



**CITY OF GARDNER**  
OFFICE OF THE  
**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
95 PLEASANT ST, ROOM 29  
GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS 01440



**Members Present:**     **Lauren Saunders – Health Director**  
                              **Susan Avallone, RN - Member**  
                              **Atty. Geoffrey Tobia – Member**  
                              **Michele Parker, MD – Member**

## **Minutes for Board of Health meeting held Monday March 30, 2020**

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*\*Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, **this meeting of the Gardner Board of Health will be conducted via remote participation.** The transcript of proceedings will be posted on the City's website as soon as possible after the meeting.*

**4:00 Meeting called to order.**

**4:05 Minutes from the February 24, 2020 meeting were reviewed, discussed, and approved with the suggested revision. The Board voted and approved to allow Lauren Saunders to sign the minutes for the Board due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**4:10 Old Business**

**Staffing at City Hall:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic there had been staffing changes for most employees. In the Health Department, the Director and Assistant Director were alternating days in the office. On the days she was not in the office, the Director was working from home with remote access to the City Hall server, she was able to respond to emails, participate in teleconferences and do other work on the computer. There were 2 Admins in the Health Department office, one had not been to work since 3/17/20, and the other had been working in the office 3 days a week. Most other departments were alternating staff schedules based on the needs of each department.

**Lauren asked to discuss the operation of the Transfer Station as she did have concerns about the safety of the 2 attendants there. The Transfer Station was still open its regular schedule. Based on COVID-19 guidelines both attendants are considered at high risk. Following medical advice one of the attendants had already been asked to stay out of work. A drop-box was installed for residents to deposit their tickets, but the attendant reported that residents are not keeping social distance from him and continue to approach him too closely. As a solid waste facility, the Transfer Station was permitted to remain open under Governor Baker's orders as an essential business. Curbside collection was still available as the primary mean of refuse disposal for residents. After a discussion about options such as limiting hours, PPE, or signage a decision was made to close the Transfer Station for 2 weeks and meet in 2 weeks to re-access to give time to explore safety options when reopening.**

**Body Art Regulations:** Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, this issue will be addressed at a future meeting. Tattoos and Body Art were suspended by the Governor's closure orders.

**Municipal Curbside Contract:** There were proposals from both Waste Management and EL Harvey, they were comparable for rates. Harvey submitted a second proposal and Waste Management had asked to have the opportunity to do the same, Lauren was awaiting the second proposal from Waste Management at the time of this meeting.

**4:25 New Business:**

**COVID-19 Contact Tracing:** Sue and her sister Sandy, both Nurses, had been working with the Montachusett Public Health Network (MPHN) doing contact tracing and case surveillance on patients in the 13 participating surrounding communities who are part of the MPHN. They both completed training with Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN) and hoped to train some of the local school nurses to assist them. Sue reported some of the challenges with the cases that she was working on to help describe the scope and breadth of the work involved. Sue is in contact with Lauren daily, providing addresses of positive cases to Lauren so that she could disclose those addresses to First Responders as permitted.

**COVID-19 Community Resources:** The volume of calls at the Health Department had been increasing, the staff was referring people to the DPH and CDC websites. City Hall has created a COVID-19 page on the city website with links to information from both the state and federal governments. Both the Health Department and City Hall shared links on their Facebook pages. Lauren has done an interview with The Gardner News. Acting Mayor Walsh and Winn Brown, President & CEO of Heywood Hospital did a taping for GETV, Dr. Parker and Lauren also did a taping for GETV with Acting Mayor Walsh.

Next meeting was not set as the Teleconference line was reserved for the City Council meeting at 5:00 PM. The next Board of Health meeting was set by email for April 14, 2020 at 4:00 PM; this will be a remote/teleconference meeting.

**5:00 Adjourn.**

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Susan Avallone RN, Member

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Atty. Geoffrey Tobia, Member

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Michele C. Parker MD, Member

All conversations are documented on recording identified as B.O.H March 30, 2020.