

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Board of Health
Minutes of the Meeting
July 1, 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 Harris; Joe Rosa; and Claudia Schweitzer. Present from the Health Department: Health Director: Karin Carroll. Absent: Frederick Cowan; and Assistant Health Director: Max Schenk.

Also present: Chris Sicuranza, Assistant to Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Gloucester.

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 June 3, 2021 as written. **Seconded** by Mr. Harris. **CARRIED.** Mr. Rosa **abstained.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no "Committee Reports".

NEW BUSINESS

Dissolution of Search Committee Created June 3, 2021-

Ms. Carroll stated that five board members cannot be on a search committee for recruitment of a new board member due to open meeting laws. She suggested that the Board of Health dissolve the initial committee and then set up a new committee with two board members.

MOTION by *Ms. Schweitzer* that the Gloucester Board of Health dissolve the search committee that was initially set up on June 3, 2021. **Seconded** by *Mr. Harris*. **CARRIED**.

Creation of a New Search Committee With Only Two Board Members and the Possibility of Non-Board Members-

Mr. Rosa and *Mr. Harris* volunteered to be on the search committee for a new Board of Health member.

MOTION by *Ms. Schweitzer* that the Gloucester Board of Health create a search committee, comprised of *Mr. Harris* and *Mr. Rosa*, for a new Board of Health member. **Seconded** by *Mr. Harris*. **CARRIED**.

Termination of the Following Board of Health Emergency Orders: Eviction Moratorium-

Ms. Carroll stated that the CDC's eviction moratorium expires on July 31, 2021 and after that it would become an issue between the landlord and a tenant.

MOTION by *Mr. Rosa* that the Gloucester Health Department continue to follow the CDC guidelines regarding the eviction moratorium which is slated to end on July 31, 2021. **Seconded** by *Ms. Schweitzer*. **CARRIED**.

Termination of the Following Board of Health Emergency Orders: The Use of Masks and Other Protective Measures While in Public-

Ms. Carroll stated that there is no longer a State mandate so the wearing of masks falls to the CDC and DPH guidelines. She stated that CDC and DPH have a mask advisory in place for unvaccinated individuals.

MOTION by *Mr. Harris* that the Gloucester Board of Health lift the mask mandate that was previously set in place and follow the Massachusetts Governor's guidelines for masks with the reservation that they obtain the option to provide more aggressive guidelines. **Seconded** by *Ms. Schweitzer*. **CARRIED**.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion: COVID-19 Response Updates - *Ms. Carroll* stated that there are zero COVID-19 cases in Gloucester and zero active cases. She stated that the contract tracing team finished off as of yesterday. She stated that at the last meeting the Board of Health voted to discontinue the Biobot wastewater monitoring and when she reached out to them they asked if they would consider staying on for free for another nine weeks as part of a federal program. She stated that

they agreed and will continue with wastewater monitoring for another nine weeks. She stated that there are no new updates on boosters for vaccines.

Chairperson Sagall asked if there is any contract tracing done now that the local contract tracing team has disseminated. *Ms. Carroll* stated that all contract tracing will be done by the State.

The board thanked *Ms. Carroll* and the Health Department for their efforts during the pandemic.

OTHER DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Creek at Good Harbor Beach *Ms. Carroll* stated that the Health Department has been continuing to have an issue with contamination at the Creek at Good Harbor Beach. She stated that the Creek has been closed and there is a sign posted for no swimming there. She stated that they have been trying to figure out where the bacteria is coming from and they are working with DPW to correct the problem.

Health Director Resignation- *Ms. Carroll* stated that she has tendered her resignation as of July 23, 2021. She stated that Kelley Hiland, the Public Health Nurse, has tendered her resignation as well.

Ms. Schweitzer expressed how sorry she is that *Ms. Carroll* is leaving. She stated that she is saddened that it has come to this. The board agreed with *Ms. Schweitzer*.

The board and *Mr. Sicuranza* thanked that *Ms. Carroll* for her remarkable job as Public Health Director.

OTHER CONCERNS OF THE BOARD

Mayoral Statement- *Ms. Schweitzer* stated that she was very disheartened, angry, upset, and concerned that she learned through residents that there was a post on Facebook and Good Morning Gloucester that there was a mayoral statement posted regarding the Board of Health concerns. She stated that she does not understand that if it was a mayoral statement regarding the Board of Health concerns why it was not sent to the Board of Health and posted in social media instead. She stated that using social media is totally inappropriate and it is very upsetting. *Chairperson Sagall* stated that he agrees one-hundred percent. *Ms. Schweitzer* stated that the post got personal with people making comments about Health Department staff and Board of Health members and the Mayor was agreeing and confirming comments made by residents. She stated that it was highly unprofessional and the Board of Health should reach out to Human Resources regarding the inappropriateness of this behavior. *Chairperson Sagall* stated that there was a "Respectful Workplace" training that took place and the Mayor did not attend. *Mr. Harris* agreed that posting comments on Facebook regarding staff is totally inappropriate. *Chairperson Sagall* requested that the Mayor issue an apology for this type of behavior.

The board discussed joining the already pending formal complaint with the union.

Chairperson Sagall suggested that they call an attorney with the Massachusetts Associations of Boards of Health to find out what is the appropriate channel to register a complaint such as this.

Mr. Harris stated that it is frustrating that board members have not even discussed the issue with each other, have followed the rules, and did what they were asked to do and then the issue is posted on social media.

Ms. Schweitzer suggested that Chairperson Sagall write a letter on behalf of the Board of Health to Human Resources saying that they support the union's position.

Chairperson Sagall stated that he will draft a letter to Human Resources and he will contact Cheryl Sbarra to find the appropriate way to file a complaint. *Mr. Rosa* stated that he would be willing to join Chairperson Sagall to meet with Ms. Sbarra.

Chairperson Sagall stated that he is very saddened that the situation has come to this. *Mr. Rosa* stated that this reflects a level of dysfunction and has precipitated the loss of two people that are probably the most respected and valuable people in the department and it is a great loss for the City.

Next Regular Monthly Meeting Board of Health- The next Board of Health monthly meeting is scheduled for August 5, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

MOTION by Mr. Harris to adjourn.
Seconded by Ms. Schweitzer. **CARRIED.**
MEETING ADJOURNED – 6:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

___/S/ Bobbi Jo Orlando_____

Bobbi Orlando

Accepted by:

___/S/ Richard Sagall_____

Richard Sagall, Chairperson

Documents Referenced:

July 1, 2021 Board of Health Agenda
Minutes of the June 3, 2021 BOH Meeting
Health Department July Monthly Report

