

BOH: Minutes from the Meeting of the Board on February 3rd, 2022.

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 PM. The Full Board was in attendance: Board Chairperson, Dr. Brophy, Dr. Andrade, Fr. Fiske, and then Eno Mondesir (Exec. Health Officer, Ex. Officio). Also, Mr. John Messia filled in for the Mayor, as the Board has invited him to this meeting.

I briefly welcomed the members and then introduced Dr. Brophy who led the meeting. The minutes from prior Board meeting were presented to the Board who then voted unanimously to approve them.

Dr. Brophy opened the floor to Mr. Messia by asking him if he could present the plan that the Mayor considers to make the transition from BOH to DOH (Board of Health to Department of Health).

Mr. Messia replied by saying: there is a process in progress. The Mayor will be reaching out to each Member of the Board individually. Question followed to Mr. Messia from Dr. Andrade: am I understanding correctly that you are not prepared to brief the Board? Mr. Messia: That is correct.

Dr. Andrade: As a Faculty at BU, I have been doing research on health disparities, and I am available to help move the BOH in the right directions.

Mr. Messia: Is there a specific issue that the Board wants me to convey to the Mayor? Dr. Andrade: Not just to the Mayor, but also to the City Council. Dr. Brophy added: I concur with Dr. Andrade who is an expert in Public Health, can help. Mr. Fiske: I agree.

Dr. Andrade: ARPA makes available approximately \$200million to help Health Departments build greater capacity, and to train staff. Dr. Brophy thanks Mr. Messia for attending. Last question from Dr. Andrade to Mr. Messia: does the Mayor have our contact information? Mr. Messia: the Mayor will make sure that he gets in touch with the Board. Mr. Messia thanks the Board for allowing him to attend.

Dr. Brophy asks to move to next item on the agenda.

As that has been requested previously by the Board of Directors, I gave an update on the COVID-19 statistics in the City. Also, I presented other COVID-19 data (including vaccine dashboard) to the Directors.

Mr. Fiske: COVID-19 is the 3rd cause of death in the Brockton.

Dr. Brophy spoke of trend with the pandemic: at the hospital, many patients come for service, but because COVID-19 takes a toll, many other health care services are limited.

Dr. Brophy: Have CI/CT been able to trace all the COVID-19 cases. Eno (Health Director): Not really!

Mr. Fiske: In terms of hiring CI/CT staffers, is residency requirement an issue in Brockton? Yes, but BOH was able to hire these individuals as Independent contractors. Also, some City Councilors want to change this ordinance.

Our next agenda item that was vaccination: Brewster's Ambulance continues to offer COVID-19 vaccine to every eligible individual who needs one. However, we are seeing a decrease in the numbers. As I mentioned earlier, as of March 1st, Vaccination at the Shaw's will drop to 3 days per week (Wednesday, Friday & Saturday).

Contact Tracing: Case investigation has been a significant concern for the Board of health. The City has registered more cases of COVID-19 than ever and BOH had limited capacity to follow them all. The suggestion was given by Dr. Andrade that the BOH and the City might consider ways to redeploy their manpower that could help to mitigate COVID-19 case investigation.

Another important issue is the Behavioral Health Need in Brockton. In discussion with other health Service providers in the Brockton and across the Commonwealth, Mental and Behavioral health problems are at an all time high. COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issues around drug addiction, Behavioral Health. Together with our partners in health care services, such as BNHC, BAMSI, BOH wants to play a pivotal role in addressing these critical aspects of needs, and their social determinants. I have been appointed by Governor Baker on the Department of Mental Health's Statewide Advisory Council. I am scheduled to be sworn in on January 18. I hope that I will be able to help build coalition across various service providers and professionals with different expertise in an effort to address the City's health challenges in a more comprehensive manner.

The platform to continue with our monthly meetings: The Board has favored the option to continue holding the meetings remotely at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 PM; and our next meeting is scheduled for March 3rd, 2022.