



CITY OF GARDNER
OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF HEALTH
95 PLEASANT ST, ROOM 29
GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS 01440



Members Present: **Lauren Saunders – Health Director**
 Susan Avallone, RN - Member
 Atty. Geoffrey Tobia – Member

Minutes for Board of Health meeting held Monday February 22, 2021

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 limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, **this meeting of the Gardner Board of Health will be conducted via remote participation. The transcript of proceedings will be posted on the City's website as soon as possible after the meeting.*

4:37 Meeting called to order.

4:39 Minutes from 4/27/20, 5/21/20 and 9/14/20 Board of Health meetings were each reviewed, discussed and approved.

5:10 Old Business:

Body Art Regulations revision – A draft of suggested amendments to the apprenticeship program section of the Body Art Regulations was provided for review prior to the meeting. The suggested changes are to define a separate set of requirements specific to body piercing, found on page 16 of the draft provided. There is a discussion about the number and type of procedures required to complete an apprenticeship. There is a suggestion that a medical opinion be obtained from a plastic surgeon. More clarifications on definitions of the piercing types are needed. Lauren will clarify some of the procedures and will discuss at the next meeting. They would also like to have Dr. Parker's input on the suggested changes.

5:00 New Business:

The Gardner Health Department & Montachusett Public Health Network (MPHN) held a Covid Vaccine First Responders 2nd shot clinic at the City Hall auditorium on 2/10/21.

The Heywood Hospital PACC Clinic is adding a 3rd clinic day weekly, on Wednesdays, to accommodate 2nd vaccine appointments.

Gardner has activated a Call Center at the Emergency Operations Center in the Police Department to assist residents with scheduling vaccinations appointments at the PACC Clinic. There were originally 12 phone lines but has recently increased to 24 lines. The Call Center has increased the appointment volume from 20% of the available vaccine to 40% as the online appointments were filling up in less than 5 minutes every time new appointments were added, which was making it very difficult for seniors or those with technology challenges to schedule an appointment. Residents are commenting that they should have priority over non-Gardner residents but the clinic must maintain the state's

requirements for regional clinics or it will lose the vaccine supplied which is distributed by the state.

There was a Covid vaccine clinic at Gardner Housing Authority on Church St for residents and staff, which was coordinated with the Health Department and Heywood Hospital.

Sue recognized that Lauren and the Health Department staff have been working hard throughout the entire pandemic, and especially with coordinating these clinics. She's very proud of Gardner, Heywood and Mayor Nicholson for collaborating to organize the clinic at the PACC. She recognizes that the Community Health Connection has been doing a lot of vaccinations also.

MPHN was working to coordinate a clinic in Leominster or Fitchburg as they were 2 communities that the state designated as 'high risk' possible 5 days a week, 750 doses a day and was awaiting approval and vaccine supply from the state. Currently, the PACC is the only clinic in this area and is trying to accommodate all of the surrounding communities. Many other communities are struggling to get their nursing homes and congregate living staff and residents vaccinated.

CHC is working with the Council on Aging with vaccinate area senior citizens and has held some clinics at the CHC Prospect Street School testing site.

The Health Department was working with Fire, EMS, Heywood Hospital and the Mayor's office to coordinate vaccine appointments for home-bound individuals and there was a meeting scheduled to discuss this the following week.

There has been some talk about implementing ordinances pertaining to chickens in the city, there has been an increased interest in keeping chickens which is currently dictated by zoning regulations. A draft prepared by the City Solicitor would put oversight of chickens on the Health Department. With the added workload on the Health Department due the pandemic, the Health Department does not have the staff capacity to handle the additional tasks associated which would include review of plans, issuing permits, performing inspections and responding to complaints that may result.

The Health Department was still in the process reviewing proposals for municipal curbside waste removal. A letter of termination is due by April 1, 2021 if the city is not going to remain with Waste Management after June 30, 2021.

5:23 Next meeting set Monday March 22, 2021 at 4:30. Adjourn.

Susan Avallone RN, Chair Person

Atty. Geoffrey Tobia, Member

Michele C. Parker MD, Member

All conversations are documented on 'You Tube' identified as B.O.H February 22, 2021 Meeting