A special meeting of the Board of Health was held on Friday, October 15, 2021. Michael LaFever, Chairman was present. Kelly Lamas, Member and Andrea Crete, Health Agent were present by phone. Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary was absent. Minutes are being recorded by LCTV video and are being transcribed from the video. The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Mr. LaFever.

Board members discussed the Health Agent job description. The duties that were presented as a Health Director have been rolled into the Health Agent position. There will no longer be a request for a title change. Motion made by Ms. Lamas to accept the Health Agent job description without a title change to Director. Mr. LaFever – Yes, Ms. Lamas – Yes. Motion passes 2-0.

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Mr. LaFever read the rules of the meeting.

The meeting was joined by Angela Kramer, by phone.

Ms. Kramer provided the Board with the latest COVID numbers. From October 10-16, 2021, there have only been 20 cases. Some of the people that have been vaccinated are not showing up in MAVEN. Mr. LaFever is pleased to see the vaccination rate increase to 62% and the positivity rate decrease to 4.76%. Ms. Lamas is pleased also.

Board members discussed the draft Mask Mandate Policy. Motion made by Ms. Lamas to approve the Mask Mandate Policy should it need to be implemented during the pandemic. Mr. LaFever – Yes. Ms. Lamas – Yes. Motion passes 2-0.

The meeting was opened for public comment.

Mr. Lou Tulik addressed the Board. Mr. Tulik would like to address an item from the prior meeting of October 8, 2021. Mr. Tulik asked why there was not a study provided to the Board from Dr. Soares instead of just commentary and opinion. Mr. Tulik asked if the Board is going to just rely on Baystate Medical doctors, was this approved by the Town? Was there an agreement to get opinions from doctors? Was a disclosure made by the member of the Board of Health that is employed by Baystate Health? Could this possibly be an ethics violation by that member? Mr. Tulik asked if there was any study provided to disapprove the study he presented from a highly accredited Industrial Hygienist. Mr. Tulik also asked why there has not been any discussion on the presence of antibodies, in regards to getting the vaccine. Mr. Tulik also asks if the mask policy states anything about masks not providing respiratory protection from the virus.

Ms. Crete read a text message from Ms. DeSantis about holding these meetings on Fridays. Ms. DeSantis would have difficulty making the Friday meetings. Mr. LaFever states that COVID will be addressed as part of the regular Board of Health meetings on Tuesdays. There is no longer a need to hold the Friday meetings.

Ms. Kramer states that all information that she provides to the Board is provided by Mass DPH and the CDC. All guidance that the department follows is provided by the CDC.

The meeting was joined by Bella Soares, resident, by phone.

Ms. Soares asked why the rules were put in place for this meeting? Mr. LaFever did not know who would be present at this meeting and did not want the meeting to lose control. Ms. Soares feels that the last meeting did not get out of control.

The meeting was joined by Dr. John Diggs, Internal Medicine Doctor from Wilbraham.

Dr. Diggs has treated over 200 people infected with Coronavirus. He has had 4 patients who are members of the Ludlow School System. Dr. Diggs provided studies about masking in schools. Wearing a mask by students has worsened speech impediments, developed new speech impediments, affected vocabulary, and affects emotional intelligence. Research has also shown that mask wearing by students also reduces IQ. Dr. Diggs made reference to the British Medical Journal. Dr. Diggs stated that kids are the most resistant to COVID. There have been fewer deaths in children during COVID compared to 1 month of influenza.

Motion made by Ms. Lamas to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. All in favor 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael LaFever
Chairman

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