



TOWN OF TISBURY

Office of

THE BOARD OF HEALTH

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MEETING MINUTES – March 4, 2020 – 1:00 PM

The Tisbury Board of Health (BOH) met on Wednesday, March 4, 2020, at the Tisbury Town Hall Annex.

Chairman Pratt called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

Commissioners in attendance were Chairman Jeff Pratt, Vice-Chairman Malcolm Boyd, and Dr. Michael Loberg, Clerk. Ms. Maura Valley, Health Agent, Ms. Catie Blake, Assistant Health Agent, and Valerie Soushek, Administrative Secretary, were also in attendance.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) – Public Messaging

Ms. Maura Valley reported that a conference call was held on Monday, March 2nd, with Department of Public Health (DPH) representatives. No new information was gleaned from the call.

A meeting was held at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS), yesterday, March 3rd, with school administration, including superintendent staff, all school nurses, principals, some teachers, and all Island health agents. All meeting attendees joined a conference call with representatives from Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH), after which the health agents met. As a result of the collection of meetings, an Island-wide "working group" ("Group") for addressing a unified voice for public messaging, was selected. Members of the group include--Ms. Valley for the Island boards of health, Mr. Jim Butterick of Vineyard Medical Care, Mr. Russ Hartenstein for Island emergency managers, two (2) representatives from MVH, an EMS employee from West Tisbury, Mr. Matt D'Andrea, school superintendent, and a representative for the Steamship Authority (SSA).

The "Group" met for the first time this morning. They drafted the initial public messaging plan, most of which was borrowed from Wellesley Public Health and then edited specifically for the Island. The draft will be distributed to the emergency managers for review at their upcoming meeting. The draft will then be routed back to the "Group" for further editing. MVH is also drafting a short information sheet and questionnaire (FAQ). They will be asking the "Group" for comments and assistance with editing.

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Upon final approval, a simultaneous release of all the document(s) is scheduled to occur by noon on Monday, March 9th. The documents will be posted on all town websites and distributed to the press. Information packages will be assembled and distributed to all elderly housing centers, the business community and Island schools.

Emergency managers are considering the implementation of the 211 system, which will be available for residents to call with questions.

A public forum is not desired by other Island towns out of concern that it will be used as a social media site like “Islanders Talk”.

A final draft of the public messaging document will be distributed to the commissioners before it is posted for access by the general public.

Documents translated in Portuguese will be available for the Brazilian community.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) – General Discussion

It is believed by Island medical professionals and health officials that we will start to see COVID-19 cases emerge over the next two (2) weeks. Residents are urged to stay home if they are feeling ill and they should call their primary care physician if they have symptoms of concern.

Town of Tisbury managers should encourage employees to stay home if they’re not feeling well.

Island health officials and medical professionals are hopeful that testing kits will be available from a company in Cambridge and as general production is ramped-up.

Various meetings will be held for guidance and informational purposes----

- MVH holds a conference call every Tuesday and Thursday at 4 PM for all Island stakeholders.
- The “Group” will meet on a weekly basis initially.

If someone goes to MVH complaining of symptoms, Ms. Valley confirmed that the hospital will refer them to their primary care provider for screening and advice.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) has a limited supply of test kits available. They are being conservative about issuing kits; patients must be approved to be tested. Local Boards of Health will be notified (by the DPH) of cases for trace-back and follow-up with the patient. Self-quarantining for fourteen (14) days will be advised to those infected by the virus.

Ms. Valley asked Ms. Hillary Conklin, Tisbury Town Clerk, to provide hand sanitizer at the voting polls and periodically wipe down the booths with sanitizing wipes.

The DPH is planning to post a list of EPA-approved products for combatting coronavirus, on their website.

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Sanitizing wipes are effective at killing coronavirus.

Hand sanitizers should not be used as a substitute for hand washing with soap and water.

Ms. Valley is keeping the Town Administrator and Tisbury Selectman updated with new information releases and issues; however, Island emergency managers and boards of health are the lead agencies for developing and releasing public messaging.

Town managers are also being kept informed and engaged, i.e. support by the police department will be necessary to enforce a quarantine order if one is implemented.

Social distancing and emergency preparedness still need to be discussed by emergency managers and health officials.

Drive-thru stations could be implemented for distribution of information, triage for taking temperatures and/or testing, if needed.

A drive for recruiting volunteers is planned.

People who have been traveling to areas of concern should self-isolate for 14 days.

Construction masks can be used in place of surgical and N95 masks.

Asymptomatic patients (who have been exposed to the virus) cannot be tested and the communicable status is unknown; therefore, it is advised that hard surfaces, including hand rails, be cleaned more frequently. Island schools and the SSA have increased their cleaning frequency effort. Not everyone exposed will get the virus even if they have been exposed by an infected person. Questions remain over whether COVID-10 recovery will guarantee immunity.

Island schools are cancelling field trips especially if travel beyond New England is included. School closures have not been discussed yet. School nurses have been advised to have symptomatic children wear a mask and to contact parents for removal from the school. In turn, parents should be advised to call their primary care physician. If travel to areas of concern, i.e. travel to other countries, has occurred, then parents are advised to call their local BOH office to discuss potential risk factors because nurses are bound by the HIPAA Privacy Rule

Small children don't seem to be affected by this illness; however, they could be vectors.

Ms. Valley will be confirming standard operating procedures for emergency medical technicians with Ms. Tracey Jones, Tisbury EMS Coordinator.

Ms. Valley is revisiting emergency plans for ICS. She will be the dispensing site coordinator. Mr. Matt Poole will serve as back-up. The health and safety officer will be Mr. Jim Butterick.

Ms. Valley will be at the Mass DEP annual update meeting tomorrow.

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With no further business to conduct, the Board of Health commissioners adjourned the meeting at 2:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Soushek
Administrative Secretary

Document(s)

The Board of Health commissioners accept the meeting minutes, dated March 4, 2020, as presented.

Date: 5/4/20

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