

Westhampton Board of Health

Minutes to meeting of

November 4th, 2020

Present: Robby Armenti (RA), David Blakesley (DB), Tom Martin (TM), Mark Bushee (MB), Alex White (AW), Meaghan Schwelm (MS).

- 1) DB moves to approve minutes of October 29th meeting as written with RA seconding. RA notes appreciation that minutes were extensive given difficulty hearing the proceedings remotely. Motion passes unanimously.
- 2) MS before the Board seeking recommendations and guidance on Westhampton Library operation for the winter months. MS notes that patrons and volunteer staff are appreciative of efforts made to provide in person service this year with windows and doors open to maximize fresh air and with appropriate safety protocols of masking, gloves and limited occupancy. MS notes that Library functionality depends of volunteer staff and that they folks are generally in the higher risk demographic and are not comfortable working in the building without the windows open. Board discussed recommendations by Sandri (HVAC service company) for safety upgrades to the Library which included MERV 13 filters (unavailable due to high demand) ionization and UVC units. TM notes that info from Sandri seems incomplete in that no specs were offered on recommended upgrade equipment and no report of existing conditions and that this was conveyed to Selectboard. TM notes that the safest way forward would be for the Library to return to curbside service. MS states that although this is possible it isn't desirable, she wants to provide more service to the community. DB notes that there is no industry agreement on the best Covid safety upgrades to HVAC systems and that at this point fresh air and masks seem to be the best way forward. TM notes that close reading of the ASHRAE website that is cited by CDC and DPH as authoritative reference for HVAC in Covid does not appear to recommend either UVC units or ionization units although it states they may provide protection. TM notes that this authority does clearly recommend significant fresh air does provide meaningful protection and stresses the words significant and meaningful in tandem. RA notes new DPH regulations about indoor spaces in forthcoming. RA notes that limiting time spent in buildings offers clear and ready protection. Opening the community room is discussed at length and changing the location of isolation space for incoming materials in order to open that space and possible the southern magazine sitting area or the children's area could be used for small community gatherings. MS states that written recommendations would be helpful. Board to work on recommendations this week and vote on them at next meeting.
- 3) Board discusses Town Hall opening for community use and HVAC in that building. DB notes that he continues to be against opening Town Hall for nongovernmental uses given the lack of clear options for safety around closed spaces with HVAC guidance from the State murky. Fresh air and limiting use are agreed to be the only clearly defined protocol around building use during Covid. DB notes that concern about freezing pipes in Town Hall if windows are open. TM notes that he has contacted Matt Hurd to do extra janitorial work in Town Hall starting the end of next week. Mr. Hurd is also providing services at the Elementary School.
- 4) Board receives document from Jeff Brooks describing activities around scouting meeting that he is requesting be conducted in Town Hall. Board to work on a set of guidelines for this group and

request that Mr. Brooks attend next meeting to answer questions about their participants and activities.

- 5) Board discussed knitting group and were it might be possible for them to meet.
- 6) Board welcomes Alex White to the meeting. AW is the newly hired Covid Protocol Outreach and Enforcement Officer for the Foothills Health District. AW introduces himself and describes his background and work experience.
- 7) Board approves letter to Selectboard outlining complaints received about disregard of Covid Safety protocols at the Willard Family Fireworks display. MB notes that the Governor wishes to limit private gatherings in the State that seem to be driving transmission numbers forward. Limitations on gathering sizes both indoors and outdoors is clarified.
- 8) TM reports on monitoring of Town Halloween event which was well and safely conducted. TM reports on senior Halloween event at HRHS which was not safely conducted with social distancing among the senior students largely ignored.
- 9) Board discusses EDS sites in the area for eventual Covid vaccination programs in 2021 and interface with Hampshire County Emergency Preparedness Coalition. TM notes communication with Loren Davine, the coordinator for this group and her explanation that Westhampton is currently grouped with Southampton and Easthampton for EDS services in Easthampton. TM notes that 40 EDS sites in the Coalition have shrunk to 7 for efficiency reasons. Board agrees to stay with Easthampton site for EDS services and RA to begin attending Coalition meetings if they are conducted safely.