

Sudbury Board of Health Virtual Meeting

January 11, 2022

Attendees: Carol Bradford – Board Chair, Linda Huet-Clayton – Board Member, Susan Sama – Board Member, Bill Murphy – Health Director, Patty Moran – Public Health Nurse, Bethany Hadvab – Social Worker, Robert Lazo – Health Inspector, Beth Porter – Admin, Jen Roberts – Select Board Liaison, Janie Dretler – Select Board Liaison, Kay Bell Council on Aging Liaison, Stephanie Lombardi – Resident, Silvia Nerssessian – Resident

Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM

Open Comments: None

Patty Moran – Public Health Nurse Update:

Omicron: Surge in December. Contributing factors – holiday gatherings, activities have moved indoors, Travel has increased and the vast influx of people testing. Many kids came back to school post-holiday break with high number of positives. Linda Huet-Clayton reported that hospitals are cancelling elective surgeries, staff are calling in sick and staff is being brought back after 5 days of isolation/quarantine. Critical services are also being delayed because of staffing shortages.

COVID Isolation/Quarantine Guidelines: Dec. 29th the CDC reduced isolation and quarantine duration. The guidelines are not clear and causing confusion. DESE (Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education) and EEC (Early Education and Care) also had shifts in guidance which has been met with scrutiny because of a lack of clarity.

Vaccinations: What is the definition of “Fully Vaccinated”? Because vaccines were not available to all age groups at the same time, it has caused confusion. Ages 5 to 11 years old are reported to be 70% vaccinated. Because of the holidays there could be a delay in reporting and the numbers may be higher.

Nurses: The nurses have been focused on assisting schools, daycares, preschools and congregate settings. Nursing resources should be shifting toward mitigation instead of focusing on contact tracing.

Testing: Home testing has become difficult to manage. Test results are not recorded unless the residents report them. There is no guidance provided by the state or federal government. Limited supplies of COVID tests have people exhausted trying to find home test kits or test sites that have availability. Schools continue to pool test. Linda Huet-Clayton asked if the preschools and daycares could benefit from pool testing. Patty Moran intoned that pool testing is expensive, requires man power and is time consuming. There are currently no plans for government agencies to supply tests to the preschools or daycares.

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Schools: We are seeing positive cases in fully vaccinated students. There are 21 positives at Curtis Middle School, 10 cases at Noyes, 5 or more cases at the remaining schools. Pool Testing has become involved. As students test positive they do not pool test for 90 days. On day 91 the students rotate back into pool testing. Keeping track is time consuming. Because of test and stay, many students can engage in after school activities, but activities outside of school is not allowed. What would be the deciding factor in closing the schools? A certain percentage of positive kids? Too many absent teachers? Too many absent kids?

Monoclonal Antibody Treatment: A therapeutic used to treat COVID19. There is a shortage of the antibodies. Requirements for eligibility is more stringent.

December Vaccination Clinics: In December the Health Department conducted 3 Immunization Clinics. A total of 38 Flu shots and 61 Moderna vaccines were administered.

Bethany Hadvab – Social Worker Update:

Cases: Many residents are calling into the Social Worker's Office in a state of panic. Second time around COVID positives in households. Food insecurity, no test kits. Resources are over taxed.

Most Impacted: Social Inequities have highlighted how difficult it is to access basic needs for everyday living. The most impacted are low-income, single parents, nonenglish speaking, front line workers. The pandemic will have long term effects on these families financially and emotionally.

Most Frequent Requests: Financial Support and Mental Health resources.

ARPA Funds: Jen Roberts would like to see these time sensitive issues be presented to the Select Board so that funds can be released to address the social inequities and help Sudbury families thru the pandemic and after. Janie Dretler said that the US Treasury came out with the final guidelines for ARPA Funds. She will review the guidelines to determine what the funds can used for these services.

Financial Programs: Are stretched to the limits. Many residents have accessed these services several times and have exhausted the maximum limit.

Robert Lazo – Health Inspector Update:

Food Inspections: Robert continues with food inspections. He's finding that many establishments are understaffed but are continuing to thrive.

Septics: Robert is now processing Construction Worksheets for septic repairs, septic plan approvals and Certificates of Compliance once installations are completed and approved.

Online Training: Emergency Preparedness.

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Bill Murphy – Health Director Update:

December: Processing Annual Permits. Over 100 applications have been processed.

Shared Services Grant: Grant Supervisor position is now accepting applicants. The current part time nurses will be assigned hours to support participating towns.

ARPA Funds: Would like to use ARPA funds to purchase COVID testing kits. Logistics of equitable distribution will need to be evaluated.

Next Meeting: February 8, 2022 @4:00 PM

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Linda Huet-Clayton. Motion Seconded by Carol Bradford. Motion Passed 3-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 5:43 PM.