



Town of Boylston Board of Health boh@boylston-ma.gov
221 Main Street, Boylston MA 01505 ** Telephone (508) 869-6828 ** Fax (508) 869-6210

MEETING MINUTES

June 27, 2022

Members Present: Robert Thibeault, John Wentzell, Sarah Scheinfein

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dennis Costello

Recorder: Melanie Rich

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Sarah Scheinfein made a motion to approve the meeting minutes dated May 23, 2022; John Wentzell seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

July 25, 2022 was confirmed as the next meeting date.

Reorganization of the Board – Sarah spoke with the Town Clerk about being a co-Chair with Rob. It was suggested that one of them be the Chairman and the other a Vice Chair. In the event the Chair can't make a meeting, the Vice-Chair will run it. John Wentzell made a motion for Sarah to be Chair and Rob to be the Vice Chair; Rob Thibeault seconded; all voted in agreement; motion approved.

AGENT'S REPORT

COVID-19 – The numbers are continuing to decline. Worcester County has been downgraded to low. The state approved the vaccine for children 6 months to 4 years. It is available at the doctor's office and/or at some CVS or Walgreens. Some doctors will vaccinate the minimum age; some pharmacies will not; it is a 3-shot process. The US recently dropped the condition to require testing before coming back into the country.

Town Nurse – The board reviewed/edited the ad for the nurse. A more detailed list of responsibilities will be made available to the applicants. Applications will be sent to Sarah to review; the pool will be narrowed to the top three candidates; a specific set of questions will be used for all candidates; the preferred candidate will interview with the board and that information forwarded to Human Resources for their part to perform CORI checks, references, etc.; if all is acceptable, the board will be informed and the candidate will be offered the position and given a start date. Rob commented that it will be a fair and balanced process on how the board came to their decision; it will be transparent. Sarah will contact the HR Department for guidance on where to post the advertisement.

Greater Boroughs Partner for Health Update – At a recent Boroughs meeting, they discussed Health Resources In Action (HRIA) to learn about the scope, scale and cost of a regional community health assessment. The next meeting to further discuss it is Wednesday, July 6th at 2:00 p.m. Sarah is unable to attend; Dennis will try to attend. The Greater Boroughs wants to hire a company to assess the four towns; the cost could be up to \$100-\$150K. They are looking to fund it with ARPA money. The new Health Agent for the Boroughs, Michael Seager, starts work on July 11th. Sarah will bring the minutes from the GBPH June 15th meeting to our next meeting.

Dennis asked Sarah to contact Kristin Black about having our nurse start checking the MAVEN for us since our current nurse contract ends on June 30th.

Cemetery Regulation – Dennis contacted the MAHB and MHOA and found that the state does not have regulations against green burials. What the board required up to this point mirrors what the state requires for green burials. The person does not have to be embalmed. Home burials are not prohibited by state law, they are told to go to the local BOH; the BOH has the authority. Home burials can be green burials; things to be considered to be done include a survey to determine lots lines, a water and well survey, a soil profile (deep hole test), there can't be a slope more than 3:1, it has to be on the deed, it has to be approved by the BOH, the plan has to be certified by the Town Clerk, and it has to be sent to DEP. It has to be approved by the towns governing body (it is not sure if that is by the Selectmen or if it has to go to a town meeting).

Green burials are for people who want to be one with nature. They have to have 3-feet of cover over them, how to keep the body before putting it in the ground is up to the people doing the internment. No metal, vault, or liner can be used. There is also consideration of how the person died, i.e., healthy person, a person with viruses/pathogens, etc. There is a lot of room for interpretation.

Dennis spoke with the attorney and explained that the board needs something in place to allow it; she has been open to that. Rob said the interpretation is so loose; she can have it at home because it is for non-profit and he believes her intention is to have it done by this means. The board is concerned about other town residents. It would have to be made extremely specific as to who could do it. Dennis has spoken with Jordana Schreiber (Day Pitney) and hopes to have something from her for the next meeting. At a certain point, all parties will be brought in for discussion.

Opiate Funding – No additional information at this time.

Community Health Assessments – Dennis received a response from UMass. They do have a Community Relations Department. The physician said he could talk with her to see what they could do or assist the board in preparing a Comprehensive Health Assessment. He will meet with her in July; possibly have interns work on it. A great deal of data needs to be gathered. Dennis would like UMass to look at our town specifically; the cost could be beneficial.

PLAN REVIEW – None tonight.

Mark Anttila asked what is needed from Compass Pointe and letting the developer know.

John Wentzell made a motion to adjourn; Rob Thibeault seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.