



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

BOARD OF HEALTH Date of Meeting – 1-11-23
LWVM Observer - Thomas Krueger

**Members in Attendance - BOH : Andrew Petty, Todd Belf-Becker (chairperson),
Sec. Andrea Flaxer, Joanne Greer Miller, Helaine Hazlett**

Public allow to Participate in the Meeting - Yes, in person and via Hybrid

AGENDA

1. Transfer Station Facility Update

Mr. Petty gave a very brief update that basically stated that they were waiting for the schedule and timeline from the architect. This would include final drawings. When they have these, he will reconvene the TSF subcommittee for further work.

2. Mental Health Task Force Update (MHTF)

Ms. Miller related that the MHTF met several weeks ago and the next meeting is planned for 1/30/23. At the last meeting they discussed what ARPA funds the MHTF might request for further work by the task force. There were four areas that the funds could be used in: 1) programs at the high school; 2) programs at the COA (Council on Aging) - she noted that recent programs there have attracted 100 seniors, etc., so would be quite efficacious; 3) funds to support the marbleheadcares.org website (building and maintaining and updating) - the site was built pro bono and the funds would help until someone from the MHTF could manage it. Parenthetically, they had discussed branding of MHD Cares so that it could be publicized more in the community; 4) Engaging NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Health) programs at the high school. In all the request would be for \$16,000. (The BOH had been granted \$200K of ARPA funds for mental health programs; \$145K was given to the Marblehead Counseling Center, leaving \$55K.)

Following this discussion, Ms. Hazlett said that she had talked to the new Essex County district attorney, Paul Tucker, He had told her that mental health issues are high on his agenda. In this vein Ms. Miller related her experience with a mental health “first aide” training at her work. The program is designed to understand mental health illness, what

are events, and how to respond to them. She opined that perhaps this could be taught in town.

3. Director's Report

- a. This is the last week for curbside Christmas tree pickup by the Highway Department. After this they can be brought to the transfer station.
- b. 2023 stickers for cars are now available. They can be purchased at the Tax Collectors or at the transfer station. A copy of the car's registration is needed. The cost is \$80 for the first, \$25 for the second sticker.
- c. HHTF - hazardous waste disposal - the firm ACV that has been doing the home collection may be soon stopping. They are looking into other vendors, but there are not a lot of vendors. Otherwise, hazardous waste disposal will have to be done the "old way."
- d. COVID, influenza, RSV - Mr. Petty noted there is some COVID in the area, but we are doing better than other parts of the state. This is mainly assessed by wastewater measurements as there are few PCR tests now done. (The wastewater measurement is regional and includes MHD, Salem and Peabody.) He noted that MHD did NOT see a post-holiday surge in cases. - we have a high vaccination rate. For home antigen testing he reminded all to look at the lot number as to the expiration date. The HD will soon get 25,000 kits that will be distributed to churches, businesses, schools, etc. They will be available at the HD and tax collectors. They can be sent to the home.

4. New Business

- a. Ms. Hazlett wanted to highlight for a future meeting an anti-tobacco campaign. She read from the American Lung Association statement asking the 11.1% of the population who still smoke to resolve to stop in 2023. This is still one of the leading causes of death. It often takes 8-10 attempts to quit smoking. Besides the health benefits, quitting can result in savings: 1 pack/day/year = \$4000. Vaping is not quitting. Further discussion concerned how to support this initiative, programs, having the regional North Shore tobacco control person come to a meeting. It was noted that tobacco use had ebbed but when vaping started, it has slid back.

5. Public Participation

- a. Three residents came to discuss the waste ban ordinance that has affected their businesses. Two of these residents have businesses that routinely dispose of large amounts waste at the transfer station. (The new ordinance from the Mass DEP seeks to decrease disposal that is going to landfills (which are rapidly filling up) and boost recycling.) The concern that these business owners have is the banning of trucks that have loads > 5 cubic yards - C and D trucks. This size truck is routinely used in their work, whether clean outs, building debris, etc. They felt that no one had done any outreach to them about this regulation. No one had offered to figure a way to mitigate this requirement. No one had

advocated for them. And it made no sense to them as they could take the same amount divide it into smaller loads and dispose of the same amount. They noted that they do a lot of business with the transfer station and pay sizable fees to do so. By this regulation the town would also lose a lot of money. Large out of town companies could come in, do the work, haul it elsewhere and residents would pay much more. At the conclusion there was a suggestion that might work for both the regulations and the contractors - a separate trailer for this disposal that would be handled separately.

- b. Another resident brought up his concern for the substance abuse in the MHD community. He is retired but had extensive experience directing programs in the Navy for years. He has spoken at the state house, with DARE, etc. He was wondering how the BOH responded to “pot” shops in MHD. In his view and experience he saw that there was a progression from pot to other substances. He wished to say that he could be a resource for the BOH.

The next meeting for the BOH is scheduled for *2/7/23*