



## **OBSERVER REPORT**

**BOARD OF HEALTH - 7-12-22** LWVM Observer - Thomas Krueger

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

Meeting - regularly scheduled

Meeting held in a Handicapped Accessible Location - not applicable

Public allow to Participate in the Meeting - Hybrid was attempted at the beginning of the meeting, however, the connection was not able to be obtained. After 5 minutes of trying, the meeting was conducted for those in person. (This possibility was noted on the BOH Agenda). The meeting was recorded to be broadcast of MHTV.

### **AGENDA**

#### **REORGANIZATION**

Following the recent town election, Helaine Hazlett, was reelected to the board. As is the practice she would be nominated to be the board's chair. She requested that she not assume that role until 2023, and nominated Dr. Belf-Becker to continue as the chair, so that there would be a smooth transition. This motion was seconded and passed. Next, Ms. Hazlett was nominated to be vice chair; this too was seconded and passed. Finally, Ms. Miller was nominated as the communications officer. Her nomination was seconded and passed.

#### **COVID UPDATE**

As of June 8, in MHD there have been 4180 confirmed cases; active cases 55, probable cases 10. In the past two weeks there were 66 cases. This number under counts the actual number in MHD as many are diagnosed at home with rapid testing and not reported. Andrew noted there are some new variants, in particular BA. 4 and BA.5, around. The department is receiving about 4,000 kits that will be distributed to department heads, restaurants, etc. - any establishment or group that needs them (camps, churches, food banks, etc.). They will be available at health department office, COA, or one can call and request one. The kits are stamped with an expiration date of 6/22 but DPH has said they are "good" until 10/22. PCR testing is still available; go to [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) to find a testing site.

Andrew was asked about the weekly data charts. He has stopped doing them for the time being, but if need to will resume them. He reiterated that the case load reported is not a true measure in the community. The numbers reported are those confirmed by a

PCR which are then recorded in the state's MAVEN software. If a rapid is done at a physician's office and is positive, this is also recorded in the MAVEN program.

During a board discussion one member noted that they had heard the actual case load could be 7X that reported, but this is difficult to confirm. The variants are quite variable as far as symptoms - some mildly affected, others more severely; in families only two out of four affected. If one does feel as though they have symptoms of COVID, it is important to test more than once - keep testing. Some individuals have had COVID two to three times.

## **TRANSFER STATION UPDATE**

In attendance at the meeting were the lead engineer of the firm doing the traffic study, the architect for the transfer station, and the town engineer. The traffic study engineer presented the preliminary findings (draft) of the study recently completed. The study was performed on the days May 19-21 (Thursday-Saturday) and included all traffic coming off Beacon Street, Green Street, and included the general traffic at peak times (7-9am, 4-6pm). They had access to data about traffic at the transfer station (especially level of activity at the pit) from May, 2021.

The proposal was to have all transfer station traffic (residential and pit use) enter from the Green Street access. This would allow for possible queuing further into the site of 750 feet - this could accommodate up to 25-30 cars; at peak times there are only 11-12 vehicles. The access road is 20 feet wide and could handle the one-way flow. The exit for all vehicles would be onto Beacon Street. As for the number of vehicles using the site the total volume on weekdays is 1,100; Saturday, 1,400. For the peak hours it is 180 weekdays, 280 on Saturday. As for traffic going west on Beacon (past the Community Store) and south on Green (toward town), there would be no change. The traffic entering the site would be 60% from Beacon and 30% from Green.

During a comment period the study could include a safety evaluation and an evaluation of the intersection operation. There was discussion about doing a follow up evaluation after the transfer station construction to see if there would be any refinements needed - this would be a new contract. There was some discussion about having commercial traffic coming in either earlier or later. It was noted that during queuing, there is a regulation of NO IDLING. The study did not look at commercial entering off Beacon and residential from Green Street, as there would only be 120 feet for queuing. It was further noted that most vehicles (90%) were passenger or pick-up trucks; only 5-10% that use the pit are large trucks. A question was posed about having a second scale. This would be operationally good, but costly \$150K and the TS cap would have to be breached which would lead to more problems (engineering and DEP sign off.) The final report will be available in a few weeks.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Water quality at the beaches is tested every Wednesday. There have been elevated bacterial counts at Grace-Oliver and Gashouse beaches in the recent past. The HD is looking in to what factors may be causing this, especially because the years 2010-2018

have always been clear. In 2018 problems began appearing. Possibilities include prevailing winds, sewage, etc.

The trash collection service JRM has been recently sold to Republic. This will not affect trash pick-up in MHD - it will be a seamless change. The contract MHD has is valid for four more years.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

One resident commented that this discussion of traffic at the transfer station was a very important discussion and was upset that the it was not carried in the hybrid fashion. He has attended many other town meetings and “they keep trying” to “get on” Zoom. He lived nearby so he could come in person but others can't. In reply, the system was set up in the afternoon, worked, and there is no one to call in the evening for problems. It is being recorded and will be available on MHTV tomorrow.

Another resident reiterated how important the topic especially for the Arnold Terrace residents; he also felt that the information about JRM should have been be available in advance.

The next meeting is scheduled for 9/13/22 at 7:30 pm. (A meeting on 8/16/22 is also possible.)