

Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
April 21, 2020  
Ashland Town Hall  
101 Main Street, Ashland, MA

*Diane Mortensen, Chair  
Judi Teller, Clerk  
Mark Oram, Agent/Director*

*Chris Daniele, Vice Chair  
Ronald Etskovitz, Member  
Koduvayur Narayana, Member*

**Members Present Via Zoom Meeting:**

Diane Mortensen, Chris Daniele, Judi Teller, Ron Etskovitz and Koduvayur Narayana

**Others Present:**

Mark Oram, Health Agent/Director  
Laura Clifford, Administrative Secretary  
Sergeant Ed Burman, Ashland Police Department  
Michael Herbert, Town Manager  
Jennifer Ball, Assistant Town Manager  
Tom Curran, Food Inspector  
Mark Dassoni, Resident  
Preston Crow, Resident  
Amy Childs, Resident

**Call Meeting to Order - 6:00 PM**

Ms. Mortensen called the online meeting to order at 6:06 PM.

**Citizens Participation**

None.

**Covid-19, Updates**

Sergeant Burman reviewed the documents sent to the Board, he discussed a flow chart from MAVEN which explains how MAVEN works, as well as two charts showing the total number of confirmed cases (83 as of 4/21/2020) and the number of cleared cases (44 as of 4/21/2020). Sergeant Burman explained that eight of the confirmed positive patients have not responded to messages, and noted a letter has been sent to them, informing them to contact us. Board Members received PowerPoint slides showing how we follow-up on the positive cases and what the nurses are doing, however, things are changing daily. A contract tracing collaborative will be taking over from Red Cap. We have added seven school nurses and a couple community members; we have a good team on top of this.

Ms. Mortensen discussed an online meeting she, Mr. Oram and Mr. Curran attended regarding the Farmer's Market and a potential June opening. Ms. Mortensen noted that Mr. Curran gave guidance regarding set up, precautions and guidelines. Mr. Curran noted that steps were discussed regarding guidelines the Mass. Department of Agriculture is implementing, similar to what food stores are doing. Those guidelines include: Social distancing, handwashing, limiting the number of people, eliminating handling of currency and food products and the use of gloves. The setup of the Farmer's Market may be configured to have all vendors on one side.

Mr. Oram visited the grocery stores over the weekend, and spoke with the managers on duty. Mr. Curran noted he has been fielding complaints and sent directives in March; he sent another email to restaurants tonight with our expectations and guidance, including links to the Town Coronavirus

webpage, EPA and CDC. Mr. Curran will work with the restaurants diligently and would appreciate any feedback from the Board. Ms. Teller would like to see the Board of Health be more proactive than reactive, and asked how can we ensure everyone's safety? Mr. Curran would prefer to address any situations by email; if there is a dire situation he would visit the establishment; Ms. Mortensen suggested that Board Members could also discuss visiting local establishments if given some guidance by Mr. Curran. Ms. Teller noted that she understands the hesitancy, but feels it is important that our two grocery stores be visited once per week to ensure they are adhering. Mr. Curran will put together guidance for the Board Members to be used by Board Members. The list of open restaurants are available on the Town website. Mr. Daniele suggested that if residents see something concerning they should forward any concerns to the Board. Mr. Etskovitz discussed the touch terminals in the stores; Mr. Curran noted that these should be disinfected on a regular basis.

Mark Dassoni inquired as to how to notify the store managers if you see something concerning. Mr. Curran noted that the managers are aware of the expectations we have of them. Mr. Narayana added that he can call the staff to come right over if he sees an issue.

Mr. Burman believes mandating masks is probably where we are heading. Ms. Ball added that the Attorney General is looking at whether wearing a mask can be mandated or a directive. We can start pushing that message, and work with Beth and Ashley to get the message out. Sergeant Burman noted that he has supplied masks for all DPW workers and staff members, and will supply any residents if they are having trouble finding one.

The issue of fatalities and death certificate process was discussed. Sergeant Burman wants to ensure an actual cause of death before that information is released. Ms. Ball noted that Captain Robie and Sergeant Burman have been in constant contact with the three high-risk facilities in Town; each day the State updates the state-wide information, for both residence and staff members. Mr. Burman noted that the National Guard testing is occurring tomorrow at Waterview Lodge, Ms. Ball added that this is a resource that the State has opened up to many nursing homes and long term care facilities after outbreaks in many facilities. Sergeant Burman confirmed that the swabs are the testing method that will be used.

### **Old/New Business**

#### **Discuss Mary Mortensen Public Health Award – Date for Award Presentation**

Ms. Mortensen noted that Mr. Daniele sent an email to Decisions at Every Turn, letting them know that they were chosen as this year's recipient of the Mary Mortensen Public Health Award. They did respond and said they were honored. We will leave this item on the agenda to discuss a date for the award presentation at a future meeting.

### **Clerk's Report**

#### **Resident/Volunteer Opportunities available for the Board of Health**

Ms. Teller read that there was a group looking for volunteers to sew gowns; Mr. Narayana noted that his wife is working with a group that can sew gowns if they still need volunteers. Is there any way we can get hand sanitizer to distribute while Board Members are visiting establishments? Ms. Mortensen suggested they could have a quick meeting with Tom Curran to go over the procedures when they go to visit a restaurant or grocery store.

### **Health Agent's Report**

#### **Budget FY20 Updates**

Mr. Oram noted that there is currently \$13,700 in Covid-19 grant money from the State. Mr. Oram noted that we are looking into where the public health nurse's salary funds, over the ten regular hours, will come from. It is currently not being drawn from the Covid-19 fund, but believes it will be soon. Any salary and Covid related items will be drawn from this account, and possibly mass inoculations.

### **Medical Reserve Corps. (MRC) Update**

The process of signing up Members is still ongoing, MRC is busy and is sending out information. There are currently 7-10 Members from Ashland. Ms. Teller suggested, and Mr. Oram agreed, to reach out to any of the nurses or medical professionals that he is currently working with on Covid-19 to see if MRC is of interest.

### **Review Minutes, 3/10/2020**

**Motion:** Mr. Narayana made a motion to approve the March 10, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Daniele seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 4-0-1. Motion approved. Ms. Teller abstained as she was not present for that meeting.

### **Review Minutes, 4/14/2020**

**Motion:** Mr. Narayana made a motion to approve the April 14, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Daniele seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 5-0. Motion approved.

### **Discuss Future Agenda Topics for Future Meeting Dates**

The Board agreed to have a weekly update/meeting exclusively on Covid-19 on the weeks that are not regularly scheduled meeting dates. The next meeting for Covid-19 update will be April 28<sup>th</sup>.

Preston Crow thanked the Board for taking care of things. The Board Members thanked him for joining the meeting.

Amy Childs noted she was just checking in to the meeting, and is currently working with Sergeant Burman and has been trained on MAVEN; she will look into the MRC. The Board Members thanked Ms. Childs for her assistance.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion:** Mr. Narayana made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Teller seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 5-0. Motion approved.

ASHLAND BOARD OF HEALTH  
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AT THE 4/21/2020 MEETING  
(All items stored in the Board of Health files unless otherwise noted)

1. PowerPoint Slides and chart showing MAVEN work flow
2. Graphs of Total Cases, Total Cleared, Combined Total Cases and Cleared
3. FY20, Year-to-Date Budget
4. Draft Minutes, March 10, 2020, April 14, 2020