

Manchester Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, August 19, 2021  
Virtual Meeting at 8:30 a.m.

This meeting was posted separately by both the Board of Health and the Board of Selectmen.

The first portion of this meeting is a joint meeting of the Board of Health and the Board of Selectmen.

The Board of Health then continued with the remainder of their B.O.H. meeting agenda.

At 8:32 a.m. Board of Health Chairperson Paula Filias called the Board of Health meeting to order.

Immediately following, Board of Selectman Chairperson Jeffrey Bodmer-Turner called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order.

### **Public Health Nurse Update**

Nurse Pamela Crehan provided the members with the following Covid-19 updates:

- Current case number & number of active cases
- Covid-19 B.O.H. vaccination clinic being held at the Laughing Gull during September
- Current mask orders including guidance from C.D.C. and Governor Baker
- Manchester Essex Regional School District mask order for start of school

Mr. Colarusso noted that there has been a lot of Covid related information coming out in the past few days and asked that Nurse Crehan elaborate on that information, which she did.

Dr. Hahn provide that Covid-19 booster shots should come 8 months after the 2<sup>nd</sup> shots, to begin the end of September. He discussed the efficacy of the booster shots, the current review of either 6 months or 8 months after second shot for booster shot, and herd immunity being off the table due to the Delta variant.

Eli Boling noted that with Pfizer if you have a symptomatic infection, you have less severe illness and less death.

Dr. Hahn agreed but noted that the concern is with passing Covid along to the vulnerable including the unvaccinated and immunocompromised.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked Nurse Crehan to break down the Covid vaccination information by age group.

Nurse Crehan agreed to do so and forward that information to Mr. Bodmer-Turner.

Mr. Round asked if the 77% vaccination rate included all the Manchester population or just those over 12 and eligible for the vaccination. Nurse Crehan replied it was based on those eligible for the vaccine.

Mr. Colarusso said that there is carryover of the virus, even from those vaccinated and was concerned for the return of college students to the area.

Dr. Hahn noted that the heard immunity is specifically against severe disease or death.

Mr. Colarusso noted that there is an increase in the breakthrough disease numbers.

Dr. Hahn disagreed. He said Massachusetts has stopped testing those that are mildly ill, who are now not tested. Further that the breakthrough number is therefore something different. He noted that testing has decreased greatly.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked that the discussion focus on Manchester.

Dr Hahn said that due to movement and travel a widespread review is needed.

Mr. Colarusso stated that the C.D.C. is recommending masking indoors and that nationally businesses are pushing for vaccinations and testing.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner stated that only the B.O.S. can pass rules, with Board of Health recommendation that they request.

He said there are things we can do including 1.) increase outdoor dining and 2.) to be proactive we may wish to address indoor dining now or in future.

Ms. Jacques asked if businesses are asking for the guidance from the Town.

Mr. Colarusso noted that some businesses are here but have offices elsewhere with those main offices making the decisions. Ms. Filias suggested that the choice is to either wait for the Governor or choose to be proactive. Mr. Colarusso noted that several communities have adopted indoor masking.

Mr. Federspiel agreed with Ms. Filias, saying that indoor masking is not overly intrusive, helps to avoid shutdowns, and suggested requiring masks for the next couple of months.

Ms. Filas suggested a few weeks out, to get people used to it, perhaps after Labor Day. She recommended that outdoor dining be allowed immediately.

Mr. Colarusso suggested that the Town align with the schools. Mr. Boling said that residents are leaning this way, towards masking and that the public is prepared for this. Further, that if the B.O.S. accept Dr. Hahn's opinion that heard immunity is not coming soon, plus Delta spread, that he would support indoor masking. He noted that outdoor dining is separate. He asked to have each person's opinion.

Dr. Hahn agreed with Mr. Boling, to keep the economy going and as the vaccinated can spread to the vulnerable he suggested an August 30<sup>th</sup> date to be in line with the schools. He believed that outdoor dining goes hand in hand with any mask mandate.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner said that masks are required to enter into a business. He asked about the interiors of the businesses, noting that Crosby's had removed their (plexiglass) barriers. He shared those efforts to require masking without addressing plexiglass is futile.

Ms. Filias noted the large and increased outdoor dining in Gloucester specifically at Tonno restaurant. She wanted to get the restaurant owners opinion on the outdoor dining, noting that participation in outdoor dining is optional.

Mr. Boling said that outdoor dining removed was taking parking spaces away. He asked what the public health need for outdoor dining versus what people would like. He stated that outdoor dining was a big headache.

Dr. Hahn agreed that there is a difference between the desire for outdoor dining versus the public health need for outdoor dining. He said that other towns have managed the process and that Manchester has parking lots and people can walk from those lots. He said many times his family could not find the outdoor dining they preferred. He said he believed there was both a preference and a public health calling for outdoor dining.

Mr. Colarusso said there is no way to quantify the matter. Ms. Jacques said the B.O.S. need to decide and act. She suggested the matter of outdoor dining be sidelined. Dr. Hahn said that outdoor dining was the impetus for this meeting. Mr. Bodmer-Turner disagreed that it was the impetus. He suggested a mask mandate at indoor spaces and businesses.

Ms. Filias stated she had a correction to make. She said the meeting was in fact a direct result of a resident's request on outdoor dining as a proactive approach to dealing with the Delta variant.

Nurse Crehan said that she would prefer a strong recommendation for masking (vs. a mandate) due to the Manchester Covid case numbers. She said there are small bumps in the Covid case numbers, and if the cases surged in Town that would be different.

Mr. Colarusso noted that State is mandating masks on public transportation.

Ms. Filias said she was ready for the B.O.H. to vote. Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked that the vote please include the vaccinated. Ms. Filias made a motion that the B.O.H. recommend masking indoors. Ms. Cottler seconded the motion. Members, by roll call vote were unanimous in favor of the motion:

Ms. Filias, yes

Ms. Cottler, yes

Dr. Hahn, yes

Mr. Colarusso, yes

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked for a recommendation from the Board of Health on expansion of outdoor dining. He questioned the impact of outdoor dining on public health.

Mr. Boling stated that if masking is only a recommendation of the B.O.H. then he is not in favor of expanded outdoor dining. He suggested going back to a holistic approach. The B.O.H. members were then polled.

Ms. Cottler – wait to expand due to hassle, narrow streets, not necessary

Mr. Colarusso – agrees with Mr. Boling

Dr. Hahn – would like to see increased outdoor dining for both public health and improve options

adds that he would have voted for mandated indoor masks, Mr. Colarusso concurs

Ms. Filias – would like to see outdoor dining but I hear you say there are headaches. Says outdoor dining is helpful.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked that the Board speak to public health specifically.

Dr. Hahn made a motion to amend the prior recommendation for indoor masking to mandate indoor masking. Ms. Cottler seconded the motion. Members, by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the amended motion:

Ms. Filias, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked how to enforce the mandate.

Mr. Colarusso made a motion to table the outdoor dining discussion as no restaurants had requested.

Dr. Hahn noted as the B.O.S. are under pressure regarding the parking, he asked the B.O.S. to ask the businesses their opinion on expanded outdoor dining.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner said it should be done for a public health point of view. He said when dining is moved out into the parking spaces, they hear from other businesses. Dr. Hahn said if you are making your decision based on businesses, you are being held hostage by businesses. Nurse Crehan, noting she is a downtown business owner, said she as an owner had no objection to the expanded outdoor dining.

Mr. Federspiel asked if the B.O.S. allowed expanded outdoor dining, would the B.O.H. be o.k. with 100% capacity between both the indoor and outdoor spaces. Mr. Boling said he would support. Mr. Bodmer-Turner said he would survey the retail stores and restaurants. Dr. Hahn and Mr. Colarusso disagreed on this matter. Mr. Boling said this is different for retail establishments versus restaurants. Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked his fellow Selectmen how they felt about mandating masking indoors as recommended by the Board of Health. All Selectmen support, noting it is for the vaccinated and unvaccinated.

Eli Boling made a motion to mandate masking indoors as recommended by the Board of Health, noting the requirement is to include the vaccinated and effective September 1, 2021. Mr. Round seconded the motion. Ms. Jacques made an amendment to the motion to note the mandate is for public buildings and private businesses.

By roll call vote, Selectmen voted unanimously in favor of the amended motion:

Mr. Bodmer-Turner, in favor

Mr. Boling, in favor

Ms. Jacques, in favor

Mr. Round, in favor

Regarding outdoor dining, the B.O.S. said they would consider, in future meetings, waiting for retail and restaurants to provide business response to survey on outdoor dining. Mr. Bodmer-Turner said that restaurants would be asked about a 1:1 reduction in seating for a combined 100% of existing capacity.

Further that all retail would be asked to comment on the parking loss of 1 parking spot per restaurant.

All Selectmen agreed that any allowance would be one parking spot per restaurant for outdoor dining.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner expressed thanks to the Board of Health regarding tough issue of masking. He said the Selectmen would take a survey to the businesses as that is the best way to go.

Ms. Jacques made a motion to adjourn the joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Health at 9:45 a.m. Mr. Round seconded the motion. By roll call vote, Selectmen voted unanimously in favor of the motion:

Mr. Bodmer-Turner, in favor

Mr. Boling, in favor

Ms. Jacques, in favor

Mr. Round, in favor

Dr. Hahn thanked the Board of Selectmen for hearing the Board of Health. Ms. Filias asked the Selectmen to continue the cooperation, please. The Board of Selectmen and Mr. Federspiel left the Zoom meeting at 9:48 a.m. The Board of Health members continued along with their meeting and meeting agenda.

#### **4 Running Ridge Road, Locke**

Property owner David Locke was present for this plan review. Also present was design engineer John Judd of Gateway Consultants. Members reviewed the septic system upgrade plans for 4 Running Ridge Row as submitted by Gateway Consultants. Mr. Judd presented the septic system design plan. Gerry McDonald informed the Board that he had reviewed the plan, received requested plan revisions, and was recommending that the Board approve the revised plan as presented. Ms. Filias made a motion to approve the septic system upgrade plan for 4 Running Ridge Row and dated 05/18/21 as presented and including the 3 requested variances to allow a soil analysis, a 1-foot reduction in vertical separation to high ground water and 18' separation from foundation to system. Dr. Hahn seconded the motion.

Members, by roll call vote, unanimously approved the motion.

Ms. Filias, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

At 10:15 a.m. Ms. Filias made a motion to enter in Executive Session Under Chapter. 30A S 21 (a)(8) and NOT return to open session. Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members, by roll call vote, were unanimous in favor of the motion.

Ms. Filias, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

As submitted,

Ellen D. Lufkin

Administrative Assistant