



Town of Fairhaven

Board of Health

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FAIRHAVEN,
MASS.

February 2, 2022

PRESENT: Peter DeTerra, Kevin Gallagher (VIA ZOOM), David Flaherty. ABSENT: Michael Ristuccia

Call to Order

- a. Vice Chair, Peter DeTerra called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Roll call attendance of the meeting members were taken, Kevin Gallagher was via zoom, Michael Ristuccia was absent.

2. Welcome and Media Notification

- a. Mr. DeTerra welcomed everyone and read the media and recording notifications and welcomed the public to speak on items.

3. Minutes of the Meeting:

- a. Mr. Gallagher made the motion to approve the minutes of the meeting on January 19, 2022. Mr. DeTerra seconded the motion, vote passed.

4. Health Agent Report/ COVID-19 Update

- a. Mr. Flaherty read his report: As of January 28, 2022: Total Case Count: 4,176. Total Tests in the last 2 weeks 2,571. Total cases in the last two weeks: 429. Positivity Rate of 18.09%. Total vaccinated persons in Fairhaven 10,878. Vaccinated Females is 5,896, 72% Per Capita and 54% Proportion. Fully Vaccinated Males is 4,982, 64% Per Capita and 46% Proportion. Mr. Flaherty also mentioned how the ICU and Hospital Rates according the Mass.gov interactive dashboard are significantly dropping. The dashboard also indicates that the majority of cases are household contacts that are causing the outbreaks.
- b. COVID testing is at the Emergency Management Building 150 Sconticut Neck Rd from 9am - 11pm. Date, time and location are subject to change.
- c. COVID testing in Acushnet is now for residents only.
- d. Homebound vaccination intake line is 1-833-983-0485
- e. Southcoast is hosting a vaccine clinic February 3rd at the old Vanity Fair in Dartmouth at 375 Faunce Corner Road from 10am- 6:30pm offering first, second and third doses.
- f. The United States Government is now sending out home test kits to any American who applies for it online. Up to 4 test kits sent to a single residence address. Test kits can be orders at COVIDTESTS.GOV
- g. Digital vaccine cards are now available online at MYVAXRECORDS.MASS.GOV
- h. The isolation and quarantine guidance has changed. (ISOLATION) If you test positive, regardless of vaccination status you must stay home for 5 days. If you have no symptoms or the symptoms are resolving after 5 days you can leave your house and continue to wear a mask for an additional 5 days.
(QUARANTINE) If you were exposed to someone who is a confirmed positive and you have been boosted OR completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months OR completed the primary series of J & J within the last 2 months, wear a mask around others for 10 days and test on day 5 if possible. If you develop symptoms, get a test and stay home.
(QUARANTINE) If you were exposed to someone who is a confirmed positive and you completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted OR completed the primary series of J & J over 2 months ago and are not boosted OR you are un

vaccinated, stay home for 5 days, after that continue to wear a mask around other for 5 days. If you cannot quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days, test on day 5 if possible. If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.

- i. State education officials are planning to provide school districts with 200,000 at-home rapid COVID-19 tests for their teachers and staff and are encouraging school personnel to take one of the antigen tests before returning to work after the winter break. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education said Wednesday that each district will receive enough tests to distribute two to every school staff member, and that superintendents will soon receive more information on the regional sites where districts will be able to pick up their test supply.
- j. Next Blood Pressure Clinic is February 16, 2022 from 1-2pm at Town Hall.
- k. Mr. Flaherty stated Chapter 2 complaints are still coming in and they are being handled accordingly. There have been no title 5 installations or inspections recently. Mr. Flaherty also said that he is working with New Bedford and Acushnet on a grant to obtain more kits and masks. The office is currently working on coordinating a rabies clinic with the Animal Hospitals in Town. Mr. Flaherty is also still trying to get a vaccine clinic in Town with Southcoast.

5. Discussion of indoor mask mandate by Board of Health

- a. Mr. Flaherty mentioned that the hospital rates are dropping over the last few weeks, the hospitals and ICU bed should see relief soon. People are masking and getting vaccinated so the State is starting to look better than it has been.

Mr. DeTerra said he believes the education has been working and that Westport is soon lifting their mask mandate shortly.

Mr. Gallagher said the Select Board asked the Board of Health to be a little more aggressive, and if we consider this any further then all three board members should be present.

Cathy Melanson was via zoom and stated that a mandate is not needed. People need to make their own decisions and it is now up to the individuals.

Mr. Gallagher asked if the Town Hall mask mandate is still in effect, Mr. Flaherty said yes.

Diane Hahn was present at the meeting. She is concerned as to what the Select Board meant by aggressive measures. She also doesn't believe that a mask mandate is not "throwing it down someone's throat". She has read how low the vaccination rates are in children and knowing that household contact is the main cause of cases it is concerning. She also appreciates that the public is allowed to speak but believes this should have been a public hearing. She also questioned why the agenda was revised online. Mrs. Bowers reassured her that the agenda was not revised. The website was incorrect and it was not anything to do with the paper agenda was the approved. Mr. DeTerra said that if the agenda was revised it would have been stamped as revised.

Mr. Flaherty read the letter from the Select Board out loud,

*"Dear Honorable Board of Health Member's,
The Fairhaven Select Board is very concerned with the recent rise in Covid numbers and the safety and welfare of our residents. Although, our Board recognizes that the Board of Health are an autonomous board, the Select Board has voted unanimously at their meeting on January 24, 2022, to request that we would like to see the Board of Health take stronger action up to and including a possible mask mandate in the Town of Fairhaven. Thank you for your consideration in this request."*

Mr. DeTerra said since receiving the letter, and the last meeting, the number have gone down. We are still continuing education, and the food inspector is also going around giving out signs, and trying to get a vaccination clinic running and encourages everyone to get vaccinated.

Mr. Gallagher said the day after the last meeting, Kevin saw the flier that was discussed up all over Town and would like to take the time to thank the staff and business owners who agreed with the request and posted them on their windows.

- 6. Public Comment**
- 7. Invoices, Correspondence and Other Business**
 - a. Bill's and permits are to be signed at the end of the meeting.
- 8. Next Meeting Date: February 16, 2022 at 5:00pm**
 - a. Mr. Gallagher made the motion to adjourn at 5:30 pm, Mr. DeTerra seconded the motion, vote passed.