

Manchester Board of Health

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Virtual Meeting

**Members present:**

Paula Filias, Dr. Martin Hahn, Dr. Tonya Colpitts, Peter Colarusso, Joan Cottler

**Members absent:**

None

Paula Filias called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

Ms. Filias asked that Public Health Nurse Pamela Crehan provide a Covid update.

Nurse Crehan provided the following information as of 01/26/22:

Confirmed Cases in Maven: 95

Active Cases: 5

Vaccination rate: 83%

Hospitalization: 0

Essex County Positivity Rate: 17%

Essex County ICU Beds: 94% (32 non covid cases, 33 covid cases)

Nurse Crehan also provided an update on the new State program for school testing, which will focus on at home Covid tests. She stated that both Tara Montessori and the Manchester Essex School District had filed paperwork to participate in this new Covid testing program.

Dr. Martin Hahn thanked Nurse Crehan for her report. He noted that the January Covid numbers were decreasing each week (from 38 to 31 to 17 to 9). Dr. Hahn reviewed the Covid case numbers, noting that people see the numbers in the Cricket and on the Town website and that those numbers are just for that 1 day, a snapshot. He noted that that snapshot, combined with reporting delays may contribute to confusion for residents. He said that the number of cumulative cases is what is important. He shared that he had checked the Covid reporting numbers and that they are correct for all months.

Peter Colarusso asked how best to communicate that to the public.

Nurse Crehan stated that when contact tracing, she always shares information with residents regarding the case numbers and case contacts.

Dr. Hahn said that with the numbers dropping and everyone hearing that the Board will need to reevaluate regarding the mask mandate. He noted there is some drop in numbers and recent stabilization (7-day death and positivity), but that there is not great accuracy of cases due to home testing. He suggested the Board hold off on any changes to the mask mandate, at least for today given the hospitalization rates.

Ms. Filias agreed with Dr. Hahn.

### **Board of Health Structure:**

Ms. Filias informed the members that she had been working on an avenue for autonomy for the Board of Health. She reported that most options require a Town meeting warrant article. She shared that Town Moderator Alan Wilson had suggested the option that the Board of Health, in a home rule petition, make an agreement with the Town which would not need Town meeting approval. She said she is working with Town Administrator Greg Federspiel on a draft agreement and will provide an update to members moving forward. Mr. Federspiel said that a Memorandum of Understanding could be done between the Board of Health and the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator. He noted that it could include statutory duties of the Board, administrative functions of Board of Health as policy makers, activities, and detail reporting and health agent staffing. He said he was waiting for examples of other similar agreements and would meanwhile draft language to show the Board of Health duties are being honored. He noted that the agreement will assume moving forward with a health agent, but with the Board overseeing their department.

Mr. Colarusso asked if communication in the arrangement would be different to which Mr. Federspiel said no. It was agreed that the details could wait for another Board of Health agenda.

### **10 Forest Lane**

Sean McDonnell of Griffin Engineering was present for this review.

Members reviewed a septic system design plan, submitted by Griffin Engineering, for 10 Forest Lane in Manchester. Mr. McDonnell stated that the septic system design plan was for a conventional 4-bedroom septic system. He said there was some confusion regarding 2018 soil testing, with contradictory records. He noted that in response additional testing was completed in January of 2022.

Confusion regarding the existing house street number and the new lot street number was resolved as follows:

#8 Forest Lane

Existing home

Formerly known as #10

Title 5 Inspection Report submitted under #10, now corrected to #8

As this dwelling comes first on Forest Lane, it has been renumbered as #8

#10 Forest Lane

Newly created lot, carved off former #10 Forest Lane, now renumbered #8 Forest Lane

Septic system design plans now under review are to serve a new construction home on this new lot

Gerry McDonald informed the Board that he had reviewed the septic system design plan for #10 Forest Lane and had requested that additional soil testing be completed and that plan revisions be made by Griffin Engineering. Mr. McDonald noted that both the additional soil testing and the plan revisions were adequate. He asked that Board of Health approval include a copy of the Form A subdivision recorded plan and the proposed house plans. He noted that otherwise the plan is fine and that no variances have been requested.

Sean McDonnell of Griffin Engineering stated that he would forward a copy of the subdivision plan, recorded at the Registry of Deeds (book 40201/page 209).

Dr. Hahn made a motion to approve the septic system design plan, submitted by Griffin Engineering and dated 11/14/21 and revised on 01/11/22 subject to the following:

- 1.) Receipt of the approved ANR subdivision plan
- 2.) Receipt of proposed house plans

Ms. Filias seconded the motion. Members, by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the septic system design plan.

Dr. Hahn asked that the Title 5 Inspection report for the existing home be revised to show the new house number.

### **Manchester Essex Regional School District**

Joe Fazio of Crabtree and McGrath, designers of the new Memorial School kitchen came before the Board of Health to request a variance to the Food Code requirement for a 3-compartment sink. He noted that the Food Inspector did not think that the corner 3 compartment sink met the traditional requirements. It was noted that Food Inspector Bobbie Cody was concerned that the installation of the sinks was a safety concern, with the possibility of excessive waster on the floor. Mr. Fazio said that the corner sinks have a 3" roll on the front side, which acts as a splash guard. When asked why the design included the unusual corner configuration, the architects replied that is provided for the best use of space. They added that the dishwasher will be used in most cases. Dr. Hahn felt that the design provided for a dirty zone and a clean zone, exceeding the code. Mr. Colarusso asked that the record reflect that the Board of Health did NOT use either cost or convenience as part of their review or consideration in this decision making. Dr. Hahn noted that the concern for water dripping on the floor has been addressed. Ms. Filias asked if the configuration of the sinks changed the way that the dishes are handled. Mr. Fazio replied no, that it is actually better as it avoids the corner. Dr. Hahn made a motion to approve the sink configuration, given that it meets code requirements, it is in place, is commercially available, and as such no variance is needed in that sense. Ms. Filias seconded the motion.

Members by roll call vote were unanimous to approve the motion as presented:

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Filias, in favor

Dr. Colpitts, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

### **Water Quality Task Force**

Mr. Colarusso, serving as a representative to the committee, provided an update on the recently formed Water Quality Task Force. He noted the goal of the committee is to provide a long-term plan to preserve and maintain good drinking water for the Town. He noted the committee has two subcommittees and he is one of those. He said the committee is still in development, a work in progress. He said that many of the items the committee is looking at would come under the Health Department. Ms. Filias asked Ms. Cottler if she could commit to being an alternate representative to the committee, should Mr. Colarusso be unable to attend. Ms. Cottler said that she was concerned about the possibility of having to attend all meetings but was willing to fill in only if Mr. Colarusso was unable to attend meetings. Ms. Filias thanked Ms. Cottler for her willingness to be an alternate Board of Health representative to the Water Quality Task Force. She said if down the line it is not working for Ms. Cottler, the Board will address it at that time.

## **Covid Case Reporting**

Ms. Filias advised that she was receiving an email from resident Eric Bradford, asking if the Board of Health had decided on the reporting of active cases. Members agreed that Mr. Bradford needs to understand that the case reporting is a snapshot in time and that the numbers are fluid and constantly changing. Nurse Crehan noted that the confirmed cases are those that are pcr positive and asked if Mr. Bradford knew that. Dr. Hahn stated that Mr. Bradford already knows that. Members repeated that the active case number is a snapshot at the current time of reporting. Members suggested adding the one-week case number alongside the cumulative case numbers which Mr. Colarusso suggested does the math for people. Staff were asked to inform Mr. Bradford of the case reporting that has been agreed on.

Members reviewed the minutes of 12/23/21 and 01/13/22.

Dr. Hahn had a question regarding Ms. Filias comment that she wished Lahey had been at the meeting.

Ms. Filias explained that the statement was correct, that in reviewing hospitalization information, she wished that someone from Lahey, owners of Addison Gilbert and Beverly Hospital, were present to provide comment on hospitalization rates.

Ms. Filias made a motion to approve the minutes of both 12/23/21 and 01/13/22 as presented.

Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members, on a roll call vote, were unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the minute of 12/23/21 and 01/13/22 as presented:

Ms. Filias, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Dr. Colpitts, in favor

At 9:26 a.m. Ms. Filias made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Hahn seconded the motion. Members, on a roll call vote, were unanimously in favor of the motion to adjourn the meeting:

Ms. Filias, in favor

Dr. Hahn, in favor

Ms. Cottler, in favor

Mr. Colarusso, in favor

Dr. Colpitts, in favor

As submitted,

Ellen Lufkin