

Shutesbury Board of Health
April 29, 2021, 7 pm
Virtual meeting

Present: Norene Pease, chair; Catherine Hilton, clerk; Arleen Read, Garrett Simonsen, Al Werner, board members; Mary David, Wm Levine, Clif Read, guests.

Minutes of April 21 meeting approved.

Several suggestions were made for a newsletter article.

Mary David is also a candidate for the Board of Health.

Arleen: update on her meeting with school nurse, principal, and superintendent. Because we reached a threshold of five cases in Shutesbury, there was a meeting to determine if the instruction modality at Shutesbury Elementary School should be changed. Since there is no connection with the school, no changes were made. Arleen noted that “breakthrough” cases in which fully vaccinated individuals have contracted COVID-19 and even been hospitalized have been observed in the area.

Cat will add DPH vaccination data for Shutesbury to the weekly report.

The board reviewed the Open Meeting Law complaint filed by Michael Hootstein on April 26 and discussed our required response letter, based on a rough draft prepared by Cat. A draft of the letter incorporating suggestions and observations made at the meeting will be presented to the board at its regular May 5 meeting for final review and approval, with last-minute changes as needed. This will allow us to respond within the OML time frame.

The board also discussed the Open Meeting Law and our compliance with it. We suspect that in some cases our email communication may go over the line into violation of the law and we plan to correct this by limiting our email communications to those that are strictly informational, without further discussion except at a meeting. Cat will obtain resources about the law to answer our questions about such things as crafting public messages, meeting in person for EDS drills or site visits, and attending meetings of other entities such as FRCOG.

The board also unanimously adopted a rule prohibiting Board members from responding to messages on their personal telephones or email accounts. Any such messages must be forwarded to the Board of Health phone or email to be answered by the BOH clerk or forwarded to the appropriate person.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.