

Lincoln Board of Health
Virtual Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Members Presents: Frederick Mansfield, MD

Patricia Miller

Steven Kanner, MD (arrived late)

Others Present: Tim Higgins, Town Administrator; Deborah Garfield, Eliot; Abigail Butt, Director of Council on Aging/Human Resources

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting will be on August 18, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

Update on COVID-19 status:

Trish McGean was unable to attend the meeting but e-mailed the members with the COVID update. As of July 1 through August 11, there were 18 new COVID cases with 13 of those cases being fully vaccinated and were tested because of symptoms, upcoming travel or recent close contact with a positive case. Most were mildly symptomatic and one 90 year old fully vaccinated resident was hospital with moderate to severe symptoms but is improving and returning home soon. There were 3 cases in the 12-19 year old group with all eligible and 2 fully vaccinated; 8 cases were in the 20-30 year old range and of those 8 cases, 4 of them were not fully vaccinated; 1 case in the 41-50 year old group and fully vaccinated; 2 cases were in the 50-60 year old group and both fully vaccinated: 1 case in the 61-70 year old group but not vaccinated; 1 case was in 71-80 year old group and fully vaccinated; and 2 cases in 81-90 year old group and both fully vaccinated. As an FYI, Concord Public Schools K-12 will be masking everyone indoors, regardless of vaccination status, at the start of school and will re-evaluate every 2 weeks given the fluidity of the situation. Concord has had 54 cases during the same time period with 15 positive cases under the age of 12 who are not yet eligible to be vaccinated.

COVID Trends and Contemplated Response Options:

The members met with Tim Higgins to discuss potential changes in our public health protocols in response to the recent increase in the number of new cases in Lincoln and more generally throughout Middlesex County. Of particular concern is that local and state public health officials have confirmed an increase in the spread among vaccinated residents, so-called “break-through” cases. The experts continue to say that our most vulnerable populations are the unvaccinated, children under the age of 12 for whom a vaccination is not yet available, and people with compromised immune systems. It now appears that the vaccinated may be more susceptible to the Delta variant than they were to the original virus. The CDC recently updated its transmission risk assessment, increasing the risk for Middlesex County from “Moderate” to “Significant”. The CDC recently revised its mask recommendation and is now urging that vaccinated people wear masks indoors in counties with high rates of transmission, which at this time Middlesex County is not there yet. Belmont has recently enacted their own local guidelines or mandates for wearing masks for all indoor public places. It was discussed that the Town could put out a notice emphasizing the CDC’s or DPH’s guidance or take an even more proactive stance and move in the direction of an indoor mask mandate. Lincoln’s vaccination rate is relatively high (approximately 80-90% if Hanscom population is removed), but we are experiencing an increase in cases locally and throughout our area. After a discussion on the pros and cons of creating a mask mandate, Patricia Miller made a motion in conjunction with the Select Board to create an indoor mask mandate for all public spaces in response to the recent increase in positive COVID-19 cases in Lincoln and throughout Middlesex County, including break-through cases among those who have been fully vaccinated. Steve Kanner seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Patricia Miller-aye; Steve Kanner-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye. This will go into effect at 12:01 a.m. on August 20, 2021. Local business will be notified and a notification will be posted on the Town website and sent out on Lincoln Talk. Regarding the Lincoln Schools, the Board has voted to implement a mandatory indoor face mask order that will be in effect with the resumption of school in the fall.

Update on Lincoln School for the Upcoming Year:

Becky McFall could not attend the meeting tonight so this discussion will be put off until the August 18 meeting.

Update on Lincoln Youth Mental Health Clinic with Eliot and Abby Butt:

The members review the 4th quarter report from Eliot which covers April 1 through June 30, 2021. The report showed 6 clinics @ 2.25 hours each for a total of 36 hours; 7 hours of collateral time for a total number of 43 hours; this includes 32 sessions for a total of 8 clients. There was a combined total of 47 residents served for 883 sessions, which is a 26% increase in the number of sessions provided and a 25% increase in the number of service hours provided. Abby said the adolescent clinics are going well.

Discussion on Public Meetings Going Forward:

The members discussed continuing to meet on Zoom and felt that it has worked out especially when members are out of Town and can still attend the meetings on Zoom especially now with an indoor mask mandate going into effect. They also agreed that getting back to meeting in person when it is safe to do so will also be good.

Minutes:

Patricia Miller made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2021 meeting as written. Steve Kanner seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Patricia Miller-aye; Steven Kanner-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye.

At 8:30 p.m. Patricia Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Fred Mansfield seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Patricia Miller-aye; Steven Kanner-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye.

Submitted by Elaine Carroll