccination Collaborative: Sudbury, along with several neighboring communities have petitioned the state for COVID vaccine in order to conduct a clinic that residents can access locally. Official confirmation is still pending for this effort.

Metro West Tobacco Control: Sudbury scored high on compliance checks. Sudbury Tobacco Permit Holders are diligent in following standards and procedures.

Health Inspector Position: It has been difficult to devote time to interviewing candidates. Mr. Murphy will begin interviewing in May.

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Bill Murphy – Public Health Director Update Continued:

Gatherings During COVID: The Health office has been inundated with questions about gatherings from residents. Most prevalent question is gathering size. Sudbury is following state guidelines. There is an eagerness to return to normal events such as proms, graduations, parties, weddings etc. Residents are referred to the state website for sector specific guidelines.

EEE: Aerial Spraying of the wetlands will commence in the next 2 weeks. The Health Department will begin messaging once we get the dates and locations from East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project. Messaging throughout the season will be posted as announcements from DPH become available. It is important not to over message to the public.

VOTE: Susan Sama motioned To approve 3/23/21 BoH meeting minutes as edited. Motion seconded by Linda Huet-Clayton. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Meeting adjourned: 4:58 PM