

Lincoln Board of Health
Virtual Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 17, 2022

Members Presents: Frederick Mansfield, MD
Steven Kanner, MD
Patricia Miller

Others Present: Trish McGean, Town Nurse; Becky McFall, Superintendent; Melanie Deneen, Director, Concord Board of Health; Elaine Carroll, Adm. Asst.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting is on September 14, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.

Update on COVID-19 Cases and Other Illnesses:

Trish McGean said the following: There were four positive COVID cases this past week, which is a downtick for Lincoln, but most people are using home testing which is not reported. Wastewater numbers are on a downward trend as well. We will see what happens when the kids go back to school. No surprise that there are a lot of tick-borne illnesses as well as some food-borne illnesses. In the fall, we have three flu vaccine clinics booked through Walgreens. The first one is for Town staff and teachers on Sept. 21, one for seniors at the First Parish on Oct. 5; and then one on Oct. 12 at the school for students and families. We also put in a request for a mobile vaccine clinic to come to Town hopefully bringing the new Bivalent and RNC vaccine that comes out in Sept. or earlier which is part of the old vaccine and also includes a new portion of the vaccine that covers the new Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 which are prevalent right now. We requested it for the COA for Oct. 26 but may do a couple of those clinics starting with seniors but wait to make sure the vaccine is available and gets approved by the FDA.

Update on School Opening:

Becky McFall said the following: The staff is not here but for our year round staff we have probably had six people test positive for COVID over the summer and had to isolate for a period of time. On Monday the Commissioner of Education sent out a memo outlining all the expectations for the start of the school year, which the Board received also. The expectation is that we go back to pre-pandemic in terms of activity in school where parents and people can come into the school from outside and students should be able to participate in all activities including field trips. This will be the first time since the pandemic that we will be completely back to all activities. This means that we start the new school year with the same protocol that we ended the school year with. There is no mask mandate but encourage and support people to make the choice to wear a mask and make sure there is no stigma attached to doing so. The big shift is around surveillance testing and the state is no longer paying for any testing including at home rapid tests. The state is asking districts to focus on symptomatic testing instead. The school has a stockpile of the rapid tests and with what we have we believe we can get through January using those for symptomatic testing and any student who ops into testing will be given a box with two test so they have them on hand at home when needed. We may have enough to test participants before and after a vacation but not enough to get us through the school year.

Becky further said that the Board voted last year on our testing plan and required that the staff participate in the testing plan and given the changes at the state level and the fact that we will not have a surveillance program available, would the Board rescind that requirement for the testing program and support our use of rapid tests at least through January. You also voted to mandate that all faculty be vaccinated unless they had a waiver. This was paired with the testing provision, and we need to decide how we would define faculty vaccinations. We made sure that our staff received the initial two vaccination shots and did not require those over 50 to get the second booster shot. In the Public Health Team meeting this week, it was discussed to potentially wait for the new Bivalent vaccine that will be coming out in the fall and then require all staff to get that one. Within the next two weeks before school starts, she said we will be sending out communications to all staff and then another to all families about what the process will and won't be in collaboration with a vote from the Board of Health about what we have agreed to as a plan going forward.

Steve Kanner said that it was about a year ago when people got the original series of shots, and they absolutely need to get the new vaccine called Evushel. It is not really a booster but a new vaccine, but we are not sure what

the age requirement will be yet. When it does come out we can mandate it for staff within 30 days of its approval. Becky said there were no more than six people who got waivers for religious reasons from being vaccinated and should be required to renew that waiver when the new vaccine is available. The new vaccine gives you long-lasting antibodies and is not a vaccine. Becky said the Massachusetts law on vaccination waivers is pretty loose. You do not need to provide any documentation and just have to say that you have a strong believe against being vaccinated, which is tough to question. Patricia said Mass. General let a lot of people go who would not get vaccinated. Dr. Kanner strongly recommends that students wear masks in school and whether we mandate indoor masking depends on the level of infection.

Becky said if a student or staff are out we will follow up to figure out why they are out and if they are symptomatic in school we will test them and know how many cases we have. We find that not looking at the number of cases but rather the clusters of how many positive cases within a classroom or grade level is more useful and then say that they will need to go back to masking for 10 days. Becky also said she will make a strong recommendation and give the reason for wearing masks. A lot of students and staff chose to remain masking in the spring and through the end of the school year.

Fred Mansfield made a motion that the school strongly recommend mask wearing and will track positive cases within the school when there are three or more cases within a single classroom which will trigger mandatory masking for the individuals in that classroom. Patricia Miller seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Steven Kanner-aye; Patricia Miller-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye. Becky will draft a new agreement and send to the Board for approval before presenting it to the unions and the School Committee.

Additional Funds for East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project:

Brian Farless of East Middlesex requested a 4% increase in the funds for FY24. Mr. Farless pointed out in an email that there had only been a 3% increase over 21 years. The cost of services from FY23 to FY24 will not be 4% higher but that he is trying to catch Lincoln up since Lincoln is behind the other towns serviced by East Middlesex. Patricia Miller made a motion to approve an increase of \$500 for mosquito surveillance for FY24. Steve Kanner seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Steve Kanner-aye; Patricia Miller-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye.

Other Business:

Steve suggested the Board invite his neighbor, Scott Rodman, who is building a net zero house at 16 Bypass Road to talk about radon testing. Mr. Rodman is very knowledgeable about it, and it could be very interesting. Steve will ask him to a future meeting. It is not known if a house has to be tested for radon before it is sold.

Melanie Dineen said Concord has not yet found a replacement for Casey Mellin, but she is working on it. Right now, she is doing most of the work with a third party engineer doing some of the plan review. She had to decline a sports camp looking to use the field at the school but when she did the inspection she found that it was an active construction site and they decided not to do the camp since there was no safe place to hold it. They also did not have all their necessary paperwork. There is a lot of work involved with approval of the various sports camps as well as the various summer camps in Lincoln.

Minutes:

Steve Kanner made a motion to approve the minutes from July 13, 2022 meeting as amended. Patricia Miller seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Steve Kanner-aye; Patricia Miller-aye; Fred Mansfield-aye.

At 8:35 p.m. Patricia Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Fred Mansfield seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Steve Kanner-aye, Patricia Miller-aye, Fred Mansfield-aye.

Submitted by Elaine Carroll

Approved: September 14, 2022