

East Longmeadow Board of Health Agenda

Tuesday, October 6, 2020; 6:30p.m. at East Longmeadow - Zoom

Board of Health Members Present: Dr. Sarah Perez McAdoo and Karen Robitaille, R.N.

Health Department Staff Present: Aimee Petrosky and Alix Shipman

Visitor:

Topic	Discussion/Action Taken/Decision Made
Call to order and Chair Announcements	Meeting called to order by Chair, Dr. Sarah Perez McAdoo at 6:30 p.m.
Approve minutes of previous meetings: September 9, 2020	Motion to approve minutes from September 9, 2020, was made by Karen Robitaille and seconded by Dr. Sarah Perez McAdoo out of necessity. Motion passes 2-0.
Public Comment	
Old Business	
Flu Clinic Recap	Aimee shares with the Board that we've had a lot of positive feedback from our flu clinic. The goal of this year's flu clinic was to be able to provide flu shots to as many residents as possible in a safe and effective manor despite the pandemic. We found an excellent partner with Big Y and we were able to give over 500 flu shots. If there's ever a Covid vaccine that local Health Departments are required to give out, we are confident Big Y would be a good partner. We believe that we could do up to 90 vaccines in an hour based on the model we practiced during the flu clinic via the drive through clinic. Sarah said she had the opportunity to stop by and she was blown away by how well organized and efficient the flu clinic was. Karen had the same experience and wanted to take this opportunity to remind people that it's super important to get your flu shot this year with the pandemic going on. It is recommend to get your flu shot by the end of October, but it's never too late to get it.
Letter to Town Council Recap	Everyone has now signed the letter to town council president, Mike Kane, requesting the Town Council and Town Manager to retake up the process of signing the IMA and the shared service agreement. The letter will be sent out tomorrow.
Board of Health Vacancy	Dr. Kevin Hinchey has moved out of town, making him ineligible to serve on the board of health. His last meeting with be November and in the meantime, we have provided the board with a sample of the posting to find a new board member. Aimee asks the board if they have any comments, questions or suggestions they would like to make to the posting. The board has no comments or suggestions and it will be shared with HR tomorrow to be posted.
COVID Update	Aimee shares with the board that we're having trouble keeping a Public Health Nurse on staff. Our numbers are quickly growing and our current nurse feels overwhelmed by the capacity to be able to do contact tracing

for the town. She's agreed to stay on with the understanding that the majority of the cases will go to the CTC. Aimee has joined a state wide working group to help improve the CTC's product they are delivering to local health departments. In the last month and half, we've been assigned to a CTC contact for East Longmeadow. Aimee thinks we have a team working for East Longmeadow that will do as good of a job with contact tracing, however, there is no replacing of a public health nurse and our department is in need of one. Our residents will still get the contact tracing through the CTC, helping us get through any fall surge. At last night's school community meeting, Aimee mentioned we've had a significant jump in cases and none of the cases are related or from the same household. There have been 7 community-based transmissions over the past two days. These cases have no contacts to each other and are with the CTC now. Aimee will receive a report from the CTC showing all their close contacts. There is usually about 6 close contacts to every positive.

Sarah asks where support for residents who have to isolate or quarantine is coming from. Aimee says we help facilitate it through the CTC. For example, if there is a resident who is low on food and they live alone, we could fill out a form through the CTC that goes right to their care providers and they help facilitate resident's needs. Sarah asks how do let residents know there is this additional support to prevent further spread? Karen says this is where there is a difference between a public health nurse that works through the municipality and the CTC. We've seen this across the state that the CTC doesn't know the town or the people. It's a very different experience when it comes to case management when it comes to having a nurse who works for the town and has come to know who the people are and what the resources are. A public health nurse dedicated to your town makes all the difference and this is something Karen's seen across the state.

Karen asks if we have an age range of our cases. At the state level, she is seeing the age range for cases has shifted to a younger population. Aimee responds that our age range is mirroring the state and might be even lower. Last report, our average age was 37 years old and the last two weeks it has decreased to mostly likely 35 years old. Throughout the spring and summer, we saw 2/3 of all cases be long term care facility based, now we're seeing a bigger proportion of community based and a much younger population.

Sarah asks if there are any other gaps or challenges we might encounter if there is another covid surge. Aimee says our inspector, Donna Bowman, is doing a fantastic job at following up with complaints. Our numbers of complaints are still increasing and we've addressed every complaint that's come in. If we did not have a full time inspector, we'd not be able to address these complaints. Our community has a lot of questions and taking a lot of time. We try really hard to respond to any questions, calls or complaints within 24 hours, but it's hard to meet that standard right now. The majority of our complaints coming in are mask usage. For Halloween, we are doing a lot of public health messaging since the town is not planning on cancelling Halloween due to it not being a town sponsored event. Last month we had 31 covid complaints and calls. In September, we're 6 days in and already have 12. Mostly mask usage and inspections, adding a significant amount of labor to staff.

Other Updates	Lastly, Aimee shares with the board that she's received an award from the MHOA. This award is given to a public health professional who's contributed to the growth and success of the MHOA through leadership and extraordinary service.
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Motion to adjourn made by Dr. Kevin Hinchey and seconded by Karen Robitaille at 6:08 p.m. out of necessity. **Motion passed 2-0.**

Upcoming Meetings / Events

This listing is reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

_____ **11/16/2020**