

Marblehead League of Women Voters
Observer Corp Report Form

League Observer - Thomas Krueger Date - 5/28/20

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

Meeting Posted 48 hours in advance

Meeting held in a Handicapped Accessible Location - not applicable

Public allow to Participate in the Meeting

Summary of Agenda Items:

Interview: scope of work from Bobby, health inspector

Bobby has been doing the routine inspections of establishments that have been open for take-out food, e.g., restaurants. These inspections are the same as before ensuring all is up to code - e.g. cleanliness of kitchens, etc., as well as a "second" inspection for COVID safe guards - masks, gloves protective wear, shields as appropriate, spacing, flow etc. In addition, as all of the yacht clubs as well as golf clubs are now open for curbside take-out, she has begun those inspections too. Each establishment has a check list to follow although these do not need to be submitted. Happily, most are in compliance. In regard to the Farmer's Market, she will do similar inspections the first and second weeks of opening. (Parenthetically, most restaurants for the time being will not be doing "in house" serving as there are other operational issues.)

Questions followed: immigrant summer workers? Will be difficult as there are a number of restrictions.

Vacation of health department staff? Andrew said that they are working on it with HR. Health department workers are considered "essential employees" so that if they did leave the state, they would not then have to return for a 14-day quarantine.

Bobby's work load? She is keeping up so far and although busy not overwhelmed.

Coronavirus - COVID 19

Andrew gave an update of the COVID statistics - as on 5/26: cases in MA = 94,222; deaths in MA =6,547; tests in MA = 552,144; past day 6600+ test with 500+ positive. All of these statistics are being followed as to whether or not there is any new surge and whether to proceed with phase 2 openings (currently scheduled for 6/8). Each of these statistics has been labeled with green, yellow, or red progress with green = a positive trend; yellow in progress; and red, a negative trend. Using this color system, cases, deaths, tests are all yellow and tests per day green. For many of these parameters the 3-7 day average has been improving.

As has been noted in the past, nursing homes have been the hardest hit. For questions and concerns about nursing home, the following phone number, 617-660-5399, is a Nurse Home Family Resource line.

Marblehead specific statistics are as follows: 223 cases (59+% in LTCF), 143 active cases, 30 deaths (96.67% in LTCF). Statewide ~65% of deaths have been in LTCF. The state is actively testing in the LTCF to be sure no one has been missed.

Farmers Market: to open 5/30; there will be 8 booths, 3 people per booth, allowing 5-7 people to travel between booths; all will be moving in a line, alone, no dogs; no touching produce, no food, no samples, no reusable bags; credit or debit card is encouraged, as cash is being discouraged. One vendor has offered a service of "calling ahead" and then having the produce at curbside. Note - the Farmer's Market does not usually open this early and only 8 out of the 14 vendors who had signed up were ready.

Andrew was asked about the department's workload. He replied that it has been a very busy week with the openings and a flurry of questions - when, what's allowed, etc. The department is following the governor's guidelines and when phase 2 begins, there will be more guidelines, procedures, and questions. As noted previously, questions are forward to the appropriate state agency, answered, and then disseminated to all the health departments. Andrew noted that a number of business groups are interacting directly with the governor's office as to allowable practices, e.g., driving ranges.

Barrels and trash pickup at beaches, etc. This is the purview of the Park and Rec department, who are currently working in split shifts - half are working one day, half the other - so that if one group becomes positive, the entire department would not have to go into 14 days quarantine. Because of the reduced work force, less can be accomplished. Citizens, therefore, are encouraged to take their own trash home.

Andrew met with Sustainable Marblehead who along with MHD Spur wish to do beach, etc. clean up. The health department will provide trash bags and pick up.

Further discussion followed about safety during COVID. Many board members noted social distancing is not being followed and how can we help remedy this. There are signs posted reminding people of safe practices. Andrew reiterated the new motto "safer at home" and discussed the recommendations for "play dates" - choose others wisely as to exposures of other families; if biking, ride at least 6 feet apart, wear a mask. If these and other recommendations aren't followed, we will see new clusters (as has happened in Danvers and Peabody.)

Miscellaneous: private tennis lessons 1 on 1 are permitted, no equipment sharing. Similarly, for pickle ball. 5/29 is the first meeting of the town's committee for the reopening. Nothing suggests that mosquitoes can transmit COVID. Tobacco control begins 6/1 so no menthol or wintergreen flavorings.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday, 6/4/20, at 7PM.