

TOWN OF HARWICH



*BOARD OF HEALTH*

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**TOWN OF HARWICH BOARD OF HEALTH  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2020-1:00 P.M.  
HARWICH TOWN HALL – REMOTE MEETING**

BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairwoman Pamela Howell, R.N., Vice Chairwoman Sharon Pflieger & Member Ronald Dowgiallo, D.M.D.

BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS ABSENT: Member Matthew Antoine

OTHERS PRESENT: Selectman Larry Ballantine

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Health Director Meggan Eldredge & Executive Assistant Jennifer Clarke

**Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Harwich Board of Health is being conducted via remote participation. 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 as provided for in the Order.**

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**I CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Howell called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

## **II      BOARD OF HEALTH WORK SESSION**

### **A. COVID-19 UPDATE**

As of July 8, 2020, there have been a total of 129 cases of COVID-19 in the Town of Harwich and 24 related deaths. There are currently 4 active cases of COVID-19 and 101 people have recovered from the virus.

The Health Department was notified by the owner of The Port restaurant that one of their employees had tested positive for COVID-19. In an abundance of caution, the owners proceeded to follow the Mandatory Safety Standards for restaurants and close for 24 hours in order to deep clean and disinfect their facility. In addition to this safety step, the restaurant owners contacted fellow employees who worked with the person who was tested and encouraged them to be tested for COVID-19 as well.

Ms. Pflieger asked if the co-workers that were tested now will be tested again in 2 weeks. Health Director Eldredge responded that they can be re-tested only if they show signs or symptoms of the virus.

Selectman Larry Ballantine stated that he received a phone call about the electronic sign at exit 10 that has been removed. Health Director Eldredge responded that prior to the pop-up clinic at Outer Cape Health Services, there was an electronic sign at the highway off ramps stating that all travelers coming into Massachusetts must self-quarantine for 14-days. The electronic signs have been moved onto Route 28 and have messages about wearing masks.

Ms. Pflieger asked if Harwich could use the same wording that is used in Chatham that masks are required and that there is a \$300.00 fine for non-compliance. In Chatham, masks are required to be worn in a certain area of downtown. Health Director Eldredge responded that masks are required when social distancing cannot be maintained. Chatham enacted a mandatory mask zone on their commercial Main Street, regardless of social distancing. It would be up to the Harwich Board of Health if they would like to adopt a mandatory mask policy.

Ms. Howell agreed with Ms. Pflieger however Mr. Dowgiallo disagreed stating that he does not feel there is a problem with masks in Harwich right now.

The Board discussed what areas of town the mandatory mask zone would apply to. Ms. Pflieger would like to see the mandate in place for the entire town, when you cannot social distance.

The Board directed staff to schedule a discussion of implementing a mandatory mask zone in Harwich, for an upcoming meeting.

### **B. DISCUSS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH, HEALTH DIRECTOR AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Health Director Eldredge briefly reviewed the information that was provided to the Board.

Ms. Howell asked when the last time the Manual of Laws and Regulations Relating to Boards of Health was updated. Health Director Eldredge responded that the copy provided is from 2010, however there was a 2016 version found after the packets were posted. All of the code references are the same however some links and regulations have been updated. The background information as far as what the Board follows is the same in both manuals.

Ms. Pfleger stated that what she is trying to determine is the difference between the authorities and responsibilities of the Board of Health and the Health Director. Health Director Eldredge responded that the Board of Health has the power to enact any reasonable health regulation. The Harwich Board of Selectmen have always looked to the Board of Health before they enact any type of health regulation. Regulations and policies that go through the Board of Health do not require a vote of the town's people at town meeting. As far as policies and updates for COVID-19, Health Director Eldredge has been acting on the Board of Health's behalf.

With respect to COVID-19, Ms. Pfleger asked what the proper channels would be if a member of the Board of Health were to have concerns or questions. Health Director Eldredge responded that the member could go thru the Board of Health Chair to request that a meeting be scheduled, as they are responsible for what is on the agenda. In Harwich, Health Department staff drafts an agenda which includes continued items from the last meeting and any new applications. Any information outside of variances or applications can be placed on the agenda at the request of the Health Director and/or Chair of the Board of Health. Another option would be to bring items up at a meeting for discussion on at future agenda.

Ms. Howell asked if policies are ever changed without the Board of Health making a vote. Health Director Eldredge responded that internal policies relating to paperwork have been changed, however anything further than that would go before the Board for review and vote.

Ms. Pfleger asked what the signs that have been put up regarding masks would be called. Health Director responded that the signs are considered advisories and work as a way of educating the public. The Board does have existing policies that are part of the Board of Health Regulations. If any of the policies in the regulation book were to be updated, they would need to come to the Board for review and vote. Ms. Pfleger asked if new Board of Health members can be given a hard copy of the regulations. Health Director Eldredge responded that the regulations are quite a large document and are available on the Town of Harwich website. One of the Board's long term goals could be to update the regulation book.

Ms. Howell asked if fee schedule changes would be found on the website as well. Health Director Eldredge confirmed that they would be and that any new and/or updated regulations are posted on the website as well.

Ms. Pfleger suggested updating the regulations on a section by section basis. Ms. Howell and Mr. Dowgiallo agreed. Health Director Eldredge agreed as well and stated that the regulations could be reviewed one section at a time and create an updated set of regulations.

Health Director Eldredge asked if there is anything COVID-19 related that the Board would like to be involved in or would like more information.

Ms. Howell feels that everything seems to be quiet as far as cases are concerned.

Health Director Eldredge reported that Barnstable County did hire 2 fulltime and 1 part time COVID inspectors. Harwich has been given approximately 5-10 hours per week of the inspector's time. The inspector has already started following up on complaints that are received.

Ms. Pfleger asked if Harwich has a Town Nurse. Health Director Eldredge responded that we do and reviewed her duties. Harwich utilizes the Visiting Nurse Association to conduct our public health nursing such as well child visits and communicable disease follow ups. There is also a public health nurse available through Barnstable County.

### **C. DEVELOP MISSION STATEMENT FOR BOARD OF HEALTH**

Ms. Pfleger had drafted a mission statement for the Harwich Board of Health to review. The Board and Health Director Eldredge reviewed the draft and made suggestions for possible edits. The Board will have further discussion and a possible vote at their August 18, 2020 meeting. Once approved, the mission statement will be posted publically.

### **III OTHER**

No other items were discussed.

### **IV ADJOURN**

**Ms. Pfleger moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:03 p.m., 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Dowgiallo. The vote was 3-0-0 with Ms. Howell, Ms. Pfleger, and Mr. Dowgiallo all voting aye by roll call.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Jennifer Clarke**

**Next meeting is Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**

Documents included in July 15, 2020 Board of Health Meeting Packet:

- July 15, 2020 Board of Health Agenda
- Weekly COVID-19 Update dated July 8, 2020
- Manual of Laws and Regulations Relating to Boards of Health dated January 2010

- MAHB Duties of Local Boards of Health in Massachusetts
- The 10 Essential Public Health Services: An Overview dated March 2014
- Chapter 1: Public Health System-Goals, Essential Functions, Duties and Powers
- Chapter 2: Legal Authority and Procedures
- Chapter 3: Organizational Options
- Town of Chatham Health Division and Board of Health Mission Statement
- Town of Natick Health Department Mission Statement
- Any other documents submitted for/at the July 15, 2020 Board of Health Work Session