



OBSERVER REPORT

BOARD OF HEALTH: 4/5/21 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.

COVID UPDATE

Andrew gave a brief update of the MHD COVID Case Reporting (available in detail at marblehead.org) The total case count is 1252, an increase of 15 over the past week. There are 2-3 new cases a day, and currently there are 21 active cases. Demographically, most of the cases are in the 0-19 and 40-49 age groups. The average daily incidence is 14.3/100,000 over the past 2 weeks (slight decrease from 15.0); the percent positive test rate is 1.44%, unchanged.

The vaccination rate in MHD as of 4/2 was 3823 persons having receive the first dose, and 5172 fully vaccinated. This represents about 46% of the town's population. The sense is that 70-90% of the population of MHD and the surrounding communities would need to be vaccinated for herd immunity. As of 4/5 the vaccine eligible population has greatly expanded to those over 55, those with one comorbidity, etc. It is anticipated that by 4/19 the entire general population >16 will be eligible for vaccination.

Andrew along with directors from health departments in Salem, Swampscott, Danvers, Beverly, and Peabody are in discussion with the state to hold clinics at the Salem State O'Keefe Center. The requirements would be that >750 vaccinations be administered a day, M-F, and it would require Andrew and a nurse to be there one day per week. The local coalition is looking to team up with a corporation or ambulance company to help with this endeavor.

Discussion moved to what the guidelines would be for school activities, especially end of school year ones. All are looking for guidance from the state level so that all the towns are approaching it in the same way. Currently, proms are viewed as potential high-risk activities and ideas, such as, holding them only if the attendees are vaccinated or actually delaying prom until after the school year ends are being studied.

Unofficially, reopening of MHD schools now full day K-6 and half day 7-12 are going well. There have been no changes in the mask mandates. Spacing guides from DESE have eased to generally 6 feet but 3 feet if necessary.

At the state level new cases are still >2000/day with many clusters on the Cape, especially of the Brazil variant. The concern of a fourth wave of infections is foremost, and vaccinations to prevent this feels as though it is a race against time. It is paramount to stay vigilant and adhere to guidelines. Canada is into a third wave with lockdowns and the border may still remain closed. The travel guidelines to MA is now an advisory, but one must be cognizant of guidelines of other states traveled to.

BOH MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

The task force met for their first meeting on 3/29 with all members representing a cross section of viewpoints. The group is in the initial stages of gathering data, assessing needs, and deciding on possible actions with the goal of acting as a connector. They do not want stop what other groups are already doing. The next meeting is scheduled for 4/12/21 at 7pm and is a public meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Andrew discussed the next steps for the transfer station upgrade. All litigation has been resolved. The three issues needing attention at this time are placement of the scale house, improving flow through the area, and building a new swap shop. (These were all part of the original plan.) In attending these needs Andrew said that any of the solutions would exclude anything that would have to be duplicated in the future.

Other practical issues discussed included: 1) trash being blown around with the high winter winds (perhaps fencing could catch the debris); 2) a water break occurred on the lower tractor trailer road (this was promptly fixed by the Water and Sewer Dept.); 3) on going state monitoring of the site for pollutants (currently an increase in alkalinity was noted and if needed MA DEP will be consulted.)

NEW BUSINESS

Michelle Gottlieb, a member of the BOH for 12 years, will not be running this year as she is currently in Utah. This spot, therefore, will be open. For those wishing to run, "papers" for candidates are due by 5/4/21.

The meeting was adjourned with the next meeting on 4/28/21 at 7:30 pm