



Town of Oak Bluffs
Board of Health
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William White
Chairman

James Butterick
Thomas Zinno
Board Members

Meegan Lancaster
Health Agent

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
April 22, 2020 – MINUTES**

Members Present: William White, James Butterick, Thomas Zinno

Others Present: Meegan Lancaster, Lorna Welch, Mike Santoro, Mike Peters

Chairman White called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

APPOINTMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 10, 2020 - Approved

BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION:

- **Discussion of currently available guidance for certain business types:**

Ms. Lancaster started the discussion. We have been waiting for guidance from DPH. The Federal Government released guidance yesterday for reopening the economy in different phases and talking about a State or a county getting to Phase 1 of return should log 14 consecutive days of the decline in Covid-19 cases. In addition hospitals shouldn't have operated at crisis level for at least two weeks. The Governors orders run till May 4th. Our local Stay at Home orders also run till May 4th. We haven't received a lot of specific guidance from the State:

- **Food Establishments** – *How will the orders address going from take-out back to dining in?*
- **Retail** – *Will there be guidelines for square footage?*
- **Lodging** – *Will there be guidelines for sanitization between guests?*
- **Transport** – *Will there be limits for distancing in an enclosed environment?*
- **Marinas** – *Will there be limits?*
- **Cultural** – *Will these events happen?*
- **Pools** – *Have not received any guidance from DHP yet.*
- **Summer camps** – *Have not received any guidance from DPH yet.*
- **Activities** – *What about MVCMA activities, Illumination, fireworks?*

Ms. Lancaster stated that her reasonable speculation based on research of other communities is the possibly, if things were to re-open in the context of non-essential businesses, that there would be limits to the amount of people in an establishment based on square footage in order to ensure social distancing. In the context of food establishments there would be some sort of segregation of space in dining rooms. There is a great concern of opening the doors and having a lot of people coming here and having a wave of positive cases hit us.

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Mr. White asked about people wanting to prep places for opening. Ms. Lancaster replied that the Fire Department is doing inspections. Mr. Santoro stated that people should wait a couple of weeks to see what happens at the State level. He believes the orders will be extended on May 4th and asked if the restaurants that were not able to open because they were closed when the orders came out would be able to open after May 4th. Ms. Lancaster stated that we have several pre-opening inspections scheduled for the week of May 4th and the following week and we are ready to go. We wish we have more concrete answers.

Ms. Lancaster stated that her understanding was that there was some guidance that the State was working on possibly for the Cape and Islands in order to ensure that things go safely and smoothly with the season approaching. This is something we have reached out to Julian Cyr about and it wasn't clear if that was what he was talking about but we are waiting to get a response from him. There was further discussion about fire extinguisher inspections and whether or not the inspectors were allowed to come over from the mainland. Ms. Lancaster said she would have to look into that and asked the Board to discuss as well. Mr. White felt that they should be able to do that as a needed service. Mr. Butterick and Mr. Zinno agreed. Mr. Santoro asked Mr. White if the Board would allow the restaurants to open for take-out after May 4th. Mr. White stated that he would be fine with that but didn't want to make a decision on spot and the Board needed to wait to hear what the next version of Governors orders will be and also to get the perspective of Ms. Lancaster. Mr. Butterick and Mr. Zinno agreed.

Mr. Santoro spoke about the inspections the Fire Chief has scheduled for this week and East Coast Fire said they would like to come over to do fire extinguishers this week. He asked Ms. Lancaster if they could come over now to do that. Ms. Lancaster stated that they reached out to her about a week and a half ago and she thought they had it sorted out. She will reach out to the Fire Chief again and also to the other Health Agents about what they are planning to do. Mr. Santoro asked her to let him know so he can get the word out.

Mr. Santoro asked Ms. Lancaster if three or four people could get clearance to go into their restaurants to clean and get ready. Ms. Lancaster replied that most our inspections were schedule for May 7th so that once the stay at home order was lifted on the 4th people could go in and do all that work. She does have a few year-round restaurants that closed prior to the order going into effect that she has scheduled for Monday, May 4th. Mr. Santoro asked about getting water turned on in the food establishments. Ms. Lancaster stated that she believes as of April 27th plumbers are allowed work but she wants to check on that because the order refers to unoccupied dwellings. She will look into that to see how it is written and let them know by the end of the day.

- **Discussion of return to work guidelines for worksites and construction sites**

Ms. Lancaster stated that Mike Peters from Farm Neck golf course was in attendance. There a letter sent to us by Tim Sweet referring to some confusion surrounding local orders and their understanding of what the State was determining as an essential service. They included some information from The Alliance of Massachusetts Golf Organizations. The concern is that it is a critical time for them to get work done for the season. Mr. Peters stated that they are currently the only golf course in the State not allowed to perform maintenance practices. Tisbury allowed Mink Meadows to continue their maintenance practices as of yesterday. Their biggest concern is that without care of the turf it could die and that would be detrimental to their business. Mr. White asked Ms. Lancaster if they are able to allow them to tender to their landscape. Ms. Lancaster could not speak to the decision another town has made. Our local orders do not allow for landscaping.

There was further discussion among the Board. Mr. Peters stated that the Governor deemed gold courses essential because of this letter. Ms. Lancaster explained that the Islands were subject to a more strict local order which is why there were different standards for the golf courses on the Islands versus the State. She added that Nantucket released their restriction yesterday and began allowing golf course maintenance activities. Mr. Butterick stated the other towns have allowed it and Nantucket has now allowed it he doesn't see how we can say no. Mr. Zinno agreed. Ms. Lancaster agreed and asked that they follow the guidelines and provide documentation of that. Mr. Zinno made a motion to allow maintenance of Farm Neck Golf Course. All in favor.

Ms. Lancaster informed the Board of other inquiries regarding landscaping and all the different scenarios out there. Mr. White stated that Ms. Lancaster and everyone are doing the best they can with public health in mind. Mr. Santoro added that he is dealing with Selectmen issues and he wouldn't want to be dealing with what we all have to deal with. It is very hard to call the shots and make everyone happy but he likes to hear that we have flexibility and are listening to people and possibly making the changes as we go along.

There was a discussion about pest control which was exempt in very specific circumstances. Ms. Lancaster will get more info on this matter.

Mr. White told Ms. Lancaster she is doing an excellent job under very hard circumstances and not to get discouraged. The Board is there to support her. Mr. Zinno agreed.

AGENT / ADMINISTRATION UPDATES:

We are back on our normal schedule of weekly meetings on Tuesdays at 10am.

Mr. Zinno made a motion to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Lorna Welch, Administrative Assistant.

DOCUMENTS: The Alliance of Massachusetts Golf Organizations letter, Farm Neck Golf Club letter, When and How to Reopen after Covid-19