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TOWN OF AYER  
**BOARD OF HEALTH**

TOWN HALL – 1 MAIN STREET – AYER, MASSACHUSETTS 01432 – (978) 772-8220 Ext 145

**Minutes of September 27, 2021 - Ayer Board of Health Meeting**

Location: Remote Participation via Zoom

Meeting was recorded and broadcast by APAC

**Members Present:** Stephen Slarsky, Chairman, Pamela Papineau, and Patricia Peters

**Also Present:** Heather Hampson, Administrative Coordinator and Bridgett Braley from Nashoba Associated Boards of Health

**Chairman Slarsky opened the meeting at 5:40 PM after an Executive Session.**

**Public Input**

There was no one from the public present.

**Discussion, Face Masks**

S. Slarsky mentioned that he spoke to B. Braley, Health Agent, regarding face masks because he feels the Board has an obligation to public health. S. Slarsky stated that some surrounding towns have mask mandates in place. S. Slarsky feels it is important that the Board discuss the idea of face masks.

P. Papineau stated that she feels that people should be absolutely wearing masks when they are indoors and/or cannot socially distance. P. Papineau mentioned that the issue with a mandate is that the Board of Health does not have the people to do the enforcement.

P. Peters stated that she has been following the mandate in Littleton and the issue they are having is enforcement. P. Peters stated that at the last meeting we discussed masking indoors and the issue was brought up then about enforcement.

S. Slarsky stated that he feels the Board should come out with a message to highly encourage masking indoors and when social distancing is not possible. S. Slarsky stated that the only way to get COVID to go away is to stop the transmission and hopefully it does not come down to closures again. He would like to see the Board highly encourage masking indoors and where social distancing is not possible.

P. Peters asked if this is something the Board can do on its own.

S. Slarsky stated that the Board can put a message out on its own to highly encourage masking indoors.

P. Papineau stated that she would like to target the business owners in town to have them start requiring masks indoors.

P. Peters asked how the Board can act on this masking request, should we go to the business directly.

B. Braley stated that food establishments could be targeted by email. There are many different businesses

in town and a list could be obtained by the Town Clerk but feels using social media to get the word out would be better.

P. Peters agrees that the Board needs to do something but wonders if there will be any push back from the businesses.

B. Braley stated that some businesses do have signs and others don't. There is an issue with making people wear masks can lead to people getting into arguments with customers.

P. Papineau stated that it is her biggest concern is with the enforcement and don't want to see people put in arms way over a mask mandate enforcement.

B. Braley stated that starting with social media and sending an email to the food establishments stating that masks reminding them to be safe.

S. Slarsky stated that having the announcement out on social media is a good first step.

B. Barley stated that she can draft something for the Board stating that they high encourage people to wear masks indoors.

P. Papineau asked if the Board wanted to target businesses in getting the statement out.

S. Slarsky said yes and to add language regarding the CDC recommendations as well to protect your staff and customers.

**At 6:05PM P. Papineau made a motion that the Board of Health put out a statement strongly encouraging the use of masks indoors when social distancing is not possible and encouraging businesses in town to adopt mask requirements for their own businesses to protect staff and customers. P. Peters seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (3-0-0)**

#### **COVID-19**

B. Braley stated that she did some number checking today and right now Ayer is in a good place. The positivity rate is under 2% right now. B. Braley mentioned that she spoke to Tamara Bedard, Community Health Manager at Nashoba Board of Health and there is no major outbreak of cases now. The schools are testing and are in good shape. In talking to T. Bedard they had a lot of positive cases last week and this week there is a trend of cases going down. It is important for people to wear masks if inside and for family gatherings to try to do them outside.

P. Peters asked how things are with kids, are they transmitting COVID or are they showing symptoms.

B. Braley stated that it seems to be more like a bad cold then anything else, but there are also cases of the flu showing right not as well as well as allergies are a problem right now.

The Board had a discussion on booster shots.

B. Braley stated that she hopes that the trend continues to have cases go down and encouraged everyone to wear masks and get vaccinated.

#### **Flu**

B. Braley stated that the flu clinic dates have been set and mentioned that there is a preregistration for the clinics this year. Nashoba Park will have a clinic this week for the flu shot.

P. Peters asked if there was a wait time for flu or shingles vaccine from COVID boosters.

B. Braley stated that she can investigate that and believes it depends on the vaccine.

P. Papineau asked B. Braley if she knows what the prediction is for the flu this year.

B. Braley stated that it has started early this year but not sure about a number, but people starting to get out more then last year will see an increase in numbers of the flu.

#### **NABOH Update**

B. Braley stated that she completed some food inspections including Wendy's which was ok, Ayer Senior Center which was ok, Subway and Family Dollar and both were fine.

S. Slarsky stated that there was a compliant with the Family Dollar.

B. Braley stated that they investigated a complaint about the freezer temperatures and Family Dollar, which was investigated and were in compliance.

B. Braley stated that there was a compliant on Grove Street about trash went by a few times, to see if it was cleaned up stating that sometimes people have a hard time getting to the transfer station. There were a few bags on the property, but nothing was torn open and will keep an eye on the property.

#### **Minutes September 13, 2021**

**At 6:15PM P. Peters made a motion to approve the minutes from September 13, 2021, meeting as written. P. Papineau seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (3-0-0)**

#### **Administrative Items**

##### **Action Items for October 18, 2021 Meeting**

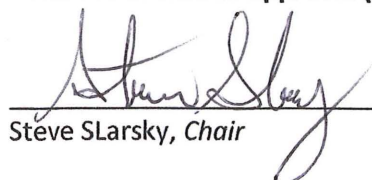
S. Slarsky stated that the Board may be meeting before then and had nothing to add to the agenda then the normal recurring items.

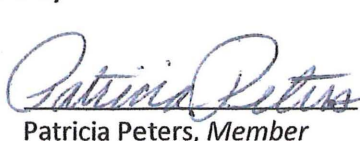
##### **Animal Control Officer**

S. Slarsky stated that some of the Animal Control Officer pay comes out of the Board of Health budget and requested that she keep a call log like what H. Hampson does for the Board. S. Slarsky stated that J. Thomas, Animal Control Officer agreed to keep a log.

#### **Adjourn:**

**P. Papineau motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 PM, and P. Peters seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (3-0-0)**

  
Steve Slarsky, Chair

  
Patricia Peters, Member

  
Pam Papineau, Member

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Respectfully Submitted,  
Heather Hampson, *Administrative Coordinator*