

**WARREN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF HEALTH
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 13, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.
THIS MEETING HELD BY CONFERENCE CALL**

Call to Order: The regular public meeting of the Warren Township Board of Health was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Flag Salute- waived (due to nature of meeting being held via conference call)

The Opening Statement: Adequate notice of this meeting was given on January 6, 2020 by posting a copy on the Township Bulletin Board sending a copy to the Township Clerk, Star Ledger as required by the Open Public Meetings Act and by posting in the Echoes Sentinel on May 7, 2020. We plan to adjourn no later than 9:00 P.M.

Roll Call:

Mr. Plager – present

Alternate #1

Mr. Riley – present

Ms. Burger- Absent (arrived 7:04 p.m.)

Mr. Rosenman – present

Mr. Morlino – present

Alternate #2

Mr. Lazo – Absent (arrived 7:08 p.m.)

Dr. Mandal- Absent

Dr. DeMarco- Absent

Dr. Sarraf- Absent

Privilege of the floor: None.

Order of Business:

Mr. Sumner briefly outlined the structure of the meeting being done via conference call as outlined in the agenda. Mr. Sumner will start the meeting by going over Covid-19 updates and all the work and numbers that are being reported by Middlebrook Regional Commission. Members were asked to refrain from asking any questions and commentary until Mr. Sumner has completed his summation and will take questions and comments at the end. Mr. Sumner also instructed members to mute their phones to avoid background noise.

New Business:

Mr. Sumner introduced Ms. Patty Martins as the new administrative assistant in the department of health. Mr. Morlino questioned the reason why a board meeting did not take place in April. Mr. Sumner advised that a commission meeting had taken place in April and invites to all township members were sent out. Mr. Sumner also emphasized due to Covid-19 coverage and his workload; it was just impossible to have another meeting in April.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

Mr. Sumner initiated the meeting by going over the most recent Covid19 statistics as follows:

- Warren had 107 confirmed laboratory positive cases
- Age range of positive cases between 25-95
- 54% female; 46% males
- Total Covid19 related deaths 11
- Age range of deaths between 65- 95 (elder population and those with pre-existing conditions)
- As of Friday May 9, recoveries stand at 23

- Commission wide age range of deaths between 40-95 (elder population and pre-existing conditions being the main factor)
- Total number of confirmed in the Commission-790
- NY & NJ is the epicenter of outbreak
- Number of deaths in NJ total 9,000 (50% attributed to elder population)
- NJ ranks among highest in positive cases, hospitalizations and deaths

Mr. Sumner explained recovery numbers are low in part due to lack of information being provided by recovered patients who do not wish to speak to screeners on follow up calls. There isn't a protocol in place to define "recovery" therefore numbers are being obtained based on people that tested positive reporting themselves as "feeling better". Ms. Burger inquired about number of children who might have contracted the disease associated with Covid19 and Mr. Sumner stated no children have been hospitalized or diagnosed within the Commission.

Mr. Morlino, Mr. Lazo and Mr. Riley are concerned and question the accuracy and high number of deaths being reported in long term care facilities and nursing homes, especially the facilities located in Warren and ask if all 11 deaths reported in Warren occurred within LTC facility. Mr. Sumner stated that the 11 deaths in Warren were not all associated with the nursing homes and explained that most positive cases and deaths in LTC and NH facilities are due to exposures to healthcare workers that were asymptomatic yet reported to work. Mr. Riley comments on deaths recorded and the high number of cases/deaths within the commission/NJ and questions the accuracy of the numbers and the process to reporting. Mr. Sumner explains that hospitals, LTC facilities and nursing homes report through the State of NJ CDRSS platform, a secure communicable disease reporting system. The system may not capture all deaths as the cause may be attributed to something other than COVID, at least initially. Mr. Morlino questions State actions being implemented to avoid further exposure to the elder population, especially in LTC's and NH facilities. In response to Mr. Morlino, Mr. Sumner explains the State has put into place a plan and is now mandating LTC facilities implement steps to do intensive monitoring, report to all agencies and provide/implement strategic plans to stop spread of Covid19. Mr. Plager states he is very concerned with the elderly population and all must take precautions to avoid spread. Mr. Lazo stated that as an elected official he is very concerned with media reporting numbers of 75% death rate in NJ that are being associated with LTC facilities and the elderly population. He also asks what he can tell his constituents that reach out to his office asking for guidance and questioning when businesses will open back up. Mr. Sumner stated that the best guideline to follow is by keeping social distancing, wearing masks in public places, minimizing gatherings and maximizing hand washing. Furthermore, the elderly populations' best bet to stay safe is to stay home self-quarantining and avoid exposure especially by going out to public spaces. Mr. Sumner reiterates that we all need to play a part in curbing the spread and from a public health perspective, the only tools we currently have to move toward some semblance of normalcy is continue to adhere to social distancing rules, continue to practice good hygiene by washing hands, contact tracing, more testing availability, quarantining possible exposures, limiting travel, controlling rumor and staying home if you have symptoms.

Mr. Morlino has concerns with the State's mandate on contact tracing. He feels that it will be a waste of time and resources, most people will not want to speak, answer questions or share health information with strangers over the phone. Mr. Sumner advised there is value in contact tracing, however, he questions the hiring process and implementation the State has put into place by taking the lead on hiring contract tracers that meet the requirement of a high school diploma and minimal training. Mr. Sumner questions the ability of the potential hires to be able to do the work. Ms. Burger asks Mr. Sumner if local public health should have more control and does he have a proposal. Mr. Sumner replies that the majority of health officers believe money should be given to local public health departments to assist in building stronger teams consisting of trained health workers including contact tracers.

Mr. Riley inquires about PPE and whether there is a stock pile available to which Mr. Sumner answered yes and no. The federal government has a stock pile but New Jersey does not. Mr. Sumner also explains that lack of PPE is still an ongoing issue across the State.

Mr. Sumner advised about what we will start to see moving forward and according to the State's road map to recovery guidelines. Retail businesses will be allowed to do curbside deliveries, State parks and beaches will be re-opened and an announcement will be made before Memorial Day. Schools and childcare centers will remain closed, restaurants will continue to offer take out with possible outdoor dining allowed in the coming weeks. Mr. Sumner also touches on the subject of public health and its role as the back bone of this ongoing crisis, the need for it to be built up across the country and the need for public health to be recognized and not become invisible once the crisis subsides.

Mr. Plager thanks Mr. Sumner for the exceptional work he has been doing and his undivided focus on the day to day events.

RESOLUTION WAIVING LATE FEES FOR CAT LICENSES DUE TO COVID-19:

Per ongoing discussions with Mr. Krane, a resolution to waive late fees on cat licenses from March 1 thru June 30 due to Covid19 is being presented for approval. This action will be consistent with action being taken by the Township Committee to waive late fees for dog licenses.

Mr. Plager calls for Mr. Sumner to read new resolution being introduced.

Resolution NO. 2020-10 Amend Late Fees for Cat Licenses Due to Covid-19 Emergency Order

Motion was made by Mr. Rosenman and seconded by Mr. Morlino to adopt Resolution 2020-10.

Voice Vote:

All in Favor: Unanimous

Opposed: None

Approval of Minutes: March 11, 2020

Motion was made by Mr. Riley and seconded by Ms. Burger to approve the March 11, 2020 meeting minutes.

Voice Vote:

In Favor: Mr. Plager, Mr. Riley, Ms. Burger

Opposed: None.

Abstentions: Mr. Lazo, Mr. Morlino and Mr. Rosenman.

Reports of Employees/Health Officer Report:

Ms. Martins read receipts, disbursements and totals.

Treasurer's Reports: March and April 2020

March 2020 - Health Receipts	
Receipts for Registrar	\$ 330.00
Health	\$ 430.00
Application Fees	\$ 320.00
Septic and Well	\$ 515.00
Total Health	\$ 1,595.00

March 2020 Animal Control Receipts	
Dog	\$ 645.00
Cats	\$ 10.00
Total Animal	\$ 655.00

Total Receipts - March 2020 \$ 2,250.00

March 2020 - Health Disbursements	
March Legal Bill - Pearlmuter	\$ 266.00
Well Permit Refund	\$ 75.00
Marriage License Fee- 1st Quarter	\$ 300.00
Total Health Disbursement	\$ 641.00

March 2020 - Animal Control Disbursements	
2020 State Dog License Fee -March	\$ 40.20
Total Animal Control Disbursements	\$ 40.20

Total Disbursements - March 2020 \$ 681.20

April 2020 - Health Receipts	
Receipts for Registrar	\$ 120.00
Health	\$ -
Application Fees	\$ 825.00
Septic and Well	\$ 275.00
Total Health	\$ 1,220.00

April 2020 - Animal Control Receipts	
Dog	\$ 268.00
Cats	\$ 25.00
Total Animal	\$ 293.00

Total Receipts - April 2020 \$ 1,513.00

April 2020 - Health Disbursements	
Legal Bill - Pearlmutter	\$ -
Total Health Disbursement	\$ -

April 2020 - Animal Control Disbursements	
2020 State Dog License Fee -April	\$ 15.00
Total Animal Control Disbursements	\$ 15.00

Total Disbursements - April 2020	\$ 15.00
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Motion to approve March/April Treasure's Report made by Mr. Morlino and seconded by Mr. Rosenman.

Voice Vote:

All in Favor: Unanimous

Opposed: None

Adjournment:

Mr. Plager thanks Mr. Sumner for his dedication during these tough times and wishes all to stay safe and well.

Motion made by Mr. Morlino and seconded by Mr. Plager to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 pm.

Voice Vote:

All in Favor: Unanimous

Opposed: None

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Martins

Administrative Secretary

Warren Township Board of Health