



OBSERVER REPORT

Board of Health: 9/15/20: LWVM Observer: Thomas Krueger

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

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.

Summary of Agenda Items:

Meeting Minutes: corrections were made to the 8/11/20 minutes as follows: Chromebooks were NOT given to all students; lawn signs are NOT for all. The minutes were amended and passed.

COVID 19 UPDATE:

Andrew presented to the Board a draft of a public health EMERGENCY ORDER (EO) regarding facial coverings. The major sections of this EO were

- all individuals entering a business or like must wear a facial covering over the nose and mouth;
- facial covering with valves are PROHIBITED, as these may protect the wearer but not others as respiratory droplets or smaller may be spread;
- this order is ENFORCEABLE by members of the health department and police. Fines of up to \$1000 could be given. This order would be effective 9/18/20 at 12:01AM.
- Note that the aim of the EO is compliance, not punishment, as offenders will be first offered a facial covering to put on or over their existing covering. This is in keeping with other HD orders, i.e., offer a verbal warning, then if noncompliance, a written one, and finally if continued noncompliance, a fine. This EO would also supersede those recommendations of the school committee.
- Further, any person can report a violator for investigation, which would be done by the health department or police. This order does not apply to a private residence; however, if someone comes to work at that residence, then this order applies. After seeking any other questions, the BOH moved, seconded, and unanimously passed the above order.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

1) **The COVID case count** for MHD this past weeks is as follows: total cases 265; active cases <5; deaths to date ~30. The numbers above may shift up or down as town residents that are away at college who test positive may initially be counted. This, however, would be corrected as it is determined exactly what address that person is at. The individual and that community will be talked with, so that the positive case would be ascribed there. With this information, there were 2 new cases in MHD this week, with one of these likely to change.

In Massachusetts, on 9/15 there were 286 new cases; 123,425 cases in total; 6 new deaths; 9016 deaths confirmed to date. The cases and death information is released daily, and each Wednesday larger data and trends is released.

2) The school committee facial covering orders now says that any facial covering with exhaust valve is not to be used on any school property.

Regarding private schools and facial coverings, Andrew has not heard from any of them

3) **School reopening** - Helaine reported that the committee met on 9/14/20. The superintendent reported to having gone to a number of the schools to check about the process. Most of the school were good, some had minor "glitches." She then related some comments about each (Eveleth, Coffin, Glover, Village, Veterans, and the high school.) The KG were screened in person at the Eveleth in small groups; Glover had painted some 6 ft circles; Village was doing some tours for first time students; there was a minor Chromebook glitch that was solved; teachers had proactively prepared materials for students to pick up at all schools; etc. A number of subcommittees reported their efforts: teaching/learning = had a boot camp for computer learning; facilities = transport for special ed students, air purifiers, HVAC upgrades, micron size filters, new compressors, providing staff with face shields and plexiglass barriers; technology = 300 laptops for staff as an upgrade in the next 2 weeks; health/safety = before going to school each day, parents should self certify their children; for those exempt from masks, their temperatures will be taken at school.

Note: new DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) has updated guidelines about reporting positive cases as of 9/14/20. Positive cases are to reported immediately to DESE as well as local BOH. There are some unresolved issues about to whom it is reported if a non-resident staff member is positive; the HD would want to know about this. It was suggested that the school department should develop a protocol for this.

4) **MA Rapid Response Mobile Unit (RRMU)** - if a certain threshold of new cases is exceeded, the RRMU can be asked to come to the school and test all asymptomatic staff and students for free. This does not apply for known cases of COVID or their close contacts. The initiative is to identify asymptomatic people with COVID. The threshold varies: if 2 or more cases are in a classroom within 14 days, that class is tested; if >3 or >3% for a grade within 14 days, that entire grade is tested; and if a school has >3%, then may test the entire school.

5) **Fall Sport Season** - the first day of the season will be 10/5, allowing the minimum of 2 weeks of practice before it commences. There will be NO FOOTBALL or CHEERING. Allowed sports are golf, soccer, field hockey, etc.

6) **Miscellaneous** - last Saturday the town had a sidewalk sale with more activity than usual. Restaurants can now stay open beyond 11/1 and this could be open ended. It is difficult to see how they are going to be able to do this with colder weather and the requirement tents have two open sides. The Building and Fire Departments are going to have to “weigh in” regarding safety, snow loads, etc.