



BOARD OF HEALTH
Topsfield Town Hall
8 West Common Street, Topsfield, MA 01983
*****VIDEO/TELE CONFERENCE*****

January 20, 2021

6:30 PM

Board Members present: Chairperson Sheryl Knutsen RN and Board Members Anthony Alley RN, Larry Fixler RPh, Mark Rizza and William Hunt Esq. Also in attendance: Health Director Wendy Hansbury, Senior Administrative Assistant Susan Winslow and Selectman A. Richard Gandt.

COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS:

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

BOH: Board of Health

BOS: Board of Selectmen

MAVEN: Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network

MDEP: Massachusetts Department of Environmental
Protection

CDC: Center for Disease Control

MEMA: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

CEU: Continuing Education Unit

MRC: Medical Reserve Corps

CEMP: Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

COIN: Community Outreach Information Network

DESE: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

DPH: Department of Public Health

NEMMC: Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control

EEE: Eastern Equine Encephalitis

EDS: Emergency Dispensing Site

PHEP: Public Health Emergency Preparedness

ESHWT: Estimated Seasonal High Water Table

POD: Point Of Dispensing

EP: Emergency Preparedness

RN: Registered Nurse

FDA: Food & Drug Administration

RS: Registered Sanitarian

HHS: Health and Human Services

SAS: Soil Absorption System

HMCC: Health & Medical Coordinating Coalition

TBOH: Topsfield Board of Health

LSAC: Local State Advisory Committee

TRMRC: Topsfield Regional Medical Reserve Corps

MDPH Mass. Dept. of Public Health

VNA: Visiting Nurse Association

WNV: West Nile Virus

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sheryl Knutsen called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Sheryl Knutsen made the following announcements:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Topsfield Board of Health will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Topsfield Town Website at www.topsfield-ma.gov. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: join the ZOOM audio-video conference call (see information below). No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Topsfield Board of Health website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Topsfield Town is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Board of Health

Time: Jan 20, 2021 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84979600206?pwd=R3RBL3VKSIY3bmFUNDUwWWsxYTZJUT09>

Meeting ID: 849 7960 0206

Passcode: 373518

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 849 7960 0206

Passcode: 373518

Boxford Cable Television is recording this meeting and Susan Winslow is taking notes for Minutes of this Meeting. Is there anyone else who wishes to record this meeting?

(There was no-one else who wished to record the meeting.)

PUBLIC HEARING TO BE CONTINUED The Public Hearing on R: 1-2 Supplemental Regulations to 310 CMR 15.00 The State Environmental Code duly advertised in the January 16, 2020 and January 23, 2020 and opened at the February 19, 2020 Board of Health Meeting will be continued per Section 17 of Ch.53 of the Acts of 2020 to the first hearing date following the termination of the state of emergency or to a date otherwise prescribed by law.

APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments at this meeting.

MEETING MINUTES

December 16, 2020

VOTE: Mr. Rizza made a motion to approve the December 16, 2020 Meeting Minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Fixler. Chair Knutsen called for a roll-call vote:

Knutsen – yes

Alley - yes

Fixler - yes

Rizza – yes

The motion passed in a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Hunt joined the meeting.

COVID-19

COVID Command Center Conference Calls

Chair Knutsen gave the Board an update on the COVID Command Center Conference Calls she has participated in since the December 16, 2020 Board of Health Meeting. Chair Knutsen read the following information into the record:

For 01/20/2021 TBOH meeting: Inter-agency Local Boards of Health COVID-19 webinars

There have been eight Inter-agency Local Boards of Health COVID-19 webinars since our last Topsfield BOH meeting. From 400 to 700 people join these calls every Tuesday and Friday. The following is a summary of my notes from these calls.

*12/18/2020 DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) reported that protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios in school, on the bus, or in community settings have been updated. MDPH has created guidance about how to keep your family safe during the holidays: Limit in-person celebrations to household members, postpone or cancel travel, and follow gathering size limits. The Community Tracing Collaborative is tracing 3,200 cases per day. MDPH reported that 42% of all MA COVID19 cases are associated with household clusters. On December 16th 2020, 20,000 doses of COVID vaccine were received at the State Lab, and were immediately shipped out to hospitals. The Commonwealth has expanded the list of people who will be authorized to vaccinate, to include paramedics, EMTs, and medical and nursing students, in order to meet the monumental task of vaccinating everyone. MDPH has created a sequential list which is posted on a new webpage titled *When can I get the COVID-19 vaccine? | Mass.gov*. First responders are next on the prioritized list. Local Health Departments will be asked if they have the capacity to store and administer vaccine. If so, they will receive Moderna vaccine which comes in 10-dose vials. The smallest amount that will be shipped is 200 doses, so small towns are urged to partner with other towns to form mini-regions. Also the State will be standing up large scale clinics to vaccinate larger groups. One site under consideration is the Topsfield Fairgrounds.*

12/22/2020 The Governor announced Order No. 59 applying temporary revisions to COVID-19 measures to stop the spread, to be in effect from December 26th to at least January 10th. These will involve reducing capacity limits and gathering limits. MDPH has extended the deadline for K-12 students to receive a flu vaccination to February 28th 2021. The Community Tracing Collaborative now has 1,800 staff and has rolled out a 2-way messaging capability

that allows people to communicate with the CTC by SMS throughout their quarantine or isolation period. MDPH is seeking proposals from LHDs regarding "how many vaccinations can you do? Food security as a top concern for some individuals/families that are quarantining/isolating due to COVID. In response, a 'Quarantine & Isolation Food Program' will be initiated. City/town Emergency Management Directors will work with LHDs to identify people in need and connect them with food resources, with the help of a new Massachusetts Food Security Coordinator.

12/29/2020 Higher education and boarding schools have been advised to refrain from bringing any students back to campus until January 18th. A new variant strain of SARS-CoV-2 has been discovered in the United Kingdom. It has been predicted to potentially be more rapidly transmissible than other circulating strains of SARS-CoV-2. The deadline for use of the Coronavirus Relief Fund (the CARES Act) has been extended to December 31, 2021, one year from now. This week staff and residents of long term care facilities will be vaccinated via a federal partnership between CDC and CVS, Walgreens and Managed Health Care Associates. Vaccination of First Responders (EMS, Police and Fire) kicks off on January 11th. Topsfield will partner with Boxford, Middleton, Hamilton and Wenham to provide vaccinations to first responders in those 5 towns. Two clinics will be held at Coolidge Hall which has been made available by the Essex Agricultural Society/Topsfield Fair.

01/05/2021 The COVID-19 Enforcement and Intervention Team (CEIT) has developed a comprehensive public messaging campaign to support high priority communities with persistently high COVID-19 case rates. These flyers, images, and videos are available for use by state and local government in their public messaging campaigns: COVID-19 resources for municipalities | Mass.gov It will include a 'vaccine communications and community engagement plan' which will provide clear, accurate and consistent information about the vaccine: COVID-19 Vaccine in Massachusetts | Mass.gov . A new COVID-19 Interactive Data Dashboard <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting# covid-19-interactive-data-dashboard-> has rolled out with data updated every Thursday by 5 p.m. Plans for local COVID vaccination clinics are rapidly coming together as allotments of vaccine are beginning to be shipped out. A Map COVID-19 vaccine locations for individuals currently eligible to be vaccinated | Mass.gov with the menu and locations of local clinics went live yesterday. Clinic staffers need to take training on storage, handling and administration of the vaccine, and they can be vaccinated before the clinics begin. All are cautioned that it takes some weeks to build up immunity, so all precautions need to continue. Primary care providers will partner with hospitals to receive vaccine with which to vaccinate their staff.

01/08/2021 The Governor announced that industry restrictions for capacity limits and reduced gathering limits that went into effect on December 26th will now be extended for at least two more weeks to January 24th. The Massachusetts Association of Health Boards reminded all that there are liability protections for health care professionals and health care services involving treatment, diagnosis, prevention or mitigation of COVID-19 that they provide. These protections are outlined in Chapter 64 of the Acts of 2020. The COVID-19 variant strain that was first identified in the UK, b.1.1.7, has now been identified in seven states, including our neighbors CT and NY. Another variant strain has been identified in South Africa. We are still in Phase 1 of a three phase vaccination rollout. Certain healthcare responders and 187 local health departments are collaborating together to operate more than 119 sites across the Commonwealth that will vaccinate first responders. Mass vaccination sites and other providers will also support vaccination efforts.

01/12 All schools in MA will have the opportunity to participate in pooled testing for COVID-19. The Massachusetts Medical Society will support COVID-19 vaccine distribution to independent medical practices. Hospital depots will help distribute vaccine to providers. They can then vaccinate their staff. In addition to vaccinating first responders, LBOHs are encouraged to vaccinate COVID-facing healthcare workers if they have the capacity. Vaccinations at Residential Congregate Care and Shelter Settings will begin next week. In the next few weeks, the Commonwealth

will launch mass vaccination sites. LHDs that opt to continue their clinic operations through Phase 3 will receive instructions on vaccine ordering.

01/15 The first Mass Vaccination Clinic will open at Gillette Stadium which is depicted on an interactive map where people can sign up for appointments. Retail pharmacy locations are helping to fill gaps in coverage between mass sites and other providers. So far 100 LHDs have indicated they want to continue vaccinating. Many questions have been asked about where people fit in phases. There are no exact dates when phases will open up because it is not known how much vaccine will be distributed to MA and on what timeline. As we move into phase 2 we are thinking about the many channels where people can get vaccine. Other states are doing things differently. Vaccine sites are being staffed by both paid and volunteer workers. There is no requirement about people being a MA resident in order to be vaccinated in MA.

01/19 The process for LHDs to order vaccine from MDPH will happen via a weekly survey to determine how many doses can be administered in the upcoming week. All orders will be reviewed by an allocation team. LHDS may receive all, a portion, or none of the vaccine they ordered, depending on vaccine availability. MDPH does not yet have on hand enough vaccine to vaccinate all of those in Phase 1. And soon those who received the first dose will need to be vaccinated with a second dose, which will be shipped automatically to locations where the first dose was administered. Volunteer support for local clinics will come from the Massachusetts Medical Reserve Corps which has over 5,000 volunteers organized into 36 units. Topsfield belongs to the Northern Essex County MRC. The Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the "CARES Act") covered period has been extended to December 31, 2021. This fund authorized \$2.7 B for Massachusetts. The Commonwealth has made up to \$502 M available to municipalities for COVID-related expenses. Eligible Uses include: renting a location, FTEs, and vaccine storage for Moderna vaccine. Other potential sources of funding are: health insurance, and FEMA Public Assistance program. Municipalities are advised to evaluate their CvRF-MP expenses to date to assess whether that is the most appropriate source. The Reimbursement rate for vaccine administration is being changed to twice the Medicare rate; it will be \$90 for administering the two doses. MEMA announced that local governments may seek reimbursement for certain costs from FEMA PA related to its vaccination operation. MDPH is putting together guidance for municipalities around eligible costs.

Board Members thanked Chair Knutsen for the time and effort she has put into attending and reporting on these meetings.

Health Director Wendy Hansbury informed the Board regarding the following:

- Phase I COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics for First Responders were held on January 11, 12 and 16, 2021. A clinic for Essex County employees was held on January 16, 2021. The clinics were held at Coolidge Hall at the Fair Grounds. Ms. Hansbury thanked Fairgrounds Manager James O'Brien and the Essex Agricultural Society for allowing the clinic to run at that location.
- There is not enough COVID-19 Vaccine to cover everyone in Phase I. A state survey team will be used to conduct allocations of vaccine.
- Ms. Hansbury thanked Board Chair Sheryl Knutsen and Board Member Mark Rizza for their volunteer efforts with the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics. Ms. Hansbury also thanked Susan Winslow and the many Northern Essex County Medical Reserve Corps volunteers who helped the clinics run smoothly.
- Ms. Knutsen noted that the Topsfield Board of Health was well-prepared to set up vaccine clinics for the COVID-19 Vaccine roll-out due to many years of experience planning and running flu vaccine clinics.

- Mr. Fixler asked if the Prep-Mod system used to register individuals for the COVID-19 vaccination will automatically schedule the second vaccine required. Ms. Hansbury informed the Board that a reminder to sign up for the second vaccine will be sent via PrepMod, with follow-up vaccine clinics in February.
- Ms. Hansbury informed the Board that a total of 600 doses of COVID-19 Vaccine were administered during the January, 2021 COVID-19 vaccine clinics.
- Three (3) vials were left, which were administered to Police and Fire Personnel at the Hamilton Public Safety facility.
- Ms. Knutsen made note of the maximization of efforts to set up the clinics quickly and efficiently: Ms. Hansbury obtained the vaccine on Tuesday, January 5, 2021. It was stored in the medical grade refrigerator in Hamilton, and by the following Monday, the initial vaccine clinic was up and running at Coolidge Hall. Board Member Mark Rizza volunteered with valuable technical expertise.
- Ms. Hansbury was given only two days' notice for the Vaccine Clinic requested Essex County employees, but the clinic was up and running and vaccinated over 300 individuals on Saturday, January 16, 2021.
- Ms. Hansbury continues to work with the COVID-19 Public Health Nurse who serves as the liaison for the schools in the Tri-Town. Ms. Hansbury reports that she is doing a great job and efforts are underway to obtain funding to keep her in the position until June.
- Statistics: as of January 18, 2021: 16 COVID-19 positive in Topsfield. VNA Care Nurse Joan Fitzpatrick RN continues to monitor these cases plus their contacts.

OLD BUSINESS

Trash/Recycling/Compost

Responsibility for Trash/Recycling/Compost was scheduled to move to the Highway Department in January. Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian has delayed the move. Ms. Hansbury will keep the Board informed.

NEW BUSINESS

FY22 Budget

Ms. Hansbury presented the proposed FY22 Budget at the Select Board meeting. Highlights include:

- Sharps Disposal: Boxford has installed a sharps collection unit, so Topsfield no longer shares the expense for Sharps Disposal with them. However, the Topsfield sharps collection costs have remained the same, and in some cases, exceeded costs in the past due to the fact that more people are working at home during COVID-19, using the Topsfield Sharps Collection box instead of dropping their sharps near their place of employment.
- Dead Animal Pick-Ups: The Town Administrator is working to find an in-Town solution to this rather than pay an outside contractor.
- Reinstatement of two (2) hours to the Administrative Assistant Position for a total of nineteen (19) hours per week.
- Re-fund the Board of Health Minutes Secretary position.
- Institute the Mass. Housing Septic Loan Program
- Institute a Revolving Fund for Vaccine Purchase funded by Vaccine Reimbursement
- Flu Vaccine: the expense for FY21 far exceeded the line item budgeted for a number of reasons:

1. Schools required that all children show proof of Flu Vaccination, so more families attended the vaccine clinics with children
2. There was an increase in Senior Citizens attending Flu Vaccine Clinics, requiring high-dose vaccine that was more expensive.

Revolving Fund

Mr. Hunt has generously offered to research and draft the proposal for the Town Warrant for the Board of Health request for a Revolving Fund. The Board discussed the goals of this fund:

- Fund will be used for the purchase of vaccine only.
- Fund will allow the Board of Health to respond quickly in the event of an emergency.

PFAS

Ms. Hansbury informed the Board that the Water Department sent a letter to residents regarding elevated levels of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in local water. Ms. Hansbury has been in communication with Water Superintendent Greg Krom to stay abreast of the situation. This issue is being handled by the Water Department because it involves the public water supply.

Mr. Gandt and the Board discussed the issue of PFAS. Mr. Gandt informed the Board that the Town hopes to obtain a grant to study the issue.

Proposed Concert Venue

Mr. Hunt informed the Board that the Essex Agricultural Society, owners of property on Route 1, would like to host concerts at that location which is currently used for grazing cows and overflow parking for the Topsfield Fair. Mr. Hunt informed the Board that he received a call from a Garden Street resident with concerns about the proposal. Mr. Hunt informed the Board that the proposal would include three (3) concerts a week from May to September and he expressed concern about the use of port-a-johns at such a venue. Mr. Rizza informed the Board that this proposal has not yet gone before the Zoning Board. Once a proposal has been submitted to the Town, Zoning Board will rule on it and comments may be submitted from the Board of Health at that time.

HEALTH AGENT REPORT

Ms. Hansbury informed the Board that, in addition to planning and executing numerous COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics, business remains brisk at the Board of Health including but not limited to:

- Multiple soil tests
- System repairs
- Review of Title 5 Inspection Reports
- Review of Septic Applications
- Answering questions and follow-up with residents
- Annual permit and license renewals

Ms. Hansbury asked the Board if they would consider a temporary suspension of percolation and deep hole testing for new systems until March due to the heavy schedule of COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics.

VOTE: Mr. Rizza made a motion that based on the current State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the number of vaccine clinics being run by the Topsfield Board of Health, there will be a temporary suspension of percolation and deep hole testing for new construction for the next sixty (60) days. Seconded by Mr. Fixler. Chair Knutsen called for a roll-call vote:

Knutsen – yes

Rizza - yes

Fixler – yes

Alley – yes

Hunt -yes

The motion carried in a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Fixler made a motion to amend the motion to include an effective start date of January 20, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Alley. Chair Knutsen called for a roll-call vote:

Knutsen – yes

Rizza - yes

Fixler – yes

Alley – yes

Hunt -yes

The motion carried in a vote of 5-0.

ADJOURN

VOTE: Mr. Fixler made a motion to adjourn at 8:26 PM. Seconded by Mr. Rizza. Chair Knutsen called for a roll-call vote:

Knutsen – yes

Rizza – yes

Fixler – yes

Alley – yes

Hunt- yes

The motion carried in a vote of 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Winslow

Recording Secretary

Items distributed:

1. Agenda
2. Board of Health Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2020
3. Topsfield Water Department PFAS Detection Notification
4. Topsfield First Responders COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Photo Flyer by MRC Coordinator Liisa Jackson

These Meeting Minutes were accepted at the February 17, 2021 Board of Health Meeting.