



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Board of Health - 1-9-24

Hybrid Meeting, Recorded

LWVM Observer: Tom Krueger

Members in Attendance: Andrew Petty, Tom McMahon, Joanne Miller, Helaine Hazlett

Tobacco Control - the tobacco control officer was unable to attend because of an emergency and will be rescheduled to 3-12-24.

Mental Health Task Force (MHTF) - Ms. Miller mentioned that Chris Herron will be at the high school 1/10 and the MHTF will have a table at the event. In addition, members of the task force met with the Marblehead Current editorial team and about the continued collaboration, e.g., the monthly article the MHTF submits. There have been many suggestions to explore - navigating mental health in the digital age, tele-therapy (done by the MCC), and discussion supporting the "screenager" program, active in Lynnfield, a media movie system, which covers the various mental health concerns of kids.

In addition, the MHTF wants to buttress relationship with MHD public schools. A meeting is planned with Julia Ferrara, the assistant superintendent. The MHTF may engage in a project of Charley Applestein, who has a program on positive trauma strength-based training, at the high school. They also want to do some articles looking at older populations.

Peter Slack continues to maintain the MHD Cares website and adds new content. He will teach Ms. Miller how to analyze how the website is being used by the community. The analysis showed in 2023 there were 5,742 unique visitors to the website, 10,354 visits.

Transfer Station Update - Mr. Petty said the transfer station construction will be out to bid 1/17/24 and due back 2/21/24. There will be a day when contractors can come to ask questions. The budget and the total funds available are \$1,258,000. When this is put out to bid, there are certain things that need to be done - the "base"- and then "alternates" depending on funds available. The BASE (3 items) bid includes pit renovation: the compactor on site, and there is an agreement to have this installed by the company who purchased the compactor as well as to do the funnel work. Pit work would be the cladding, the out-front work, the manned shack; then the site work (new scale pit), regrading, etc.; and finally, the scale house foundation. (The temporary trailer is out of the way of upcoming work.) Next are the ALTERNATES (5 items) - new scale house, the transaction pad, the swap shed pad, the transaction hut (where residents

can buy stickers, etc.), and the swap shop building. (More transactions will be done online, etc. so receipts can be shown to TS personnel),

Mr. Petty said that once construction starts the biggest interruptions will be to the commercial side. The plan is to leave the current scale in so material can continue to weigh things and stay operational. During this phase, the board may need to meet more often to discuss things as they come up. The one thing that has not occurred so far is the permit from DEP - this was supposed to be granted before the new year. The bidding can go forward despite this, but actual construction can only take place when the permit is granted.

A question came up about the bids - the bids will be "broken" down as in the steps above, so "base" bid will be lumped together with the "alternates." By 2/21 Mr. Petty will have more information about bids and any need for more resources. Another question concerned the projected size of the swap shed - currently it is the size of two shipping containers, the new one would be a little larger. The reason the "pad" (foundation) alternate is higher priority than the building is that if funds were not available perhaps other means could be used to build the shop shed itself.

BOH Website - Mr. Petty passed out handouts and began the discussion about the top two items, mental health, and physical health. He mentioned that there is a North Shore Public Health Collaborative website. The Board could look at their resources and potentially incorporate them into the MDH website. There are various toolkit resources available on it that the Board might choose. There is also on the NSPHC website physical health resources. Ms. Miller wondered where the MHD Cares website fits into this discussion. Perhaps the best idea would be to have a redundancy with the BOH website, and MHD Cares website. This is just the beginning, and it will evolve.

Directors Report

Budget - Mr. Petty said that budget season is beginning. On 1/24/24 the State of the Town is the kickoff. Then he will meet with the liaisons, will bring the budget to the board, and discuss. The current direction is to have a "level" budget: level services, level funded. He mentioned discussion about funding for the MCC, perhaps an additional staff member at the TS which is very busy, and an additional person in the office to answer phones. All agree that everything is "tight" in the town. Mr. McMahon asked if an extra person might allow the TS to be open at lunch and on Sunday. Mr. Petty said that the staffing is currently so tight that if someone is sick at the TS, he must send someone from the HD office (Marty). To actually operate during lunchtime there would have to be three people available. Later Mr. Petty noted that they will keep the current employees, that there are large contractual increases and as a consequence the HD is always over the 2.5% increase.

BOH Workshop - this is commonly done by groups to enhance communication. Mr. Petty asked the board about their thoughts about that. The board discussed the logistics of doing this. This would be an open to the public meeting. Ms. Hazlett mentioned a potential facilitator, Hannah Bowen, executive director of The Resolution Center in Beverly. The board will do a "doodle poll" to find a time.

Other - Ms. Miller and Tom Massaro went to the Wellesley Transfer Center. The staff there were very welcoming and showed pride in their facility (which is huge). There they separate out all their recycling materials, so they can sort out the "valuable" items out and sell them as a commodity. They even have a bailing machine on site - e.g., bail all the clean white paper. They have buyers for their product. They also take out all the "redemptions" (bottles and cans) and take those to a redemption center. This is perhaps something that MHD could do. (There is a bottle bill in front of the legislature to increase the fee from five cents to ten cents redemptions.) Note - Wellesley does NOT do curbside pickup.

Mr. Petty will be working on the town report which is due 2/9/24; before that he has to do a state report on all the trash and recycling done, etc.

Ms. Miller asked precisely "what opening the bids" means: Mr. Petty responded that it literally means opening up the envelopes containing the bids from each contractor and seeing what they bid for the "base" work as well as the "alternate" work. All envelopes are opened at the same time at Abbot Hall. The lowest qualified bid wins the contract.