

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Board of Health
Minutes of the Meeting
March 4, 2021
5:30 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 Harri; Frederick Cowan; Joe Rosa; and Claudia Schweitzer. Present from the Health Department: Health Director: Karin Carroll; Assistant Health Director: Max Schenk.

Also present Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken.

The meeting started at 5:30 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 Board of Health meeting of February 4, 2021 as written. **Seconded** by Mr. Cowan. **CARRIED.**

MOTION by Mr. Cowan that the Gloucester Board of Health approve the Board of Health Septic Review Subcommittee minutes of the meeting of January 19, 2021 as written. **Seconded** by Mr. Harris. **CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Septic Review Subcommittee report of January 19, 2021-

At its meeting on January 19, 2021 the Gloucester Board of Health Septic Review Subcommittee reviewed and approved variances for the following properties:
186 Atlantic Street (Map 254/ Lot 28)

Property owned by Maureen Lawler

50 Eastern Point Boulevard (Map 135/ Lot 12)

Property owned by Certified Perfect LLC

MOTION by Mr. Harris that the Gloucester Board of Health accept the Board of Health Septic Review Subcommittee report from the meeting of January 19, 2021 as presented. **Seconded** by Mr. Cowan. **CARRIED.**

NEW BUSINESS

There was no "New Business".

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION: COVID-19 response updates -

Ms. Carroll stated that there are currently 40 active cases in Gloucester and there are zero people in the hospital and no new deaths. She stated that statewide the trends are similar. She stated that there has been a significant decrease in the positivity rate. She stated that the State is around 2% and Gloucester is around 3%. She stated that they are keeping in an eye on the new strains that have started to pop up in Massachusetts. She stated that they are focused on bringing the vaccination numbers up. She stated that there is much more of a demand for the vaccine than there is of a supply. She stated that the biggest challenge for the Health Department right now is assisting frustrated residents with how to access the vaccine. She stated that there are many barriers for people such as being tech savvy, and finding the time to look for an appointment. She stated that Governor Baker announced yesterday that teachers will now be eligible for the vaccine, starting March 11. She stated that they are holding vaccine clinics at the affordable senior housing complexes this week. She stated that they are able to offer rides for people to get to their vaccine appointments through SeniorCare. She stated that people do not have to be a member of SeniorCare to utilize the service. She stated that right now residents are responsible for finding their own appointment; they can call 211 or go online to the <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/> to book an appointment. She stated that they have been trying to push for a regional site on Cape Ann but for the State to accommodate that request they would need to give out 750 doses a day for 5 days week after week and they did not think they would have that demand on Cape Ann. She stated that they are still asking for 500-1000 doses per week because they have about 50%-60% of seniors on Cape Ann who are not yet vaccinated. She stated that they would like to have vaccines for teachers as well. She stated that the State is working on a mobile vaccine program and that may be available for Cape Ann residents who are homebound.

Mr. Cowan asked if any programs have a "no-show list" wait list. *Ms. Carroll* responded that SeniorCare and the senior center did have a list but the list becomes outdated very quickly.

Mr. Cowan asked if there was an appeal process for people such as library staff. *Ms. Carroll* stated that she did not know but those people would have to go through the State.

Mr. Schenk gave an update on new guidelines. He stated that restaurants are now able to have as many people as they can fit as long as they are six feet apart. He stated that they cannot have a party larger than 6 and there is still a 90 minute time in place. He stated that public events are limited to 100 people indoors and 150 outdoors and private settings are set to 10 people indoors and 25 outdoors. He stated that the Health Department has been receiving about 10-12 calls a day about scheduling a vaccine appointment.

Mr. Cowan asked how much longer they will have to do contact tracing. *Ms. Carroll* responded they will do contact tracing until the State tells them they no longer have to. *Mr. Schenk* commended their nursing team for the work they have been doing.

Mr. Rosa stated that the Biobot program runs out soon and he recommended that they renew the program until the virus is not detectable.

Mr. Cowan inquired about the pool testing at the schools. *Ms. Carroll* stated that the pool testing at the schools has started and they did hire 2 people to run the program.

Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken appeared before the board. She stated that she is also very concerned about the limited amount of vaccine available. She thanked everyone for their work.

The board thanked the Health Department for all their work around Covid-19.

Other Department Updates -

Mr. Schenk stated that the Housing Inspector is moving on and they will post for the position in the next few weeks.

CONCERNS OF BOARD MEMBERS

Blood Drive- *Chairperson Sagall* stated that he was concerned with the blood drive in Magnolia obtaining an oral temperature from donors. *Mr. Schenk* stated that that is not best practice and he will reach out to them and pass that on.

Next Regular Monthly Meeting Board of Health- The next Board of Health monthly meeting will be April 1, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

MOTION by Mr. Cowan to adjourn.
Seconded by Mr. Rosa **CARRIED.**
MEETING ADJOURNED – 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____/s/ Bobbi Orlando_____

Bobbi Orlando

Accepted by:

/s/ Richard Sagall_____

Richard Sagall, Chairperson

Documents Referenced:

March 4, 2021 Board of Health Agenda

March 4, 2021 Covid Metrics

February 4, 2021 Board of Health Minutes

January 19, 2021 Septic Review Subcommittee Minutes