

A joint meeting of the Melrose and Wakefield Boards of Health was held remotely on March 25, 2020. The meeting came to order at 7:05 pm . Present at the meeting remotely were Melrose Board members Maurine Garipay and Frank Brincheiro, Wakefield Board members Laurel Gourville, Elaine Silva, and Candace Linehan as well as Health Director Ruth Clay.

Minutes from the last meeting were tabled.

Clay reported that there are currently 7 cases of COVID19 in Wakefield and 4 in Melrose. Household member with symptoms can be declared positive by a physician without testing.

AFC Urgent Care in Stoneham is doing a drive through testing program this Saturday. All people will be prescreened and prebooked. They anticipate 300 cars over six hours so we anticipate additional cases from that testing.

All tests are currently going to Quest Labs unless they are a first responder. Those tests are conducted by the State Lab. Until March 17 the Quest tests were going to California with a 2 week turnaround. They are now being processed in MA so we are hoping for a shorter turnaround.

Melrose Wakefield Healthcare seems to be relaxing their criteria to test people who do not need to be hospitalized however Dr. Brincheiro was on a conference call MWH who did not mention changing their protocols. Homemade cloth masks donated to the hospital will only be used as a last resort.

Good data is updated every day at 4 pm on the DPH website including the number of cases by county, by sex, by age group.

Melrose school nurses have all been trained on contact tracing. The Public Health Nurse will make the call to the case and they assign the case to one of the school nurses for contact tracing. Wakefield nurses have indicated that they might be interested in helping. Their biggest concern is that the public does not have access to their personal cell phone numbers.

Because Melrose and Wakefield are considered a Health District by the MDPH we have been given \$100,000 quickly for health department use. This includes paying for other space for people to isolate or quarantine as well as pay for people to assist with contact tracing. The Wakefield EMD has contacted the Four Points Sheraton who has indicated that they will be closing. Lakeside Inn had concerns about having positive people at their facility.

Daycares are closed except those who receive designation as Exempt for healthcare workers and first responders' children.

There is still discussion about what information can be shared with fire and police. The Public Health Commissioner has issued an Order saying that only addresses can be shared. However, there is a document being shared that says that names can be shared.

Clay has purchased gloves and cleaning supplies for public safety. The state has contacted schools of public health to train public health students on contact tracing to assist health departments. Garipay

noted there is a lot of discussion about construction sites. Clay noted that the legal team for the Governor has noted that cities and towns cannot restrict more than the Governor. Staff is following up on complaints about restaurants that are allegedly allowing some seating. Discussion was held about social distancing at the lake. An electronic sign has been posted reminding everyone to stay six feet apart.

Wakefield staff are working remotely. Cindy is picking up messages and sending them to Ruth. Ruth is usually in the Melrose office to pick up calls. Louise is doing administrative work remotely. Brigid Alverson is picking calls to the Mayor's office and forwarding them to Ruth. Ruth and Karen talk and text several times a day.

The members of the Boards decided that they would like to continue to have joint remote calls on Wednesdays. Next meeting will be April 1 via WebEx.

Materials distributed:

Agenda

Motion to adjourn by Silva, seconded by Linahan. Roll call vote: Silva yes, Linehan yes, Gourville yes.

Motion to adjourn by Brincheiro, seconded by Garipay. Roll call vote: Brincheiro yes, Garipay yes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth L. Clay, MPH
Health Director