

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Board of Health
Minutes of the Meeting
October 1, 2020
6:00 p.m.
Remote Meeting Via Zoom

Board members virtually present courtesy of a system organized by the City's IT Department: Chairperson: Dr. Richard Sagall; Vice-Chairperson: Robert Harris; Frederick Cowan; Joe Rosa; and Claudia Schweitzer. Present from the Health Department: Health Director: Karin Carroll

The meeting started at 6:00 p.m.

This meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state Open Meeting Law. Consistent with the Governor's orders suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and banning gatherings of more than 10 people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. If you are calling in on a phone you can press Star 9 (*9) to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or device there is a "raise hand" button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options during oral communications to be recognized to speak.

PUBLIC ORAL COMMUNICATION

There was no "Public Oral Communication".

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Ms. Schweitzer that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the minutes of the meeting of September 3, 2020 with a memo on 159 East Main Street attached. **Seconded** by Mr. Harris. **CARRIED.** Joe Rosa **abstained.**

MOTION by Mr. Rosa that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the minutes of the Septic Review Subcommittee meeting of September 3, 2020 as written. **Seconded** by Mr. Harris. **CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Septic Review Subcommittee - September 3, 2020- *Mr. Cowan* stated that on September 3, 2020 the Septic Review Subcommittee reviewed and approved variances for 26 Walker Street (Map 239/ Lot 12).

MOTION by Ms. Schweitzer that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the Septic Review Subcommittee report from the meeting of September 3, 2020 as written. **Seconded** by Mr. Harris. **CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion Re: Options for Mosquito Control District Participation-

The Board of Health agreed to withdraw this item from the agenda.

Discussion Re: Whether There are Any Health Impacts Related to 5G Phone Networks-

Chairperson Sagall read the following [statement](#).

Mr. Cowan shared information from Section 703 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 with board members. He stated that this issue falls under the FCC not local Boards of Health.

Board members agreed that they did not have the jurisdiction nor the expertise to weigh in on the issue. The board suggested that if the residents of Gloucester would like to further express concerns on the issue they should contact the FCC, or their Congressman or Senator.

Ms. Schweitzer stated that she appreciated the public's concerns on the issue.

Councilor Val Gilman appeared before the board. She stated that the public will have to push back on AT&T to ensure that they can justify the FCC guidelines.

Mr. Rosa stated that using your phone emits more energy than the phone receives from the tower.

MOTION by Mr. Cowan that the Gloucester Board of Health withdraw the item until further discussion or information is brought forward. **Seconded** by Mr. Harris. **CARRIED.**

Update on Covid-19 Response Actions-

Ms. Carroll stated that the City's Covid-19 Task Force is continuing to meet. She stated that there are 6 active cases in Gloucester. She stated the State has seen a slight increase in positive cases recently. She stated that they still have concerns regarding the shelter and the waiting list for the shelter. She stated that they are advocating at the state level for assistance. She stated that the schools are doing well and the high school is the last school to open on October 12th. She stated they have received some guidance for Halloween and they are trying to stay in step with other Health Departments in the North Shore. She stated that the City is planning on doing a small Halloween party downtown that the Mayor is organizing. She stated that since Gloucester has not been in the "red" and is considered a low risk community they can move into step 2 of Phase 3. She stated that many of the items under that step do not apply to Gloucester, but gyms can increase capacity to 50% and the library can increase their capacity as well. She stated that this step also increases public outdoor gatherings to 100 and private outdoor gatherings are limited to 50 and indoor gatherings are capped at 25. She stated that

Salem has decided to delay Step 2 until November 1 and they have asked other Boards of Health to consider the same.

Mr. Rosa asked about the restrictions set on remote learning centers. *Ms. Carroll* stated that there is a lengthy process that establishments need to go through if they don't already have a license for this type of center. She stated that the only existing program that she knows of is the YMCA and they already had a license when they moved to offer this service.

Mr. Cowan asked if there was a source for City employees to go to for masks. *Ms. Carroll* responded that the City is only involved in supplying N95 masks to those who require them. She stated that as far as other employees, any face covering is better than nothing but they have lots of guidance on what is a better face covering and proper cleaning and handling of masks.

Mr. Cowan asked about HEPA machines. *Ms. Carroll* responded that most machines will state on the machine itself how many square feet it can be effective in. She stated that they are really only for small spaces and can be purchased at Target.

Ms. Schweitzer asked what the Halloween guidelines are for communities. *Ms. Carroll* responded that DPH put Halloween activities into risk categories. She stated that moderate risk would be trick-or-treating. She stated that people should not have bowls of candy where children can reach their hands into and they are discouraging face-to-face handing out candy at the door. She stated that there should be no indoor activities and wearing a Halloween mask alone without another mask to protect from Covid-19 is not recommended and there could be breathing issues if a mask is worn under a Halloween mask.

The board discussed whether or not to hold off on moving into Phase 3, step 2. The board discussed the Halloween gathering scheduled for downtown. They agreed they did not think it was safe for businesses to hand out candy to children. They suggested a goodie bag to be given out at the end when children were leaving the area.

Ms. Carroll suggested that the Board of Health submit their concerns to the City Council.

Mr. Cowan stated that he is concerned with people who are visiting Gloucester on vacation who refuse to wear masks and jeopardize people's safety.

Ms. Carroll stated that all of the senior housing buildings have been visited to administer flu vaccines.

Mr. Cowan asked about Covid testing. *Ms. Carroll* stated that there has not been much progress in terms of testing but they are partnering with MIT to offer one free round of testing to school communities. She stated that people can go to <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread#eligibility> to find a testing site.

CONCERNS OF BOARD MEMBERS

Virtual Board of Health Meetings- *Mr. Harris* asked if there were any plans to move towards in-person meetings. *Ms. Carroll* stated that they cannot at this time hold an in-person meeting because they would have to allow anyone that showed up into the meeting and there are still pandemic capacity limits.

Next Regular Monthly Meeting Board of Health- The next Board of Health monthly meeting will be on November 5, 2020 at 6 pm. The board agreed to hold a meeting on October 15, 2020 if needed.

MOTION by Mr. Cowan to adjourn.
Seconded by Mr. Rosa **CARRIED.**
MEETING ADJOURNED – 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobbi Orlando

Accepted by:

Richard Sagall, Chairperson

Documents Referenced:

October 1, 2020 Board of Health Agenda
Minutes of September 3, 2020 meeting
Minutes of September 3, 2020 Septic Review Subcommittee meeting