

Westhampton Board of Health  
Minutes to Meeting of  
September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Present: Robby Armenti (RA), David Blakesley (DB), Tom Martin (TM), Mark Bushee (MB)  
Dolores Thornhill (DT), Dale Kasal (DK)

Meeting to order at 1:09 pm and adjourned 3 pm

- 1) DB moves to approve minutes of September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 with RA seconding. Motion passes unanimously.
- 2) DT and DK submitted a requested proposal to resume pickleball play at Town Hall once the weather turns colder, noting that the document is a starting place for the group, and they are open to changes. DB notes that Town Hall is currently closed for this activity and that the Board would need to put suggestions together for review by Selectboard to resume activities that are not directly related to operation of town government (i.e. board meetings, elections). DK wonders why the Town Hall is closed when state's transmission data on Covid show a low level of risk. MB notes that activities allowed by the state are sector specific and Board will need to do some research to get up to speed on this activity. TM notes there is still a great deal of fear and caution surrounding Covid in our community and that the State is inconsistent with its metric and guidelines and for that reason it seems premature to open for other than essential business. Board agrees to put together recommendations for opening town hall to non-governmental public activities. Board will work on this at next meeting.
- 3) Board discusses the Halloween activities in town noting that DPH is still working on guidelines for Halloween and MB notes that currently the State is asking BOH to look at CDC guidelines to begin the process of review. TM notes that DPH is calling some plans afoot for this Holiday as "TRICK OF TRUNK," where a drive-by, no touch event where costumes are worn in the car of a family that comes to a location of get a bag of free candy. DB notes that something like this is being proposed for organizers of Halloween in Westhampton. Board is ok with that proposal but it unsure of the details and tasks TM with going over this on Monday at Selectboard meeting.
- 4) Board discusses observations on school openings. All Board members have been at the schools gathering information on procedures and practices. It is noted that mask wearing at this time seems to be universal amongst staff and students. Social distancing is still a challenge especially at the Regional school. The Elementary School is doing very well with BOTH masks wearing and social distancing. Very few students on the buses generally and so distancing is very possible. TM notes some problems with spacing on the buses at the Regional even though there are few problems. Board discusses the benefits of bus monitors. Board trying also to convey to bus drivers the benefits of opening window in the bus to promote air flow. Board notes it has not received written proposals for resumption of sports at the Regional school by the Athletic Director and the need to follow up. TM notes he has heard reports of sport tryouts are occurring at the Regional even without a plan seemingly in place. Board notes need to follow up on

this. TM notes that 700 free meals were planning on going out of the regional school kitchen all on a to go basis or bag lunches eaten outside. TM notes that Elementary School plans to have lunch outdoors whenever possible but also plans to allow students to eat indoor (in the gym/cafeteria in two shifts) with door open and with powerful fans deployed to increase outside ventilation. Board tasks TM with conveying to Administration and School Committee that such a plan may create more close contacts for the school than is desirable and request that it be done by grade or spaced out in groups that are gathered by grade and separated by larger spacing.

- 5) Board discusses CARES ACT funding. TM notes that he was told by Susan Bronstein our Cares Act coordinator that Board has special dispensation/authority to spend CARES ACT money without submitting to FEMA. This comes through Eric Weiss of Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Board wants confirmation of this and to know parameters of that authority.
- 6) Board discusses complaint of Agricultural Spraying and Chemical Drift and request to take up the matter again given Barbara Pelissier's frustration with Agricultural Commissions lack of action on the issue and perceived conflict of interest in the matter. TM notes again that Westhampton is a Right to Farm town with By-law in place that the Agricultural Commission is tasked with working out solutions to abutters conflicts with Farming activities. MB notes that State Agricultural Department is known to be less than helpful in these matters. MB notes that most agricultural chemicals are carcinogenic and potentially could be considered a nuisance when not contained to fields. TM notes that exposures to chemicals that are airborne are likely a health hazard if breathed and PPE is worn by those who spray. DB notes that he does not see a health risk with agricultural spraying in general, and that Barbara did not make a case for her health being affected, and stressed that none the less her request of 2 hour to 20-minute notification prior to spraying was reasonable. Board to work on a letter that can be sent to Selectboard and Agricultural Commission again requesting that the matter be taken up, by them.