

FLORHAM PARK BOARD OF HEALTH

March 8, 2023

Minutes

Present: Peter Kleban, Stanley Wisnewski, Sabrina Edmunds, Thomas Michalowski, Jay Rosania, and David Adinaro

Also present: Joshua Marchal (Council Liaison), Thomas Cantisano (Health Officer), Gina McConeghy (Registered Environmental Health Specialist), and Maryann Lang (Board of Health Secretary)

Absent: Tana LaPlaca, Raymond Holmes and Sonya Youngren

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Ms. Lang took attendance, and stated that the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Act had been met.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Edmunds made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2023 meeting. Mr. Michalowski seconded the motion, and all members present approved.

Approval of Reports:

Mr. Kleban requested additional information regarding the Retro Fitness complaint, referenced in the January report. Ms. McConeghy responded that it was for an unlicensed tanning bed, and cleaning protocols not being followed. The tanning bed was shut down until proper licensing, and training, have been instituted. Mr. Wisnewski asked if the tanning bed issue was discovered through a complaint, or inspection. Ms. McConeghy responded that she believed it was through a general inspection conducted by our other health inspector, Cathy Cappuccia.

Ms. Edmunds asked if there is a tattoo parlor in town. Ms. McConeghy responded that there is not, but mentioned that Cathy D's Salon performs permanent cosmetic procedures (microblading). Mr. Cantisano added that microblading is covered under body art regulations.

Ms. Edmunds made a motion to approve the Registrar of Vital Statistics monthly report for January and February; and, Pequannock Township monthly report for December 2022 and January 2023. Mr. Michalowski seconded the motion, and all members present approved.

Communications:

None

Report from Health Department Staff:

Mr. Cantisano provided the following report:

The COVID 19 case count is the lowest it has been in the past three years. The virus seems not to be mutating beyond the Omicron sub variants, and disease is mild. There is more immunity through prior infection, and vaccination. We are in a position to have the virus enter into an endemic phase, where it will hopefully just be seasonal.

The numbers of flu, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), cases have been falling. There were no further Ebola exposure cases since January, and the Ebola outbreak in Uganda was declared over on January 11, 2023. Those individuals within the Pequannock Health Department's jurisdictions, who returned from Uganda and were potentially exposed, were monitored for the required twenty one days and did not develop the virus.

Monkeypox cases have drastically declined and stabilized, due in large part to vaccination.

New Business:

None

Unfinished Business:

None

Ratification of Licenses:

The Board ratified licenses issued in January and February 2023.

Public Hearing - Privilege of the Floor:

Mr. Kleban opened the meeting to the public at 7:09 pm. He stated that each person will have up to a maximum of four minutes to speak.

Maria Quigley:

Ms. Quigley presented information on menstrual irregularities after COVID 19 vaccination. She claimed that Pfizer was aware of it, but brushed it aside. She said there were no reports of menstrual disorders in the clinical trials of the vaccine. She referenced Pfizer report 38. Ms. Quigley asked the following questions:
Do school nurses track any unusual, or newly trending, issues in the school population?
If so, are findings reported to the local, county, or state public health departments?
Have any menstrual irregularities been noticed in the schools?

Don Quigley:

Mr. Quigley presented information on natural immunity in regard to COVID 19, and that public officials should factor infection induced immunity into policy decisions, including vaccine mandates. He mentioned that Senators Pennacchio, Testa, Thompson and Oroho have introduced NJ Bill S4136 which requires entities to accept confirmation of prior COVID 19 infection, or infection immune response against COVID 19, when proof of vaccination is required. He posed the following questions:
Does the Department of Health have a way to track natural immunity in the K-12 population?
If the COVID 19 vaccine is added to the NJ schedule of required vaccines for school attendance, will you support natural immunity in place of vaccination?

The public portion of the meeting was closed at 7:19 pm.

Mr. Cantisano responded to the questions raised during the public portion of the meeting:

It is not the role of school nurses to initiate the collection of health status data in general, but especially in relation to the regularity of the menstrual cycles of the students. The nurses' primary roles are related to assisting with communicable disease control, reporting and providing immediate interim care to injured or ill students while they are in school. Parents of students would be expected to report any maladies, irregularities, symptoms, suspected side effects, etc., to their pediatricians and healthcare providers.

In regards to communicable diseases for which there are no vaccines, the population would be solely reliant on prevention control practices and hope that herd immunity would quickly be attained.

The local Health Department isn't authorized to make policy decisions regarding school vaccination requirements, but is required to enforce the mandates of the State of NJ. The Pequannock Health Department is not recommending to the Board of Health that school vaccinations be augmented beyond what is required by the State. The State has not added COVID vaccinations to the list of required school vaccinations at this time, nor are we aware of any State plans to move in that direction.

There were additional comments made by Ms. Quigley and Mr. Quigley, regarding changes in COVID 19 vaccination policy for children in other countries, taking a stand regarding policies in this country, and accountability, to name a few. The following is a brief summary of Mr. Cantisano's responses:

Facts, science and data from peer reviewed studies and research, should be the criteria relied upon to make policy decisions. This information must be analyzed and interpreted by the experts associated with the recognized international, federal, and state agencies. These recognized agencies are equipped and responsible to establish pandemic and large scale disease outbreak policies. Large scale disease outbreaks and

pandemics are very complex. Local health agencies are not equipped to perform a credible analysis of the vast, rapidly changing information that would be required in order to develop contrary or counter policies to those established by the appointed and recognized international, federal and state agencies. Many actions taken during the pandemic are believed to have saved lives and slowed down the spread of the disease. In time, other actions might be proven to have had no meaningful benefit. Some of the measures that might eventually be found to have been ineffective might also be proven to have caused dire, negative consequences. It could take years, and in some cases decades, to know the full nature of the disease and which strategies were helpful or harmful. Hindsight is 20/20. There are some aspects of the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918 that are still open for debate. In response to the Quigley's question on accountability, it is the recognized international, federal and state agencies and the top decision makers who are ultimately responsible and accountable for the pandemic mandates, policies and recommendations that are established, not the local Health Departments or Boards of Health.

Adjournment:

Mr. Michalowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 pm, Ms. Edmunds seconded the motion, and all members present approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Maryann Lang
Board of Health Secretary