

Sudbury Board of Health

Virtual Meeting 10/12/2021

Attendees: Carol Bradford-Board Chair, Linda Huet-Clayton-Board Member, Bill Murphy-Health Director, Patty Moran-Public Health Nurse, Beth Porter-Health Admin, Janie Dretler-Select Board, Jen Roberts-Select Board, Kay Bell-Comm on Disabilities, Mark Thompson-IT, Residents-Theresa Mahoney, Stephanie Lombardi, Stephan Lombardi, Jill Kushinsky, Tracy Garozzo, Dennis Reed, Steve G.

4:00 PM Meet called to order.

Open Comment: Kay Bell announced that October is National Disability Month. Kay reminded us of the rights of all disabled people and how far we have come and how far we need to go to create a society that gives disabled people access to everything that we all take for granted. Disabilities can be both seen and invisible.

Patty Moran: Public Health Nurse Update:

COVID Update: September was the first month where state reporting showed the types of COVID variants. September had 8 cases of Delta, 2 probables and 89 contacts. Not as many contacts converted to COVID positives as have happened in the past. Middlesex County cases had a downward turn mid-September, but have been trending back up.

Schools: Carol Bradford has been overseeing the pool testing at the Sudbury Public Schools. Patty Moran has supplied the schools with nursing interns from Worcester State to assist in the pool testing. There are currently 7 positive cases, all of whom are 5 years of age and under. And from those cases of the 27 contacts 10 of the contacts were 5 years old and under. Linda Huet-Clayton is concerned that children in this age group have under developed respiratory systems. The Board is concerned that this age group is unvaccinated.

Residents: Ken Bettenhauser would like to see the mask mandate lifted. Stephanie Lombardi would like the mandate updated to exclude children ages 3 – 5. She wanted to know if there are resources in place to address children’s social and emotional health associated with COVID and mask mandates. Carol Bradford stated that there is support at SPS for masking. Ms. Lombardi agreed to share information with the Board on the negative effects that mask wearing has on preschoolers. Dennis Reed asked the Board if they could define the numbers that drive the mask mandate and what will reverse the mandate? Mr. Reed also asked if the mask mandate is driven by numbers for Middlesex County or if it’s data that is specific to Sudbury? The Board is using CDC numbers from Middlesex County. Sudbury employs many people who do not live in town. Scott Lombardi questions the efficacy of mask wearing in the preschool age groups, it appears that masks are being worn improperly. Many residents believe that Sudbury is the only town in the area that has a mask mandate. Janie Dretler informed the Board that Lincoln and Belmont have mask mandates. She asked if children transmitted COVID more or less than any other age group? Linda Huet-Clayton said that there is no evidence that ages 7 and younger transmit any more than other age groups.

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Patty Moran: Public Health Nurse Update Continued:

COVID Vaccines: The number of people getting vaccinated has not increased this month. 80 percent of high schoolers were vaccinated prior to the start of the school year.

Community Tracing Collaborative: is planning on closing down at the end of the year. Sudbury has not been using the CTC for contact tracing.

Flu Clinic: The Health Department held its first 2021 Flu Clinic for Seniors the last week of September. 138 seniors were vaccinated. The Health Department has secured the Curtis Middle School on Saturday October 23rd for the Town Wide Flu Clinic. First responders are currently getting vaccinated as walk-ins at the Health Office. The Employee Clinic is scheduled for October 20th at the Lower Town Hall.

Bethany Hadvab Social Worker Update:

Interns: Bethany has on-boarded 5 interns, 4 graduate students and 1 undergraduate student.

Increasing Needs: Referrals to resources, access to transportation and utilities.

Hope Sudbury: Many hours spent on processing the applications. Several follow-ups prior to completing applications

Holidays: Many residents are concerned with gifts and food for the holidays. Bethany is working on being proactive.

Metro West Foundation Grant: is supplying the Social Work department with technology, training and extra hours for Mitch Sanborn (Part-Time Senior Outreach Social Worker).

Holiday Drives: Coat drive and gift programs have been picked up by other Sudbury Community Groups. Lack of space limits the services that the Social Worker can devote to community Drives.

Rob Lazo Health Inspector Update:

Inspections: Robert has begun doing septic Inspections for repairs and witnessing soil tests. Food inspections have been completed at the Sudbury schools and convenience and liquor stores.

Bill Murphy Health Director Update:

Septic Repairs and Installations: number of repairs and installs have increased in 2021. The Health Department has already inspected, permitted and approved over 100 properties.

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Bill Murphy Health Director Update Continued:

Condemned Home: Securing funding and lining up contractors to secure condemned property in town is expensive and time consuming. The home owner of the condemned property has approached the town claiming to have a potential buyer. Should the property be bought, the financial burden of securing the premises will not fall on the town. Janie Dretler asked Bill to consider a Blight By-Law for neglected properties and abandoned Homes.

Mosquitos: Surveillance and control for mosquitos has concluded. A late season human case of WNV (West Nile Virus) was found in Wayland. Temperatures at night have been trending down. Once the first frost hits, the threat of mosquito borne illnesses will be eliminated.

Public Health Shared Services Grant: This grant will pool Public Health resources between 7 towns. KP Law has drafted an inter-municipal agreement. Bill Murphy will start interviewing for the contacted position of managing the grant.

VOTE Linda Huet-Clayton Motioned to approve September 28th BoH Meeting minutes as edited. Carol Bradford seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0-0.

Next Board of Health Meeting will be scheduled for November 9th. Should the Board feel the need to convene sooner, another October meeting will be announced.

Meeting adjourned at 5:22 PM