



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building
100 Maple Avenue
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 05145

Date: September 22, 2023
To: Board of Health
From: Jennie Fishman, Chair
Re: Board of Health Meeting Minutes
ATTENDANCE: Jennie Fishman, Dr. George Abraham, Karyn Rossacci

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Central MA Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA):
Soloe Dennis, Director of Public Health
Ian Wong, Deputy Director of Public Health
Amelia Houghton, Chief of Public Health Nursing
Emma Stefanski, Regional Public Health Coordinator

The next meeting of the Board of Health will be held on **FRIDAY, September 22, 2023** at 8:00 a.m. in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room located at the Richard D. Carney Municipal Building, 100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545, at which time and place the Board of Health will consider the following agenda:

- 1. Call to order.** The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m. by Jennie Fishman.
- 2. Review and approval of Minutes from the August 18, 2023 Board of Health Meeting.**
On a motion made by Dr. Abraham and seconded by Karyn Rossacci on a roll call vote; Dr. Abraham, aye; Karyn Rossacci, aye; and Jennie Fishman, aye, the Board of Health voted to approve the Minutes from the August 18, 2023 Board of Health Meeting. Unanimously approved 3 - 0.
- 3. Review and Discuss Coronavirus / COVID-19 Update.**
Amelia Houghton provided an update. The COVID-19 vaccine is now available. The City of Worcester is now able to get the vaccine for children (COVID formulation). Access to the vaccine is available for those who are eighteen (18) years of age and under. Worcester is part of the Bridge Access Program, which will allow access to and provide vaccine for the population of people who are in an underserved community, are under-insured or have no insurance. For the month of August, Shrewsbury is reflecting controllable numbers of positive cases; however, those are only the reported cases to the state. It does not capture those who test at home.

Ms. Houghton met with a representative from SMOC to discuss the homeless/migrant families and offered assistance. The City of Worcester is on standby.

Question: What brand of vaccine will there be available for children? Will you have access to one kind or both?

Answer: Will try to obtain both, as children under the age of five (5) have a different dosage depending on the vaccine type. If clinics were scheduled, for those who need to return to a future clinic, then staffing would need to be beefed up.

UMass and St. Vincent Hospitals - Both hospitals have peaked in their COVID-19 cases. The numbers had come down and it was believed to be travel-related in the months of July and August.

What we measure is tip of iceberg due to people self-testing or not testing at all. People are tired of having to be vaccinated. The combined vaccine (COVID-19 and FLU) has been tabled for now. There might be a combined vaccine available next year. People should be well covered with the current vaccine. There are no recommendations for a second dose. This vaccine doesn't cover the original COVID-19 strain, it focuses on Omicron.

Influenza ("Flu") - The Flu activity to date is sporadic. In the Southern hemisphere, their incidence of disease gives us a good prediction on how it will be here in the United States. The current vaccine should have a good response rate.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) - There are two (2) RSV vaccines out now that are licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USDA). These are for use in adults sixty (60) years of age and over.

Mosquito-related Illness - One (1) individual in Worcester County had contracted West Nile Virus (WNV) from out-of-state.

Question: What is the communication about the new vaccine?

Answer: CMRPHA works with the MA Department of Public Health (MDPH) and in turn, provides communications to the alliance communities to disseminate.

COVID-19 Test Kits - The Government has relaunched their program. U.S. residents will be able to order up to four (4) free test kits as of September 25, 2023. They can be ordered starting September 25, 2023 by visiting www.covid.gov/tests

Question: How is the migrant community being addressed?

Answer: Discussions are taking place on how to collaborate. One area of focus is how to best manage the sanitation and ensure people have clean linens, etc. Another area of focus is how to reach out to families of different cultural backgrounds. The majority of the migrants have been vaccinated. There are mobile vaccination clinics available.

Question: What is the Town doing for the migrant population?

Answer: The Town has a large donation bin situated in the front of Town Hall for anyone who would like to donate pampers, wipes, toiletries, etc. Additionally, the Town established an online portal for those who would like to make monetary donations.

Question: What are the public schools doing to address food insecurities and clothing?

Answer: Will follow-up with the Superintendent of Shrewsbury Public Schools.

4. Review and Discuss Updates from the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA).

Soloe Dennis provided the following updates:

Staffing - Introduction of Ian Wong, Deputy Director of Public Health and Emma Stefanski, Regional Public Health Coordinator. Welcome!

Inspectional services - Looking at centralizing current inspectional processes.

Narcan Training - To be held at the Library in the October / November timeframe. Details forthcoming.

CMRPHA Newsletter - This communication has been revamped and the latest edition was deployed via the City of Worcester's listserv. This information is also posted under the Health Department portion of the Town of Shrewsbury's website.

5. Review meeting schedule. The next scheduled Board of Health meeting will be held on Friday, October 20, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room located at the Richard D. Carney Municipal Building, 100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.

6. Adjourn. On a motion made by Dr. Abraham and seconded by Karyn Rossacci and on a roll call vote, Dr. Abraham, aye; Karyn Rossacci, aye and Jennie Fishman aye, the Board of Health voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 a.m. Unanimously approved 3 - 0.

Correspondence:

- Shrewsbury Board of Health Meeting Minutes – August 18, 2023