



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

DOUGLAS KRESS
DIRECTOR

MINUTES
BOARD OF HEALTH
August 19, 2021
Open Conference / Virtual Meeting

Present:

Douglas Kress, Director
Brian Green, MD (Chair)
Robert Ciccio, Board Member
Paula Machado, Board Member

City Staff - Ellen Shachter from Office of Housing Stability
Brianna Noonan – Somerstat

Guests: 46

Meeting Called to Order:

On a motion made by Dr. Green, the meeting was called to order at 6:00pm. Ms. Machado seconded it.

Approval of Minutes: Dr. Green made a motion to approve the July 15, 2021 minutes. Ms. Machado seconded it.

COVID19/Vaccine Updates: Mr. Kress presented the city's COVID19 Dashboard slides to the board some of the highlights are as follows:

Key Dates – On August 11, 2021, City of Somerville moves to establish public indoor mask mandate.

August 5, 2021 – with CDC and Somerville's Eviction Moratoriums both extended, the city urges residents to access housing assistance now to prevent possible eviction later.

MDPH State Data – Current seven (7) day average of confirmed cases was 905 on 08/17/21.

MDPH State Data – Current seven (7) day average of hospitalizations was 388.9 on 08/17/21.

MDPH State Data – Current seven (7) day averages of confirmed deaths was 5.4 on 08/17/21.

Somerville Case Data – As of Tuesday, 08/17/21 there were 6,050 positive confirmed cases (pcr tests) and 89 fatalities.

Somerville Vaccinations – As of 98/12/21, approximately 55,190 indicuvulas are fully vaccinated and 4,417 partially vaccinated and 59,607 have at least one dose administered.

Eviction Moratorium: Ellen Shatner from the City of Somerville Housing Stability Office, presented slides on updates of the Eviction Moratorium, topics including as follows:

- A. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) issued an order effective August 3, 2021 for the moratorium remains in effect until October 3, 2021 extending and revising the federal eviction moratorium for US counties experiencing "substantial or "high levels" of community transmission of Covid as defined by the CDC.
- B. The rationale for the extension are as follows:
 1. Vaccination rates are lower for populations most likely to face eviction (vulnerable population).
 2. Study of 43 states show significant increase in incidence and mortality approximately two (2) to three (3) months after state of local eviction moratorium lifted.

3. Eviction moratorium allows quarantining in place for people who become ill or who are at risk of transmitting the disease.
- C. Caseload Data – OHS received 72 new cases for assistance; Somerville Homeless Coalition waitlist is at 342 applicants.
- D. Court Filings – Sixty-five (65) new cases filed since 10/15/20 at the Eastern Housing Court and seventy-five new cases filed at the Somerville Courthouse as of 10/15/20.
- E. Unemployment Data as of 06/01/21 was 4.1% percentage of residents unemployed in Somerville.

Board of Health Public Hearing on Mask Mandates: The Board of Health conducted a public hearing virtually at their August 19, 2021 board meeting where the public was able to speak on the city's proposed face mask mandate. After listening to the comments from the public, the board members gave their views why the face mask mandate should be approved for the following reasons:

Being vaccinated along with wearing mask is double the safety of covid transmissions. Children and persons who cannot be vaccinated, mask are the next best option for staying safe. The city along with their board of health is trying everything to protect all in the city and the Mask Mandate is a very good tool to keep transmissions low. Dr. Green brought up how the mandate would be enforced and how the city can help local restaurants industries keep in compliance. The city's mask mandate proposal can be found on their website at www.somervillema.gov.

Dr. Green made a motion to implement the mask mandate effective Friday, August 20, 2021. It was seconded by Ms. Machado. A vote was taken 3 yes / 0 no. All in Favor **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Directors' Updates: Mr. Kress said that vaccines and testing clinics are ongoing with various sites throughout the city. Information on covid219 vaccines and testing clinics and additional resources can be found on the city website at www.somervillema.gov. The city is awaiting guidance from the state on the booster vaccine.

Next meeting – Virtual
Thursday, September 9, 2021

Adjournment:

On a motion made by Dr. Green, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08pm. Ms. Machado seconded it.

List of Documents:

Notice/Agenda, Eviction Moratorium Slides

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Henkle-Teixeira
Board of Health Secretary
September 16, 2021
(Revised October 8, 2021)