



## OBSERVER REPORT

**BOARD OF HEALTH - 9/14/21 LWVM Observer - Thomas Krueger**  
Members in Attendance via Zoom - BOH : Andrew Petty, Todd Belf-Becker, Sec. Andrea Flaxer, Joanne Greer Miller, Helaine Hazlett

Meeting Posted 48 hours in advance

Meeting held in a Handicapped Accessible Location - not applicable

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

### AGENDA

#### COVID UPDATE:

As of 9/10 there were 1462 cases (1449 on 9/3/21), with 15 active, 31 deaths (unchanged), and the average daily incidence rate 8.3/100,000 (lower), 2441 test in the past 14 days, and 0.98% positivity (lower). The age distribution of cases was 4 in 0-19 age; 6, 20-29; 3, 40-49; 3, 50-59; 2, 60-69; and 1, 70-79.

The spread of COVID is mainly in households, explaining some of the clusters. Andrew reiterated that even in the fully vaccinated, symptoms (rhinorrhea, headache, cough, loss of taste or smell, etc.) should be monitored. Symptoms of COVID can present as a severe head cold. Fifty percent of the cases are “breakthrough” infections, so precautions need to be watched. There are no new mask mandates. Andrew and others have met with the region’s hospitals (Salem, Beverly, etc.) If there is an increase in hospitalizations, they will reach out to the public health in the area.

As before the best strategies for COVID are prompt testing if symptomatic, vaccinations, contact tracing, and surveillance testing.

Andrew did speak to the Board of Selectmen about mask mandates in public buildings. The response was no mask mandates at the present time.

In answer to the question of a third dose, Andrew said that as of 9/20 immunocompromised individuals would get this dose. This will be determined by the PCP-patient conversation.

In answer to a third dose for all ages 12 and up, there is still debate when. If deemed so, there would be clinics and it would be given in staged "color" program. Along a similar theme, the question is when 5-11 year-olds would be vaccinated. There has been some discussion that it could be as soon as the end of October, but at this point there is no information from the federal or state level.

Ms. Hazlett reported on the school/superintendent's meeting as of 9/3/21. The opening of school has gone well. Masking has not been an issue. The October 1st date is still be looked at as to any change. Mitigation strategies at school have continued with school seats distanced; windows open when possible; lunch, recess, mask breaks outside weather permitting. It is hoped that more parents will accept pool testing. With agreeing to be participate in "pool testing", there is the policy of "test and stay" if there is a close contact in school or activity. This means after testing the student can stay in school, pending the test results.

#### MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

Ms. Miller reported on the progress of this group. Peter Schelk and his team are working on the website, using the Lexington site as a model, and "plugging" in the MHD local resources. They are at the stage of looking for the domain name - this will cost \$300, which will be covered by the town. The website when completed will be linked to the town website for easy access. Numerous committee members have been helping to actuate this work. Members of the committee have met with the faith community, YMCA, JCC and others to publicize the site. When will this be ready? More will be known about this at the 9/20 MHTF meeting. The committee is continuing to look for speakers who would have conversations with the community about what mental health symptoms look like and how to connect with a resource.

## DIRECTORS REPORT

1. Household Hazardous Waste Day will be held on 9/15/21, using the ACV Environmental company, the same company that has been used in the past. Approximately 100 households in Marblehead and Swampscott will be serviced. Now that this program has been going on quarterly, 400 households per year have been helped versus only 200 per year when Clean Harbors handled this.
2. Beach sampling - the last day will be 9/15. The results have been “decent” with only some issues in July at Grace Oliver and Gashouse beaches. The data will soon be analyzed.
3. West Nile virus - about 1 week ago a mosquito was found to have WNV. An additional trap was added and no further ones have been found. This is the time of year when more cases are seen. The risk will continue until the first frost. Andrew opined that it is less likely to occur in MHD because the WNV mosquito is a marsh mosquito and MHD doesn't have marshes. It is possible that this came from Salem that does, and this mosquito got carried further than expected.
4. Leave collection schedule - this will be finalized in the next 1-2 weeks and will be posted on the MHD website. It is planned to also use a postcard to notify residents of the schedule.

## QUESTIONS

1. Flu clinics? there will be one for town employees and seniors. The tentative date will be posted
2. How often do some of the other Boards of Health in the area meet? Most meet monthly with additional meetings as necessary. The BOH can meet remotely (Zoom) until the end of the year or longer.

The MHD BOH meeting will be scheduled for the second Tuesdays of each month with the next on 10/12/21.