



## OBSERVER REPORT

**BOARD OF HEALTH - 10/12/21** LWVM Observer - Thomas Krueger

Members in Attendance via Zoom - Andrew Petty, Todd Belf-Becker, Sec. Andrea Flaxer, Joanne Greer Miller, 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 for the 8/30/21 and 9/14/21 were approved.

### COVID UPDATE

As of 10/8 there have been 1580 cases in MHD, 35 currently active, and 31 deaths (unchanged.) In the past 2 week 9/24-10/8 there were 58 new cases. These can be broken down with the help of the schools' COVID dashboard (note that children <12 are not vaccinated yet): 0-11 age 23 cases; 12-19, 11; 20-29, 1; 30-39, 2; 40-49, 8; 50-59, 4; 60-69, 4; 70-79, 3; 80+, 2. The average daily incidence rate was 22.1/100,000 (a slight increase). The total number of tests performed is 74,073, and in the past 14 days, 2700. The percentage positive was 2.59% (unchanged). On the website are graphs that show the case rates, positive test rates, etc. since October, 2020.

The fully vaccinated status by age is as follows (the numbers in parentheses are those partially vaccinated): 12-15, 89% (8%); 16-19, >95% (6%); 20-29, 88% (9%); 30-49, 93% (6%); 50-64, 91% (5%); 65-74, 90% (7%); 75+, >95% (this is data from the state website.)

From the school COVID dashboard, since 10/4 there have 4 cases among students and 0 cases for staff. The numbers since 9/1 have been tracked for each school with the most at the elementary and the total among all the students and staff have been 26.

Additional COVID topics - 1) vaccination of 5-11 years old? Awaiting CDC guidance, perhaps using a different dose. 2) The MA Contact Tracing Collaborative (CTC) is

winding down, stopping on 11/30 and closing on 12/31. The town will assume full responsibility and working with the surveillance team for contact tracing.

Ms. Hazlett reported on the school reopening committee, now the Superintendent Advisory Leadership Team (SALT). The protocol is for a student who tests positive to isolate, and for their contacts to quarantine. Contact tracing will continue and the school nurse will do this for those contacts in school. Those students who are contacts and not part of the “test and stay” will have to go home; those who are part of the program can be tested and stay in their classroom pending results. At this point only 50% of the students are in the “test and stay” program. Parents should continue to pay attention to the weekly HD case reports and the school dashboard. As a reminder, if a child is not vaccinated, he/she should wear a mask in school and in shared rides. The masking at school will continue for another 30 days and then be reassessed. Andrew added that COVID is here to stay, it is not going away, and emphasized personal responsibility.

Andrew further said that the HD will need everyone’s help - “if you are positive, reach out to your contacts, and alert them so they can get tested.” He added that we are head into influenza season.

#### MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

Ms. Miller reported on a productive meeting on 10/4 as they are pulling together the information for the spreadsheet. The website is in the “fine tuning” stage. On 11/8 7pm at the high school, Dan Bauer will lead a panel of mental health professionals answering questions that are most relevant to the audience. The MHTF will be widely advertising this program via the PCO, COA newsletter, etc. to attract different demographic groups. In addition, the MHTF is lining up sponsors for the event, and in response, the BOH voted to be a sponsor.

Separately, Ms. Miller said that Ben Day had left the MCC, and the task force was reaching out to the new executive director. The MCC is sponsoring a talk by a mental health professional via Zoom addressing mental health issues. The task force would like to align its programs with the MCC as not to be redundant.

#### TRANSFER STATION

At the prior request of the BOH, Andrew had sought and presented the “Additional Services #11” with “Cost Estimate Comparisons” for two different approaches for completing renovations or building a new transfer station. The former, Path 1, included relocating the existing scales; a new scale house, staff structure, ancillary storage structures, and swap shed; parking, traffic flow, etc. The latter, Path 2, was for the construction of a transfer station design (as of August 2018) and swap shed. The inputs to these estimates include those from civil engineering, structural engineering, architects, etc. The total cost for these services was \$35,500. The board voted to go ahead with this process.

A letter from a resident addressed to the Board was read concerning the articles (32,33, and 34) passed in the town meeting 2015 for funding the completion of the land fill cap and building a new transfer station. The letter asked for an accounting of how the money was spent. In answer, the articles were passed “all together”, and the town was required by state mandate to close the landfill, not to build a new building.

## DIRECTOR’S REPORT

1. Compactor was “down” - two large clamps (dogs) that attached the compactor to trailer were broken, actually damaging one of the trailers. This problem is being actively addressed to fix.
2. Budget - the Board of Select has a new budget process which will need to be completed by the departments by 11/6. This is a very quick, and the concern is that it difficult to predict the trends of the expenses and income. The past budgets will be used as a basis. Once it is prepared, the department will meet with their liaison and then the finance committee.

## BOH POLICY ON PUBLIC COMMENT at regular BOH meetings

A draft of the policy was read with the intent of “an opportunity to express opinions on issues of the BOH” and not as “a discussion, debate, or dialogue between or among citizens and the BOH”. Some of the guidelines include: signing up to speak prior to the meeting or if by Zoom “raising their hand”, identifying themselves and topic, time limit of 3 minutes, issues requiring more time to scheduled later, etc. The full policy is to be posted on the BOH website. The BOH voted and adopted the draft.

The next meeting is scheduled for 11/15/21 and in the future will be on the second Tuesday of the month, unless a change is required.