

**MINUTES
BOARD OF HEALTH
April 2, 2020**

OPENING: The regular scheduled meeting of the Board of Health opened at 7:00 p.m. The following members were in attendance:

Dr. Jerome Azia

Sue Brzosk

Jean Nillson

Ms. Tammy Spencer, Health Director, was also in attendance.

MINUTES

Ms. Brzoska made a motion to accept the minutes of March 26, 2020. Dr. Azia seconded the motion. The vote of the Board was unanimous in favor.

ATTENDANCE

Public Health Nurse, Dr. Kate Johnson, Selectman, Douglas Moglin

Tonight's meeting is being held via teleconference.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Selectman, Doug Moglin, would like to thank the Board of Health for inviting him to the meeting. Mr. Doug Moglin has been receiving many e-mails and phone calls regarding COVID-19 and the town's response, specifically, how many confirmed cases we have in town. Mr. Moglin has had lengthy conversations with our public safety chiefs about this issue. From a public safety view the chiefs believe the number of confirmed cases should be updated at least weekly. The police department is seeing people not following the social distancing guidelines and congregating in groups. They believe this is in part due to the number of confirmed cases in Southwick (3 reported Friday March 27, 2020) showing a low number compared to other towns in our state. Mr. Moglin would like to see a Code Red issued reiterating Governor Baker's social distancing order and stay at home advisory along with the number of confirmed cases in town.

MS. SPENCER'S REPORT

Ms. Tammy Spencer has performed routine inspections for failed septic systems.

Ms. Spencer will be issuing a letter to Rail Trail Ale House regarding their dumpster being open and overflowing.

Ms. Spencer participates in a MA Department of Public Health COVID-19 conference call with local and regional Health Departments every Tuesday and Friday.

COVID-19 Discussion

March 31, 2020 Governor Baker extended the order to close all non-essential businesses until May 4, 2020. The list of non-essential business has been updated. This order also prohibits congregating in groups of 10 or more. Governor Baker's Stay at Home Advisory remains in effect.

Ms. Spencer has been in contact with Michael Botelho, Produce Safety, Market Access and Certification Program Director for the Department of Agriculture, to discuss the operation of Nurseries and Greenhouses and the protocol they will need to follow as essential businesses. Ms. Spencer will be in contact with the nurseries and greenhouses to ensure they are aware of and following all federal, state, and local orders and advisories.

Letters have been issued to all the churches in town informing them of Governor Baker's Order.

Letters will be issued to all food establishments informing them of the extension of Governor Baker's order. The letter will include a list of things that restaurant owners should be doing throughout their day to further ensure the safety of their employees and customers. A food service section has been added to the Town of Southwick website.

There have been complaints regarding certain non-essential businesses continuing to offer their services and or meeting in groups at various locations in town. The police department will be looking into these complaints. Ms. Spencer will be contacting all non-essential business involved in these complaints, informing them of their responsibilities under the Governor Baker's Essential Services order.

A complaint was received about New England Bike being open. New England Bike is considered an essential business and is following guidelines put forth by the Essential Services order.

Ms. Spencer stated that most businesses in town are doing a great job following the orders and doing everything they can to ensure the public's safety. However there have been some issues with individuals and groups not following the Social Distancing Advisory. Some of the caution tape and signs that have been put in place to deter the public from congregating at local basketball courts, playgrounds, and soccer fields have been taken down and the facilities have been being used. Ms. Spencer and Chief Bishop have been in constant contact regarding these issues. The police Department will continue to monitor these types of locations to ensure social distancing is being followed. Civil tickets in the amount of \$300 can be issued to individuals for failure to disburse.

The Cemetery will be reopening due to the revised list of essential business. Signs will be put up at the cemetery outlining social distancing guidelines.

The Town posted signs along the Rail Trail promoting safe use and social distancing.

The Board of Health office has been receiving an increasing amount of phone calls regarding COVID-19. To keep everyone informed there is a COVID-19 section on the Town of Southwick website that can be accessed by clicking on the red banner on the front page. The website will continue to be updated with any new information as it becomes available. The community is

encouraged to refer to the website for up-to-date and accurate information on how to stay safe during this unprecedented time. The Board of Health is strongly encouraging everyone to follow Governor Baker's Stay at Home advisory to reduce the spread of the virus.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health lists the number of confirmed cases and deaths on their website by county. It is at the discretion of each individual town to publicize the number of cases within their community. The Board of Health has conducted a very extensive discussion about releasing town specific information in a responsible manner with the utmost consideration for an individual's privacy.

Ms. Nilsson made a motion to have Chief Bishop issue a Code Red advising citizens that information relevant to COVID-19 is available on the Town of Southwick website and will include precautions and confirmed case numbers. Dr. Azia seconded the motion. The vote of the Board was unanimous in favor.

Saturday April 4, 2020 the Board of Health will meet virtually using Zoom to ensure the technology is working correctly for our next meeting. No business will be discussed.

The next scheduled meeting is April 9, 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Pelley, Secretary

cc:
Select Board
Town Clerk

Dr. Jerome Azia, Chairman

Tammy Spencer, Health Director

Sue Brzoska

Jean Nilsson

Date