



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

BOARD OF HEALTH - 10-27-25

Hybrid meeting - Recorded

LWVM Observer: Tom Krueger

Members in Attendance: Andrew Petty, Tom McMahon, Tom Massaro, Amanda Ritvo

CAHM Update -Dr. Massaro gave an update about the responses to the health survey. So far there have been 1500 responses and it will need another “bump” to get a higher response. This means more ads in the newspapers, a rolling backboard at football games, perhaps table cards at restaurants, etc. The plan is to extend the time to 11/11 for responses. The higher the response rate, the more value to the survey. What is needed are more responses from the 18-30 and 30-39 age groups. The “stretch goal” is for about 3,000 responses.

MMHTF -The Marblehead Mental Health Task Force was begun in response to the mental health issues that arose during the pandemic. During its first years, it was very active: an informative website, columns in the newspapers, etc. Since that time it has become apparent that the MMTF would need an affiliation with the MCC, whose role is face to face work with clients. This new affiliation is now called “Marblehead Cares.” Much ensuing discussion was how to deactivate the MMTF website. There was also discussion about how much “traffic” the site got, how the content would be directed to the MCC, and if the site could include more about substance abuse. Thatcher Kezer said that he could take the website off the town website.

DMH Grant RFA - Dr. Massaro brought to the board’s attention that the state is offering grants for “behavioral health promotion and prevention.” This would be from the office of the aforementioned. Their mission is to promote the same with innovative, evidence based, data driven approaches for the promotion and prevention of mental health conditions, including substance abuse. Dr. Massaro presented a slide with the “objective for social impact” which included reducing stigma, prevention of suicide, violence, substance abuse, as well as promoting positive childhood and health experiences. The funds dedicated to this initiative is \$3M, but the competition for the grants will be “fierce”: 300 people were on the call, and there will be likely only 15 grants. The grant funding depends on whether programs are being developed, are about to be implemented, and are already developed but will need to sustain and expand, i.e., three different tiers. If MHD were to apply, it would be at tier 1, a developing one. With the board’s approval Dr. Massaro would like to apply for one of these grants. There was a discussion about how these funds could be used: early intervention, a mini course for the community about public health, also what the police department does, at school for help with social emotional programs, etc. In conclusion, the board agreed with going ahead. The timeline for applications is 11/17. The group discussed how and when to meet to get input from each member within this timeline.

Waste Management -Mr. McMahon told the group that a presentation of the future waste management options will be discussed at the COA on 10/30 from 3-4 pm. He has been getting a lot of feedback already: there is not much support for every other week recycling pickup; no “push back” about the barrel sizes. Mr. Petty will bring the 65, 35, and 96 gallon totes to the meeting. Mr. Petty will do a presentation about the RFP for waste management; a Q and A will follow, followed by an open house. He noted there WILL be a limit for curbside recycling, regardless. Additional recycling can always be brought to the transfer station. Also, he said that there is always a “cost” to transfer station for this removal.

The license plate readers LPR have been working well. There have only been a few people stopped. The sale of stickers has exceeded \$600K this year. Dr. Massaro was asked about the possibility of a limited license for those who only use the transfer station infrequently. Mr. Petty said that there is in effect one already: a person can always use the commercial “weigh and pay”. This cost is only \$0.16 per pound.

Curbside leaf collection will be for 7 weeks, and all leaves have to be in paper bags.

Community Health -Dr. Ritvo showed the board the sign that will be posted at Riverhead. The sign shows a swimmer graphics within a red circle and a horizontal slash. The wording is “Warning - Water Not Suitable for Swimming” and below “Bacterial Levels Are Not Monitored At This Location.”

Transfer Station Project Update - Mr. Petty said that all the documentation and permits have been obtained and work will soon begin. He is awaiting a schedule from the contractor. Commercial accounts (which number about 400) will be notified about the work and when there will be closures for work. The transfer station will be open to residents, with occasional need to reroute traffic.

Public Comment

One question was about Dr. Massaro’s ideas of a mini course for residents in public health. Would this be like the “police academy” run by the police department.

A second question was about the large dumpster for metal. Mr. Petty said that this was a mixed metal one,