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NORTH READING, MA

**Town of North Reading
Massachusetts**

Board of Health

**North Reading Board of Health Meeting Minutes
June 30, 2020
Teleconference/Virtual**

Members Present: Gary Hunt, Chairman
Karen Martin
Pamela Vath

Others Present: Robert Bracey, Health Agent North Reading
Amy DiChiara
Lauren Gulbicki
Mary Samost

Stephanie Connolly
Patrick Daly
Abigail Hurlbut

7:00 PM

Mr. Gary Hunt opened the meeting.

Minutes

New Business:

COVID-19:

Pam Vath, Public Health Nurse, reports that in town there have been 200 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19; 137 from town citizens and 63 at or associated with the Meadow View Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Of those cases, 133 patients in North Reading and 51 at Meadow View have recovered. The Health Department is currently monitoring 2 active cases. There have been 14 total deaths. 12 of these were confirmed COVID-19 cases at or associated with the Meadow View Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Amongst North Reading residents, there has been one death from a confirmed case and one death from a suspected case. Since June 1, 2020 there have been 7 probable cases of COVID-19 in town based on serology test results.

Since the order of long-term care facilities was amended, there have been no new admissions at the Royal Meadow View Center.

Discussion about a COVID-19 testing site in North Reading has continued.

Reopening:

Massachusetts is currently in Phase 2, Step 2 of the reopening plan for the state. Mr. Bracey reports that he is continuing to check in with businesses about sector specific protocols. Inspections of food establishments, now with indoor and outdoor seating, are ongoing. Safety



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standards for pools were released, and at this time almost all semi-public pools in town have opened safely.

Title V:

Inspections are continuing to go well. Previously issued fines have been paid.

Funding:

Title V inspection expenses are being covered by COVID-19 relief under the CARES Act. It has been requested that this funding may continue into the 3rd round of funding. Funding provided by the CARES Act has also been used for staffing purposes, as individuals such as the public health nurse have worked additional hours through the pandemic. It is hopeful that additional funding for this purpose will be available going forward, especially once a new public health nurse is hired should there be a resurgence in COVID-19 cases.

Public Health Nurse Position:

Because of the part-time nature of the public health nurse position, creative solutions have been proposed. It was suggested that a town employee such as a school nurse or firefighter may be able to take on this extra position. The idea of sharing a public health nurse with one of the surrounding communities was also proposed.

Flu Clinic

A collaborative effort will be made with the Board of Health, CVS, and the public health nurse to host a flu clinic in town this coming season. The Senior Center is the proposed location. Social distancing, infection control, and an ingress/egress pattern will all be required in order to protect against the spread of COVID-19 at the clinic. There is uncertainty whether or not individuals will need to test negative for COVID-19 prior to receiving a flu vaccination this year.

Town Meeting

Due to the recent disregard of the BOH's recommendations for safely conducting town meeting, the Board would like to release a statement saying they stand by the decision they made. The Board had the power to order a cease and desist letter or make an order prohibiting large indoor gatherings without the pre-approval of the BOH through the remainder of the state of emergency. These actions were not taken, and the town meeting was held inside the middle/high school gymnasium. The Board plans to publish an open letter in the Transcript. It was also proposed to mail out a letter to all residents with the statement.



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North Reading Public Schools:

The guidance for reopening public schools this fall was released Thursday June 25, 2020. Karen Martin has attended the past two School Reopening Committee meetings which occurred on June 26th and 30th. A survey has been drafted and will be sent out to families about reopening practices. There has been great discussion around the wearing of masks in school. Guidance provided by the state and pediatricians is actively being considered in order to encourage safe practices for mask wearing and proper education to youth and families. The goal is to eliminate any fear or extra stress held by the students. Questions were raised about specialty masks or shields for playing musical instruments and participating in physical education. Based on current knowledge, playing musical instruments (particularly wind instruments) would pose a significant risk in spreading air droplets. Physical education classes should take place outside. Remote learning will continue for the remainder of the summer.

A plan has been proposed to hold the North Reading high school graduation ceremony at the turf field. The ceremony is set to take place July 24th at 6:00 pm with a rain date of July 25th at 10:00 am. Families must pre-register for the event and only immediate family of the graduates will be able to attend.

The recently held graduation car parade received lots of positive feedback from the community.

Tobacco Control

Due to a violation of new state tobacco regulations, a town permit holder will be brought before the Board of Health at the next meeting for a hearing. The individual will be charged with a \$2,000 fine. This is a second offense.

The next meeting will be held Thursday July 16, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

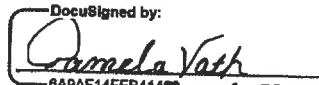
Karen Martin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm.

Motion seconded by Pam Vath.

All members voted unanimously in favor.

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Gary Hunt

DocuSigned by:

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Pamela Vath

DocuSigned by:

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Karen Martin