

**MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF HEALTH  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
November 16, 2020 at 7:30pm**

Members Present

Mr. Charles Perry  
Dr. Arnold Pallay  
Ms. Betty Bowers  
Dr. Steven Marcus  
Dr. Sunil Shah  
Dr. Sachin Shah

Members Absent:

Ms. Brielle Cook

Others Present:

Aimee Puluso, Health Officer  
Amanda Rizzo, BOH Secretary  
David Pennella, BOH Attorney  
Victor Canning, Township Administrator  
June Hercek, Asst. Twp. Administrator  
Dr. Matthew Kayne, Twp. Committee Member  
Sarah Foye, Member of Public

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

With a quorum present, Mr. Charles Perry called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m., and took a roll call of members present.

As required by the Open Public Meetings Act (a.k.a. “Sunshine Law”), adequate notice of this meeting was provided. The notice specified the meeting was to be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Health Department at the Montville Township Municipal Building, 195 Changebridge Road. Legal notice of this meeting emailed to The Daily Record Newspaper, posted on the public bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Building, posted with the agenda on the Montville Township website at [www.montvillenj.org](http://www.montvillenj.org), filed with the Montville Township Clerk.

**Appointment**

Resolution 2020-08: Appointment of Board of Health Secretary Amanda Rizzo

MOTION: A motion was made by Dr. Pallay, to approve the appointment of Board of Health Secretary, Amanda Rizzo. Seconded by Dr. Marcus, all in favor.

**Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: A motion was made by Dr. Pallay, to approve the minutes of the Board of Health meeting held on September 14, 2020. Seconded by Ms. Bowers, all in favor.

**Public Comments**

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Perry to open the meeting to public comments, from any citizen wishing to speak before the Montville Township Board of Health on items on the agenda, and items not on the agenda. Seconded by Dr. Sunil Shah, all in favor.

Public Comments: None.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Perry to close the meeting to public comments from any citizen. Seconded by Dr. Pallay, all in favor.

### Reports

Health Officer Aimee Puluso presented, and the Board reviewed, the Health Department's Monthly Activity Reports for September 2020, October 2020 and COVID-19 Summary as of November 3, 2020.

### Discussion

Dr. Pallay asked for a verbal report on COVID-19 as of November 16, 2020. Ms. Puluso stated that cases and data were trending upward, increasing quickly, Health Department page indicates a sharp increase in cases. The average age over the last two months has dropped by 3 years, and there are more cases among younger individuals than during the spring surge. There are 43 open cases today, about half of our largest number of open cases at one time (80). NJ Department of Health anticipates that the peak of the surge would be seen towards the end of December. Contact tracing efforts continue, but the department has experienced increased resistance to cooperation among the public. 2 attempts at phone calls are made, then a note is delivered to the residence. Ms. Puluso discussed with Administration to put a press release requesting the public cooperate with contact tracing. Mr. Perry asked who is not cooperating. Ms. Puluso said those not cooperating are across the board, there is no specific age range.

Dr. Pallay asked Ms. Puluso if there was any commentary from restaurants or schools with today's press briefing from the Governor. Ms. Puluso stated she got pulled away on another telephone call and was not able to watch the briefing, but did not receive any calls from restaurants or schools as of yet. Ms. Puluso stated that a new Executive Order is expected that will reduce the number of indoor and outdoor capacities for gatherings. Indoor capacities will be reduced to 10, and outdoor is reduced to 150. Dr. Sachin Shah asked how Montville Twp. is going to enforce these guidelines with the holiday coming up. Ms. Puluso stated that we are trying to educate the public by posting information on the Health Department website. Also, the Police Department is involved in enforcing compliance with the Executive Orders. Dr. Sachin Shah asked if we could start putting information about these reduced gathering limits on the electronic billboards in town, by the Police Station, along Changebridge and Horseneck Roads, near the schools etc. Ms. Puluso responded yes.

Dr. Kayne wanted to inform the Board of a decision made by the Township Committee. With the increase of COVID-19 in our township and around the country, all outdoor recreational offerings have been suspended because of public safety concerns and out of an abundance of caution. As of tomorrow, November 17, 2020, all community basketball courts, playing fields, playgrounds, and pavilions will be closed to further mitigate the increase in COVID-19 cases. Announcements will be made to coaches and the public. Dr. Kayne mentioned that two walking paths, one at Camp Dawn and one at Community Park, will remain open so long as people wear masks when doing so. The Police will be patrolling the parks to assist the parks department to ensure compliance. Dr. Pallay asked regarding the concert performances? Dr. Kayne stated concerts would be cancelled because they would most likely be in the Pavilion area.

Dr. Pallay asked Ms. Puluso, if we could recommend signage on the outdoor electronic boards? Ms. Puluso stated that Dr. Sachin Shah had discussed this earlier, but if Dr. Sachin Shah would like to make a motion he can do so.

Dr. Marcus and Dr. Sachin Shah had discussed the possibility of electronic email blasts. Ms. Hercek said there is a way to sign up through the Township website. Additionally Mr. Canning added that there are multiple avenues that the Township gets the message out, NIXLE, Facebook, Twitter, Township website, local press. Whomever is registered through our website will get the notification.

The motion is for the usage of the electronic signs located throughout the Township to inform the community on the new restrictions on indoor and outdoor gathering limits. Dr. Pallay adds recommendation that the Township use any means available to get the message out.

MOTION: A motion was made by Dr. Sachin Shah. Seconded by Dr. Pallay, all in favor.

Dr. Marcus thanked Ms. Puluso for her updated formatted reports.

Mr. Perry questioned if there were mental health resources for the general public due to the increased stress of the pandemic. Ms. Puluso stated that there are references on the Health Department page. Mr. Perry was wondering if we could add this information to the electronic signage. Ms. Puluso stated that we could discuss with the Police Department to put the information on the electronic signs that are set up on trailers down the street from Town Hall and discuss with the schools to put on their signage.

Dr. Sunil Shah asked a question regarding hospitalizations. Ms. Puluso stated due to privacy concerns, she can speak only in generalities, but that she has not seen the hospitalizations and severity that she saw in the spring surge.

Dr. Marcus mentioned that Hackensack University Medical Center sent him a notification that they are closed to “any non-emergent medical care.” Dr. Marcus has stated he hasn’t seen any other hospitals doing this at this time.

### **Unfinished Business**

Resolution 2020-09: Recommendation Residents Cooperate with COVID-19 Contact Tracing

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Perry, to approve Recommendation Residents Cooperate with COVID-19 Contact Tracing. Seconded by Dr. Pallay, all in favor.

Dr. Marcus questioned what the Township’s rate of cooperation is with contact tracing. His understanding is that the Governor stated that the rate of non-cooperation for contact-tracing is 60%. Ms. Puluso stated we have higher rate of cooperation due to our Dial-A-Ride drivers dropping off notes on resident’s doors.

Epidemiology study: Ms. Puluso stated that in regards to the study, requested by the Board to explore differences in the number of cases among the different zip codes within the Township, as of the most recent COVID summary report to the Board dated November 8, 2020, there was a 2% decrease in the Towaco zip code. The breakdown by zip code is now: Montville – 50% of population and 46.9% of cases,

Towaco – 24.7% population and 28.3% of cases, and Pine Brook – 27.2% of population and 23.3% of cases. Information for the analysis of information collected during contact tracing efforts would be presented to the Board at the December meeting. The result of the analysis may or may not answer the question of the continued slight difference in zip codes. As stated previously, there are a variety of reasons that this may be due to, including differences in average age, profession, etc. If further information beyond what the Health Department gathers during contact tracing is required, an outside consultant would have to be hired to design a study, and gather and analyze additional data. Such an expense would have to be approved by the Township Committee. Mr. Perry commented that a consultant could cost thousands of dollars and he much rather not see that money spent in such a way. He feels that discussing this further at the December meeting should be sufficient.

MOTION to table discussion to next meeting was made by Dr. Marcus. Seconded by Dr. Pallay. Five “yes” (Marcus, Pallay, Bowers, Shah, and Shah), one abstention, Perry.

### **New Business**

Dr. Sachin Shah mentioned that he sent out an email regarding pandemic fatigue due to social distancing and felt that getting out other ideas/alternatives for adults and children would be beneficial. Perhaps trying out different games and platforms that we could use interactively but virtually. He asked about thoughts on putting out such messages on social media. Dr. Sachin Shah said he could put this together, it is not too difficult to create. Dr. Pallay suggested that these ideas/platforms run through the Health Officer and presented in that fashion. Ms. Puluso stated that would not be a problem but to send her template so she review and then submit to public information officer for posting on the Township website. Mr. Perry stated that perhaps we could get a college intern to assist with this effort. Dr. Sunil Shah stated perhaps you could get some ideas or get promotional help from the Montville Township Library.

MOTION: A motion to recommend promotional messages be sent out on a regular basis to our community in lieu of in person gatherings was made by Dr. Sunil Shah. Seconded by Dr. Marcus, all in favor.

Dr. Marcus mentioned that with the colder weather, many restaurants may want to bring in space heaters to their outdoor setups. He’s not been able to find any fire safety directives or any heat or fuel sources that are able to be used. His concern is regarding combustible fuels such as propane or kerosene in an enclosed spaces and the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Ms. Puluso responded that she has been in contact with Administration and they have contacted the Construction Official. The Construction Official will be writing up a directive in the next few days. Mr. Canning added that no restaurant in Township is to use any fuel heaters. They are only to be using electrical heaters which have to be inspected by the Fire Districts in accordance with state code. Any violation of this should be reported to Administration or the appropriate Fire Districts.

### **Adjournment**

MOTION: There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Mr. Perry, seconded by Dr. Pallay, all in favor, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.