

Worksite Safety and Health Committee
March 4, 2021

Present: Director of Health and Emergency Management Director Lisa Fasulo, Fire Marshal John Planas, Teacher Representative Deborah Minor, Essex Elementary School Maintenance Supervisor Tom Fitzgerald, EES Principal Jennifer Tousignant, Fire Chief Aron Schumacher, Visiting Nurse Sarah Foley, Assistant to Selectmen Maria Lucarelli, and Public Works Director Ryan Welch.

Lisa Fasulo called the meeting to order at 7:51 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion was made by Sarah Foley to approve the agenda. Lisa Fasulo seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes:

Motion was made by Jennifer Tousignant to approve the December 3, 2020 minutes. Sarah Foley seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Communications and Correspondence: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Aron Schumacher report the Fire Department is all set with PPE. They have an abundance of PPE that they received from the state, however, they have not used much since the hospital has restricted them from being first responders. Once the restrictions are lifted, the Fire Department personnel anticipate the PPE will come in handy.

Lisa Fasulo reported that on January 30th the first outdoor Covid vaccination clinic was held at the Essex Fire Department Co. #1 on one of the coldest days. Lisa thanked the Essex Fire Department, Town employees, and the Nutmeg Pharmacy and everyone that made this clinic a success. Additional clinics are now being held on Friday mornings at the Essex Town Hall being run through Nutmeg Pharmacy.

Ms. Tousignant reported there was one confirmed Covid case in the elementary school that was reported to her over the weekend and she worked with Lisa in getting the information out to families. She also reported that teachers who have not been vaccinated, are making plans to get vaccinated. Hopefully now that teachers have been vaccinated will help reduce the anxiety levels so teachers can concentrate on teaching.

Deborah Minor had nothing new to add. She too agreed that the anxiety levels of teachers are coming down as people are getting vaccinated. She also reported they are well provisioned with PPE.

John Planas reported on the outbreak of Carfentanil. There were 20 cases of overdoses in Hartford last night. It is 10,000 times more powerful than morphine. It is used as an elephant tranquilizer. Mr. Planas also reported there is a 200% increase in suicides and an uptick in domestic violence and a lot of mental health issues.

Mr. Planas mentioned that parents and teachers should be made aware of social media platforms that children are visiting. Many sites are inappropriate or for adults only. Everyone should be aware of apps that children are using, and parents should be more involved in monitoring their children's computer and cell phone applications. No child should go to bed with their electronics.

Tom Fitzgerald reported that most custodians have either received or are going to be getting their vaccination very soon.

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Sarah Foley reported that all nurses are vaccinated, and they do weekly rapid tests on all staff. Sarah also reported they currently have plenty of PPE, but at the beginning of the pandemic they did not have much PPE and now they have a room full of PPE.

Lisa inquired whether the VNA were planning on getting a supply of Covid vaccinations. Sarah said it is something that is in the discussion phase and would benefit the home bound population. The problem is there is no protocol to get the vaccine to them. They need someone to be able to give the vaccination, then a nurse or an EMS personnel must wait the 15 minutes with the patient.

Ryan reported that a couple of the crew did have Covid but are back and everyone is well. Public Works has plenty of PPE and for now, each crew member has their own vehicle so they can self-isolate in trucks. Lisa mentioned that one of the vaccination clinics was during a snowstorm and public works did a terrific job with snow clearing during the clinic.

Maria had nothing new to report.

Lisa Fasulo stated that one of her concerns during the last winter storm was the possibility of opening a shelter during the pandemic. But fortunately, the opening of a shelter didn't happen. Lisa also stated that she believes that masks will continue to be worn and are still going to be required even though the population is being vaccinated. Social distancing is also still strongly recommended and will continue. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine has just been approved which may help the homebound population.

Lisa reported that town-wide there are 380 confirmed cases in Essex and there were 13 fatalities. Essex continues to work with Nutmeg Pharmacy with their weekly vaccinations. They have administered 450 vaccinations so far and an additional 250 vaccinations will be administered on March 5th. They have a few vaccinators and may call VNA at some point in the future to help with administering the vaccines.

There was discussion of the Governor's briefing that is happening today, March 4th at 4 pm and the topics anticipated will be on travel, changes in sports guidance, summer camps, and after school camps.

Motion was made by Sarah Foley to adjourn at 8:30 a.m. John Planas seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Maria Lucarelli