

Shutesbury Board of Health Virtual Meeting  
April 1, 2020 7 pm

Present: Catherine Hilton, clerk; Norene Pease, Arleen Read, Al Werner, board members; Garrett Simonsen, guest. Other guests for shorter periods were April Stein, Mary Anne Antonellis, Meryl Mandell, Gary Bernhard, and Carol Samuels.

**Actions:**

Statement regarding on-line meetings in accordance with governor's orders.

Minutes of two previous meetings were accepted.

In response to a press request for case counts in individual towns, the board voted unanimously to adopt a policy of not publicizing case numbers, and to put out a statement saying that the disease is present in Western MA and universal precautions are called for.

**Discussion:**

Mary Anne Antonellis presented several proposed library programs: story walk on Town Common and behind Town Hall; fitness equipment distribution from Town Hall for zoom classes; a system for mailing materials from the library to in-town library patrons; sending notes and postcards to children. The board agreed that these programs should be safe as long appropriate precautions are taken.

Meryl Mandell and Gary Bernhard presented their proposal for trash bag distribution. The board approved the plan in principle and are leaving the details up to the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee.

Arleen explained nuances of quarantine. Anyone who had contact with a positive case before that case was symptomatic does not have to be quarantined. When investigating a confirmed case, those who had contact with the case prior to the onset of symptoms are not considered contacts; DPH acknowledges that there is a possibility of transmission before the onset of symptoms but the greatest risk is when symptomatic. The threshold for an officially identified contact is 15 minutes of contact within 6 feet of a symptomatic case who is not wearing a mask. Notification of address where a positive case goes to Shelburne Control. In the interest of time, discussion of quarantine education was postponed.

Back-up for Arleen on MAVEN and case investigation: even with a small surge she would be overwhelmed. There are a few options, including PH nursing services through FRCOG, volunteers from the School of Public Health, some personal contacts who may be interested, and possibly Claudia Lucas.

In Leverett, the BOH is asking people with suspected cases —untested but clinically diagnosed— to report them directly to the BOH. We agreed that we could not manage something similar.

Norene and Arleen have developed a budget for the \$16,000 of DPH aid that we are receiving through the district. They are also working on requesting 12-15 thermometers that are reportedly being distributed.

A citizen asked if the board would be able to “fast-track” home burial permits. The board agreed that we would expedite the request for such permits to the extent possible but that we are unable to waive any of the requirements.

Carol Samuels asked for guidance for the Lake Wyola Association, which expects to see second-home owners arriving in early summer. The board will develop some language for them to put into their spring newsletter.

The Select Board has written a letter intended for short-term rental owners; the governor has ordered these closed. This is a Board of Health responsibility so we’ll send the letters out. We will also ask our agents if Sirius Community should be inspected.

Cat will contact Steve Hubbard at DCR to inquire about plans for the state beach. Also we will work up some signage about social distancing to be used at Elliott Park and the LWA beaches.

Norene reported that MAPHCO will have weekly meeting Tuesdays 4:30-6:00 beginning 3/31 to discuss the status of COVID-19 in the 8 EDS regions, their response, what works. Topics for weekly PH messages will be prioritized. To engage our EDS team she will make informal contact with EMD and police chief rather than try to schedule yet another virtual meeting. Not clear how to engage with Leverett.

We have received a copy of Deerfield's drive-by vaccination plan to be adapted for our use in the event a vaccine becomes available.

The Board voted at 9:10 to go into executive session for discussion of confidential information relating to the physical or mental health of an individual. Vote to re-enter open session and immediately adjourn at 9:30.