



Observer Report

Board of Health: 5/25/21 LWVM Observer - Thomas Krueger

Members in Attendance via Zoom - Andrew Petty, Todd Belf-Becker, Sec. Andrea Flaxer, Michelle Gottlieb, Helaine Hazlett

Meeting Posted 48 hrs in advance

Meeting held in a Handicapped Accessible Location - not applicable

Public allow to Participate in the Meeting - yes via Zoom.

AGENDA

Minutes of 5/11/21 accepted. Refund for duplicate facility stickers were granted.

COVID UPDATE

Andrew gave the update saying that “our numbers are good.” As of 5/21 the total cases = 1338 (2 cases more than 5/14); active cases =4; total deaths =31 (unchanged.) The average incidence rate for the past 2 weeks = 4.9/100,000 (green zone). The percent positive for the same time period = 1.06% (green zone.) The actual total tests were 1516, down from average 2000+ /week in the past. If the incidence rate does go up, it is only because of a smaller denominator. Soon, it will not be needed for MHD to track these statistics as all are available on the state website.

The vaccination rate for MHD is 11,852 fully (representing 62% of MHD population) and 3216 with one dose. The total, therefore, is 15,068 or 79.16% of MHD population. All who are 12 or older are being urged to get vaccinated. For now, the local clinic at Salem State O’Keefe Center is

operating Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3pm-6pm. It is unclear how much longer this will be open.

Governor Baker issued the following: that effective 5/29/21 that all industries could be open. That facial coverings requirements are lifted EXCEPT in the following circumstances: 1) public and private transportation, including taxis and ride shares; 2) inside K-12 public schools, collaborative, etc. for students, teachers, and staff; 3) inside childcare programs; 4) in health care facilities and provider offices; 5) congregate care settings (e.g. assisted living facilities, group homes, houses of correction, residential treatment programs, etc.); 6) health care and rehabilitative day services or programs; and 7) home care workers. As reminder those exempt from facial coverings are children 5 or younger and persons for whom wearing a mask is a health. This information is all available on [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) as well as [marblehead.org](https://www.marblehead.org)

On 5/25/21 Governor Baker is filing legislation to extend the open meeting law, whereby meetings have been able to conducted by services, such as, Zoom, until September 1. (There may be possible changes in the law to allow this to more permanent. Many have felt it has allowed more public participation.) In addition, this legislation would include provisions to have towns approve permits for outdoor dining. One additional part of the legislation is that medical providers cannot bill for some COVID related costs until January, 2022.

Following Andrew's update were these questions: 1) does 79% mean herd immunity? Fauci has in the past said 70-90%; 2) if the O'Keefe Center closes, how does this effect Salem whose vaccination rate is lower? The O'Keefe Center was a regional program, so Salem residents would be affected; however, there are numerous resources available for vaccinations - pharmacies, doctor's offices, etc. 3) do private schools have their own guidelines? Andrew does not know, but will find out. 4) can public meetings meet "in person"? After 5/29 the answer is yes.

Helaine publicly congratulated Andrew and his staff on their tireless work this past year. Andrew opined that they are waiting on possible authorization of vaccinating the 12 and younger. In the fall there will be more consideration about boosters if and when needed.

MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

Due to a scheduling mix up, the task force has not met in the interim, but will meet 6/1 and again on 6/15

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Hazardous Waste residential collection is to occur on 6/9, using the same procedures as in the past. On marblehead.org , News, there is a link so that one can sign up online, pay online, list what is to be collected, as well as where on your property it will be (porch, driveway, etc. - this is NOT curbside.). The same firm, ACD, will collect the material, bring it to the Transfer Station, where it will be repackaged before finally transit. In the past 100+ people have used this service, all to good reviews. It is hoped to be able to offer this service four times a year. Note - items can be taken at other times to the Transfer Station for processing.

Weekly beach water sampling is to begin 6/9 and until 9/5/21 - at the Village and Sunset piers.

The Health Department office will be closed 6/19 in honor of Juneteenth. Curbside trash and recycling will continue to be collected that day.