

BOARD OF HEALTH

Board of Health Public Meeting

May 27, 2020

A posted public meeting of the Town of Hingham, Board of Health (the Board) was held remotely by telephone as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law.

Mr. Peter Bickford called the meeting to order at 7:01p.m.

Members Present

Peter Bickford, Chair

Elizabeth Eldredge, M.D., Member

Kirk Shilts, D.C., Member

Staff and Town Officials Present

Susan Sarni, MPH, Executive Health Officer (EHO)

Elizabeth Nee, Health Agent

Kathy Crowley, RN, Public Health Nurse

Robin Magner, Food Inspector

Andrea Benedetto, Administrative Assistant

Christopher DiNapoli, Hingham Fire Department

Heather Johnson, Meeting Recorder

Agenda

Mr. Bickford reviewed the posted agenda with the Board.

Thereafter, a motion was made by Dr. Shilts, seconded by Dr. Eldredge and VOTED (roll call);

to approve the agenda as presented.

Members in favor: Bickford, Shilts & Eldredge

Members opposed: none

Dr. Shilts asked to reverse the COVID-19 Compliance Inspections for Nursing/Assisted Living Establishments and the COVID-19 Compliance Inspections for Grocery Stores agenda items. He said he only completed the grocery store compliance check-list and this could serve as a base discussion for any nursing/assisted living checklist. Mr. Bickford said the agenda was already voted on at the beginning of the meeting and he was hoping that the meeting would not exceed an hour. Dr. Shilts said nursing/assisted living establishment compliance inspections are important and suggested postponing this matter to a future meeting.

Thereafter, a motion was made by Dr. Shilts, seconded by Dr. Eldredge and VOTED (roll call);

to table discussion on Nursing/Assisted Living Establishment COVID-19 Compliance Inspections.

Members in favor: Shilts, Bickford & Eldredge

Members opposed: none

Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the public meeting minutes of May 6, 2020.

Dr. Shilts requested changes to the draft minutes. Ms. Sarni said the meeting was not recorded and available to review.

Thereafter, a motion was made by Dr. Shilts, seconded by Dr. Eldredge and VOTED (roll call);

To approve the public meeting minutes of May 6, 2020 as amended.

Members in favor: Shilts & Eldredge

Members opposed: Bickford

Code of Conduct for the Board of Health

Ms. Sarni presented an updated version of the Code of Conduct for the Board of Health. She suggested this was a good time for it to be reviewed and edited with a new chair in position.

- Dr. Eldredge inquired about the origin of the document and some of the proposed edits.
- Dr. Shilts said the Board voted the policy on July 17, 2008. He said the proposed changes would improve the policy.
- Ms. Sarni said it was important that all staff directives come from the EHO.

Thereafter, a motion was made by Dr. Shilts, seconded by Dr. Eldredge and VOTED (roll call);

to approve the Code of Conduct for the Board of Health, as amended.

Members in favor: Shilts, Bickford & Eldredge

Members opposed: none

COVID-19 Grocery Store Compliance Inspections

- Ms. Sarni briefed the Board of her meetings with the Hingham COVID-19 Incident Command group. She said the State is rolling out new phases for re-opening and she is watching COVID-19 cases in Hingham in both the vulnerable population vs residents.
- Ms. Sarni said the Town has a new COVID-19 complaint form that Hingham residents can submit to town hall. She said Ms. Magner is overseeing this process relative to grocery stores and there are no complaints to date.
- Ms. Sarni asked what the department is not doing regarding grocery store inspections.
- Ms. Magner explained her work with the grocery stores and food establishments since the beginning of COVID-19 state of emergency. She mentioned the FDA checklist template. She discussed food temperature, hand sanitizer, product inspections, and hand washing sinks and proper signage.
- Ms. Magner said her current brief time in grocery stores is not for standard food inspections but rather giving guidance and assisting in COVID-19 matters.
- Dr. Shilts said the reason he asked for discussion on this topic is that at the beginning of the state of emergency, grocery stores were the only places where the community regularly gathered and the COVID-19 virus likely spread. He said everyone has to go to a grocery store and that's why it is so important to do COVID-19 compliance inspections.
- Dr. Shilts said he visited all of the Town's grocery stores, observed and asked questions not about food safety, but about preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus. He said there were wide differences in how each store protected their employees and patrons from the virus.
- Dr. Shilts said a Covid-19 Control Plan is now required by the State to be filled out by every business, which his proposed grocery store compliance checklist is broadly modeled. He said these plans are something we should obtain from every grocery store so that we have something to compare to when we do an inspection where they provide us with information that they are complying with COVID-19 safeguards.
- Ms. Sarni said Town Administrator Mayo does not want the Town of Hingham to be stricter than the state. She said she feels we are doing an adequate job and that there are no complaints to date.

- Dr. Eldredge said we should be working with the grocery stores as a team. She suggested we send them the checklist, have them review it, and discuss it with them in person.

Thereafter a motion was made by Dr. Shilts, seconded by Dr. Eldredge and VOTED (roll call);
to perform COVID-19 compliance inspections on all Hingham grocery stores consistent to the proposed checklist dated 5/12/20.

Members in favor: Shilts

Members opposed: Bickford and Eldredge

MOTION FAILED

Scheduling

The next public meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 6:00pm.

Public Comment

- Mr. Frederick Leathers, 1166 Main Street, asked that his septic application be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Ms. Sarni said she intends to have a number of non-COVID items for the next meeting including this one.

Adjournment

Mr. Bickford noted there were no more agenda items.

Thereafter a motion was made by Mr. Bickford, seconded by Dr. Eldredge and VOTED (roll call);
to adjourn the public meeting at 8:27p.m.

Members in favor: Bickford, Shilts & Eldredge

Members opposed: none

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Nee, Health Agent

Documents reviewed during the Public Meeting:

- *Meeting agenda 05/27/20*
- *Draft meeting minutes of 05/06/20*
- *Code of Conduct for the Board of Health, updated draft 04/25/20*
- *Proposed Grocery Store Compliance Checklist, 05/12/20*