

Marblehead League of Women Voters
Observer Corp Report Form

League Observer - Thomas Krueger

Board of Health: 7/21/20

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

Meeting Posted 48 hrs in advance

Meeting held in a Handicapped Accessible Location - not applicable

Public allow to Participate in the Meeting

Summary of Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update:

As of 7/20 the case count for MHD was 243 with <5 active cases. No new deaths. All of the new cases were from people who had traveled from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Andrew stressed the importance of quarantining for 14 days when coming to or returning from out of state.

With the summertime there has been much more activity in general, outdoors, at the beach, at yacht clubs, etc. One camp is running in MHD this summer. (Children's Island is also having camp but that is part of Salem.) One major issue has been the accumulation of trash, especially at Devereaux Beach. Andrew has been talking with Peter James (Park and Rec) and there is trash collection at Devereaux in the AM and afternoon. The restaurant there need to take more responsibility for the trash associated with its use. Thankfully the case load of COVID is low, but if it should increase then the Health Department will have to do more, including CODE RED reminders and signage about social distancing and taking care of one's own trash.

Andrew reminded all that we are in Phase 3, step 1-3, of reopening and will not move to Phase 4 and normality until Phase 4. He has two calls a week with the state about current issues with COVID.

School reopening is an actively discussed issue. There may be a mix of teaching: in person, at home, or hybrid. There is much discussion about what public health standards will be used: 6 feet vs 3 feet of separation; when a contact can return to school, e.g., 4-5 days after a negative test or the current standard; etc. At this point public health and DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) are not on the "same line." The Board discussed that the MHD health department could have its own guidelines, as the governor understood that it could not be the same voice for all communities, and local jurisdictions would have some say. Andrew noted that previously the state had set guidelines for long care facilities, camps, etc. and felt the state should do the same for schools.

Locally, BOH members are involved with the school for reopening. Helaine has met the new superintendent and is currently on two committee for the school reopening. (There are multiple committees with different meeting addressing the needs of high school, middle school, and elementary school children and staff.) Michelle will be representing the BOH on the health and safety committee.

Briefly, there has been little information about the retail establishments are doing in town. The restaurants are meeting the challenge so far, even with the rain and heat. All seem to be surviving with no closures. The community has been supportive.

The Social Justice Team is thinking of having a fair in August, using the parking lot of the Lutheran Church. There are, however, many questions that will need to be answered: Booths? Serving food? List of contacts if encounters >15 minutes, etc.

Farmer's Market: Helaine has been attending each week and noted there is more produce, more people, but fewer vendors. Lines have been long waiting to enter. There is concern that with these problems that the market may falter. The market does serve a benefit to the community. They seem to need more people to sell their products. Andrew did note that this is not the purview of the health department.

MOSQUITO SEASON 2020

The town has a contract with New England Mosquito Control who does trapping and monitoring for mosquitoes with West Nile virus and EEE (Eastern Equine Encephalitis). If there are any positive identifications, the town is immediately notified. There is concern that this may be a "rough" season as the prevalence is cyclical and we are in the up cycle currently. Andrew reminded all that dawn and dusk are usually the worst times, the need to tip over water containing vessels as these are breeding grounds, (the town's catch basins are all treated), and a list of effective repellents is on the town website.

OTHER ISSUES

1. Plastic bags - the governor rescinded the order against using reusable bags, but the use will vary and customers may have to bag their own items. As far as the use of plastic bags at stores, this will be phased out as supplies are used up. The Board voted that the grace period will be over 9/1/20. Andrew will send a notice to retailers.
2. Lease of a front loader - the Health Department is asking to lease a John Deere loader, 624, for 7 years, at \$26,079 per year. This was voted and approved by the Board
3. Part time employee - a job opening is being posted for a scale house operator for afternoons, Saturdays, and fill ins.
4. Complaints - if there is a complaint regarding COVID, the Health Department or the Police Department can be contacted. There is now a way to make an anonymous complaint to the PD.
5. Mental health issues - there is a contract for \$60,000 with the MHD Counseling Center. There is additional concern about enough mental health personnel. Andrew offered some of the public health tips for mental issues: get exercise, eat well, spend for personal time, and watch less news.
6. Magic Hat - can reopen but would have to follow the same guidelines as retail establishments. A number of questions need to be answered - e.g., entrances and exits, etc.
7. Beach water tests - the water is tested every Wednesday and reports are back by Thursday. So far, all is going well. Usually there are not problems when the weather is hot; it becomes more of an issues with rain and runoff.
8. House hold hazardous waste - Andrew has identified a vendor would come four times a year and would even come to residents' houses. This would clearly easier and would be more likely to capture more material. They will start quarterly and then adjust depending on use.

The meeting was adjourned and the next meeting scheduled for 7/28/20 at 7:30 PM via Zoom Teleconferencing