



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 28, 2020 – MINUTES**

**Members Present:** William White, James Butterick, Thomas Zinno

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

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

**APPOINTMENTS:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- **March 24, 2020** - Approved
- **March 24, 2020 Emergency Session** - Approved

**BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION:**

- **Face covering requirement for drivers and riders on public transportation**

The VTA reached out to all the Boards on the island for support in requiring face coverings for riders. They have also reached out to DPH for their support as well. Mr. White asked if riders will be denied entry on the bus if they do not have a face covering. Ms. Lancaster replied that she would have to confirm that with the VTA. Mr. Santoro asked to give some leeway so that people don't get left behind at the bus because they didn't have one. Mr. Zinno pointed out some of the enforcement challenges but decided that this would be an important safety precaution. Mr. Zinno made a motion to require VTA (public transportation) riders to wear a face covering starting Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 8am. All in favor. Mr. Zinno made a motion to require drivers and passengers in private car services, taxis, livery and tour services to wear face coverings. All in favor.

- **Return to operations planning for public buildings – town hall, library, etc.**

Ms. Lancaster stated that this was more of an agent update. The working group had their first meeting yesterday. It was very encouraging. Wendy had a lot of really good input regarding OSHA standard and regulations that pertain to public buildings as well as some possibilities of modifying town hall to accommodate people in terms of space. Another possibility arose of using the trailers depending on what happens with the renovation project for the town hall to be voted on in April at town meeting which is now postponed until June. It is a question of how much to modify a building because it is not clear if we will be here for any length of time and also what is the Governor going to do. Mr. Zinno suggested the possible use of an ultra-violet device that is good for up to 250 sq. feet that is supposedly a virus killer that you can put in a space and run for 5 minutes. Similar to what they are doing in hospitals to purify the rooms. Ms. Lancaster stated that she would look into it.

**AGENT / ADMINISTRATION UPDATES:**

- **Ongoing COVID-19 response activities**

Ms. Lancaster started the return to work inspections yesterday. As phase 2 guidelines come out she will be getting more which allow for five worker crews. She has reached out to Ms. Brough for help because this will not be sustainable for her to do for any quantity of time since we have 118 open building permits currently. Ms. Brough mentioned that the Assistant Shellfish Constable has reduced hours at this time and would be available to help with these inspections. Ms. Lancaster will be meeting with him at noon and go on a few inspections to get him up to speed. She should be able to delegate most of the inspections to him.

Mr. Santoro stated that it would be easier for BOH to follow the States guidelines pertaining to construction. He feels it is getting contentious. Ms. Lancaster replied that there is no material difference between the State guidelines and our local guidelines although the State allows for revisions. The State asked for construction supervisors to develop their own plan for the jobsite. What was done locally is that the working group provided them with that template and guidance so that at least there was consistency throughout all the jobsites. Not only town to town but company to company which makes it easier for sub-contractors that work for several different general contractors in different towns. She feels that our local order is actually better because it provides that framework to work versus having to create that for each company and it makes it easier for inspecting in terms of efficiency to have the same expectations for each jobsite. Mr. Santoro asked if she had received any complaints for contractors. She replied that she only had one out all the contractors and that most were grateful, thankful, and appreciative and prepared. There was further discussion regarding landscapers.

Mr. Santoro asked about how long workers are waiting for inspections. Ms. Lancaster stated that we are getting to them in less than 24 hours and she did 17 in one day. She also reminded everyone that all the other towns have a building commissioner that is also doing these inspections. Our building commissioner lives off island and is not working at this time. Mr. White stated that if anyone had complaints about this to refer them to him.

Ms. Lancaster asked for the Boards opinion about restaurant operators being able to go into their establishments to get ready to open. She feels there is not much of difference between tradesmen going into an establishment to work and allowing food establishment owners and workers to go in and get their places ready to open. Especially since sanitation is a huge part of their business. Mr. Santoro reiterated that people need five to six days before a pre-opening inspection to get ready, turn water on, etc. Mr. Butterick agreed that the food establishments have well developed systems for sanitizing and cleaning, bathrooms and sinks, all the things they do not have on a construction site. Mr. White agreed that a restaurant is totally different then a construction site. Mr. Zinno agreed. The Board voted to approve no more than five people in the food establishments to prepare their spaces for inspection effective immediately.

There was a discussion about the owners of the Game Room bringing over equipment on May 5th. Ms. Lancaster stated that we would have to wait for the Governor's orders to see if they are able to do this.

Mr. Santoro asked about restaurants that closed before the orders came out and they now want to re-open. Ms. Lancaster replied that the Governor's orders go until May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Butterick expressed concern last week during a conference call with the hospital about the minimal amount of testing that is getting done. One of our public health nurses said that they are not doing contact tracing because they are not getting any referrals. There is an article in the Gazette today that addresses several concerns that Mr. Butterick put in a letter to someone else. He feels they are still missing the point. They are telling a lot of patients

that unless they are really high risk, if you have the symptoms and it is obvious you have the virus then do not come in for testing and to just stay home and quarantine. That is called clinically confirmed. Someone told him that the clinically confirmed are people that had a negative test. That is not his impression. Somehow the health agents in each of the towns need to find out who the clinically confirmed people are because it is assumed they are positive without a test. If they have contact then they need to be traced. This is not getting done and not resolved. Mr. White asked how the health agents would be able to track them down. Mr. Butterick stated that the hospital can call the health agent and give them the info. Then we can have the public health nurses do the contact tracing. This is a basic fundamental of public health. Ms. Lancaster stated that she believed we were getting the clinically confirmed cases reported to the public health nurses. Mr. Butterick stated that he does not think that is happening. There is no mechanism because these cases do not get entered in MAVEN. Ms. Lancaster's understanding was that they were communicated verbally to the public health nurses. Mr. Butterick stated he would bring this issue up with the CEO of MVH and asked Ms. Lancaster to bring up with the other health agents.

Mr. Zinno suggested scheduling another meeting on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> especially with the new information coming out from the Governor. Everyone agreed.

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

Respectfully submitted by Lorna Welch, Administrative Assistant.