

**TOWN OF GROTON**

Board of Health

173 Main Street

Groton, MA 01450

**BOARD OF HEALTH**

Jason Weber, Chairman

Susan Horowitz, Member

Robert J. Fleischer, Member

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2020

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Present: Jason Weber, Chairman; Dr. Susan Horowitz, Member; Robert J. Fleischer, Member; Ira Grossman, Nashoba Associated Board of Health Agent

Others Present: SB, Parks

Jason Weber called the Emergency meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Alison attended last Parks meeting from Tuesday.

Phase II

Anna – challenging nature of this emergency meeting

Mark said parks is in violation – anna asking what the basis is

Courts open for basketball; field open for use – sharing of equipment; not in line with state guidelines

Josh –

Kenny – all we’ve allowed is what’s under state’s guidelines; alison – enforcement intent? Kenny – league has own policies in place – following the state’s guidelines

Don wants to hear what the issue is

Meeting being recorded by IT – check with Mike for link

Don wants to hear what issues are and concerns are

Jason – asked for background from each board / committee

Becky – went over what SB has seen re guidelines

Don Black went over guidelines; we don’t have softball fields

Db – cutler court; more than 20 people

Refer to video

Anna - we did put guidelines; no competition was removed for the basketball one; bring their own; carry in carry out basketball

Alison – any questions re regs

Anna – CDC regs

Anna – in order to use the fields, they have to have permits

BOH – any comments? Bob – no comment

Jason – how best to reduce curve; parks decision should align with what CDC says

Are guidelines in violation?

Vote had been taken; a policy has been adopted; let’s ask IG does this confirm w/both federal and state guidance; does IG have any questions?

IG – most of the thing are adhered to.

Basketball, scrimmages – would have a concern

Requirement for signage – was anything posted?

Required to wear a mask when 6ft social distancing can’t be met; i.e. dugout

During Phase 2 fields can be open for practices, training, fundamentals but you cannot have games

Jason – attempted signage is really important – otherwise expectation won’t be met

Enforcement is a separate topic

Don – we have a budget free zone – can’t extend any money right now other than emergency funds other than signs put out by Police Dept.

Mark – spending freeze in place – anything COVID related does not need to go through the Town Manager

IG – “Operators must post signs on site”

How about masks?

Don – check video – IG said that’s a broad statement.

Anna responded – no ill players; very specific list; have their own tracking mechanism in place

Alison replied. Anna – don’t grant permits otherwise unless they follow guidelines

Don went over details – social distancing be maintained at all times

Alison – regs for folks who have a permit; how about unorganized groups using the fields?

Alison – if fields are open…

Ig – requirement for # of people; same type of scenario

Anna – abide by state guidelines; if more than 10 have to apply for a permit

Becky – children, teens or adults? For permits that have been approved

Anna – all have to sign waivers; all ages for players

Becky – under certain circumstances that they do need to wear masks

No groups larger than 10, no contact sport, social distancing

Should specify that you need a permit to play – signage should include and be very clear about that

Don – signage is a waste of time; ripped down, etc. nobody pays attention to any of the signage

Kenny – is there an entity in town who can make these signs; Don – we do have someone

Bob F. – if closed is ignored…feeling very pessimistic that regs even matter at this point

No more than groups of 10? 10 total on field? No. there is a specific definition

Josh – addressing why we can have emergency meetings; public duty rule – if there is a charge for use of pool – check video

Josh has list of questions – 3 user groups – are they being charged a fee? Parks – NO

How do you social distancing in basketball? How will that be addressed?

Don – you can’t control it; put it in the hands of the coaches; regulate it to the best of their ability

Anna – pool water you have approved is a far greater conduit of germs than basketball court

Alison – let’s assume we include details in signage; then what is the enforcement?

Don – when does Phase 3 begin? Let’s review hypothetical; should we do the signage for a short term; maybe they read them but don’t follow it

What is enforcement plan? Alison asking

What are SB’s thoughts on whether parks should be closed

Jon giger – if not charging fee – town is liable; allows people to make their own decision regarding risk level; maybe need to rely on choice of people making their own judgement

IG – BOH or Police Dept may enforce; can have action taken

As of May 15th

Alison – asked IG how other communities handling this

IG – enforcement is not the intent; every town is a little bit different; a mixture of things; very variable

Becky – how about permit uses? Ig – has not been involved w/any discussions involving this

Ig – educational at this point

Anna – got regs from other towns

Don – went through list of what other towns have open / closed

Becky – interested in the permit uses. Discussion ensued

Becky – advocated for family use of fields but not organized sports

Kenny – baseball orgs – good to get everyone educated and involved; parents / kids; Phase 2

Alison – asked ig question; ig – either open for people to use or not; no chaperoning etc.

Bob F. – encouraged by what Kenny said but doesn’t feel it is sufficient; how about assigning someone to observe whether rules are being followed; and can report to police if not; there are probably willing to do this

IG – that is or should be taken care of by coaches or whoever is operating this; much more comfortable; good use of town facilities – goal is to do it in a safe manner

Anna – we have a list of users for contact tracing

Alison – much higher comfort level with permitted groups; concerned more with those randomly showing up

We have no way to keep track of which group were playing where; police is getting complaints

At what point do we start issuing fines?

Alison – we need enforcement mechanism

Anna – signs can be put up in a matter of days

How do we enforce those rules though?

John giger – didn’t say it would stop COVID but it would protect the town; people are gonna go one way or another

John Reilly – parents, coaches and individuals have to take responsibility

Time to move on; take personal responsibility; remove liability from the town; up to individuals being aware of risk level

Defer to state – if they’re not allowing scrimmages or games; follow the state’s rules

Doesn’t see the risk; the numbers aren’t there, data’s not there

Jason – separate risk conversation from health conversation; i.e. legal risk – close the court; not advocating for this but logically and piece by piece, decide what everyone wants to do

Legal risks are part 1; part 2 is a completely separate conversation around the public health

Does closing the courts will produce a better outcome? We don’t know.

Need to be reasonable; legal risk issues aside; whatever we do is going to be imperfect; have to do the right thing

Discuss health side of it? A lot of these questions have already been discussed and answered

Relatively health compliant, health safe – baseball

Concerns more around basketball?

There’s gotta be some level of personal responsibility

Biggest gap here is communications; no pre meeting so people are surprised

Words matter

Jon giger – basketball courts; take down the nets

Becky – signage needs to go up; clear message on signage of expectations; doesn’t believe decision to open fields should be override

Bob – signage is necessary but not sufficient; am not comfortable with organized sports

Sb will put legal side on agenda

Josh – take down hoops

Tom D – can take hoops down; wire nets up there instead; just need a hoop; not sure if we can remove just the hoop

Jason – this is ongoing effort

Stuff changes; evidence driven vs. ideology driven

Not a given that closing the parks will decrease numbers

JASON – Public safety concern of approach

Basketball high risk activity

No date for Phase 3

Brief discussion ensued between don black and jason

Bob – enforcement questions

Ig – no to games

BOH happy to wait and see what state does

Parks agrees; will leave signs in place there

Baseball – don – we have self governing rules; coaches have self governing rules; simply a practice

Yes on organized – no on basketball

Jason – wait to hear from the state; will take our queue from that

Next scheduled meeting is on 7/6; 10 days from now next phase

7/2? If cause to do so can schedule meeting for the 2nd

29th is an important date

NO GAMES

Jason – but if there’s bad behavior…would like to see parks lead but if willingness isn’t there then boh can step in

Don – checks places at least 3 times a day and so does Chief Luth and his officers

**<< Bob>> moved to adjourn the meeting at << 10:29 >> a.m. << jason >> seconded and the motion carried with Dr. Susan Horowitz abstaining.**

Minutes by Sammie Kul.