MINUTES
BOARD OF HEALTH
TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM
FEBRUARY 9, 2021

Mrs. Plantemoli called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Health to order at 7:30 P.M.

Adequate notice of this meeting of the Board of Health was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to both the *Chatham Courier* and the *Morris County Daily Record* on January 15, 2020 & October 19, 2020; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on January 15, 2020 & October 19, 2020; and notice was filed with the Township Clerk on January 15, 2020 & October 19, 2020.

Oaths of Office

Mr. Hamilton was sworn in as a member of the Board of Health. Mr. LaConte administered the oath.

Roll Call

Answering present to the roll call were Mr. Hamilton, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nikolopoulos, Mrs. Gardner and Mrs. Plantemoli. Mr. Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Dolan were also present. Also present was Eric Range of the Madison Board of Health.

Ms. Taormina was absent

All participation in this meeting was via Zoom.

Reports

Mrs. Plantemoli asked Board members to save their questions for Mrs. Dolan and Mr. Fitzpatrick until after their reports have been completed.

Public Health Nurse

Mrs. Dolan reported that COVID testing is still being conducted free of charge at County College of Morris. She also said that there has recently been less frustration from callers inquiring about COVID vaccines. Mrs. Dolan said that news stations have reported that CVS and Walgreens will be administering vaccines, however appointments are not yet available. She also said that Morris County has the second highest percentage of residents vaccinated in New Jersey. Mrs. Dolan reported that there is still an outbreak at a long-term care center in Chatham Township. She also said that the LTC centers are required to report the vaccination levels of their staff and residents.

Mrs. Dolan reported that immunization audits are being conducted at the local schools, which is an annual requirement. Preschools and childcare centers have been prioritized and will be followed by schools. Mrs. Dolan also noted that the pandemic is not a pass for getting vaccinated.

Mrs. Dolan reported that the Health Department has often been in touch with schools regarding COVID exposures. She noted that quarantine is from all activities, not only school.

REHS/Health Officer

Mr. Fitzpatrick reported that normal health inspections are still occurring, and inspectors are cross-trained to perform contact training. He also reported that he has often been in contact with the School District regarding COVID issues. Discussions have also been had with the Township Administration on how to keep employees safe.

Mr. Fitzpatrick also commented on COVID vaccines. He said that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is expected to have emergency approval by the end of February, with shipments in April. Mr. Fitzpatrick also commented on the vaccine distribution process, and said that the Atlantic Health system is the best registration system.

Mr. Eric Range from the Madison Board of Health gave a presentation on COVID trends in New Jersey. He addressed case rates per 100,000. He also showed statistics for Morris County. Mr. Range also provided information on vaccination rates by county. The presence of COVID variants was also discussed, and Mr. Range said that the number of cases of variants is very low. He also said that the number of cases that are tested to see if they might be a variant are also low.

Mrs. Fowler asked about vaccination clinics for teachers. Mr. Fitzpatrick discussed planning for mass prophylaxis pods. Mrs. Dolan noted the need for crowd control for mass vaccination centers. Mr. Range said that clinics for specific groups like teachers would only be likely if the State prioritized such a group.

Mr. Fitzpatrick reported that Mrs. Dolan won an award for Employee of the Month.

Mr. Nikolopoulos asked what the consequences would be if a teacher did not want to get the COVID vaccine. Mrs. Dolan said that the vaccine is not mandated. Mrs. Fowler shared her experiences working in the medical field as they relate to the COVID vaccine. She said that myths need to be addressed.

Mr. LaConte asked if the COVID vaccine is anticipated to become a seasonal vaccination. Mr. Fitzpatrick said that boosters are being developed to address variants and mutations.

Mrs. Plantemoli said that control measures to prevent COVID will remain in effect for some time. Mr. Fitzpatrick noted that cases of the Flu are relatively low due to measures such as mask wearing, social distancing and hand washing. He also said that hopefully moving forward people with colds and the flu will stay home when they are sick.

Mrs. Fowler asked if the LTC outbreak was from before vaccinations. Mrs. Dolan said that anything higher than two cases is an outbreak, and the recent outbreak began before vaccinations were available. Mr. Fitzpatrick noted that it still takes time after the second dose to build up to the 90-95% protection. He also noted that the vaccinations are not yet available for children. Mr. Fitzpatrick also stressed that supply shortages are the reason why it is taking a long time to get vaccinations rolled out.

Mr. Hamilton said that the Senior Center's administration have been working to communicate with seniors in the Chathams regarding vaccinations. He also asked if variants would be found in regular COVID testing. Mr. Fitzpatrick confirmed that it would. Mrs. Plantemoli said that the concern about the variants is heightened transmissibility, and they are not necessarily more virulent.

Registrar of Vital Statistics/Board of Health Secretary

Mr. LaConte reported that fees were collected for the following items in December 2020:

1 Marriage Licenses		$28
16 Marriage Certificates		$100
	Total	$128

Mr. LaConte noted that $25 of the $28 for the marriage license is the State's share.

Mr. LaConte reported that there are only a couple retail food licenses that have not yet been renewed.

Meeting Open to Public

Mrs. Plantemoli opened the meeting to the public.
Seeing no public comment, the public hearing was closed.

Mrs. Plantemoli moved to adjourn at 8:46 PM. Mrs. Gardner seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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Gregory J. LaConte
Board of Health Secretary