



## OBSERVER REPORT

Board of Health: 10/19/20 LWVM Observer: Thomas Krueger

Members in Attendance via Zoom - BOH : 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:

Minutes of BOH meeting 10/6/20 accepted

### COVID UPDATE:

Andrew reported that the case count (total) for MHD was 287 cases, 2 more cases than last week. He then addressed the confusion of the statistics from MHD vs the State. MHD reports on the Monday of each week the number of new cases that occurred, whereas the state reports on Wednesday with a 14-day average, so that the two can't be compared. He plans to change the MHD reporting so that it would be done by 6 PM on Wednesday, and available on Thursday. The school department will also be reporting on cases that occur there and this will be available on Friday. Currently MHD is in the "yellow" zone, representing the two additional cases, which may include those detected by testing, but are asymptomatic. Note that the reporting by the MHD Health Department gives a picture of week to week change, as well as includes in its report the states that are exempted from the 14-day quarantine when traveling or returning from them.

Andrew went further to discuss the confusion from the terms "isolate" versus "quarantine". Isolation for 10 days refers to those who are infected with the virus (presumably after 10 day that are no longer infectious.) Quarantining for 14 day is for individuals who have been in contact with a positive case - the timing of this starts from the date of the positive test. (The reason the quarantine time is longer, 14 days, is that this is the time period that someone who has been exposed could develop COVID.)

The Health Department issued a CODE RED (moderate risk) today as a result of MHD now being in the “yellow” zone. This is to reinforce that all must remain vigilant and continue safe practices (e.g. social distancing, wearing facial covering, hand washing, etc.) This is especially true during Halloween, the upcoming holiday season, and the move to more activities indoors. There is a plethora of information about many specifics of COVID on the [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) website. Board members suggested that the Health Department website should have a link to the [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) website.

In additional discussion many of the new cases are clusters that are occurring at HOME (family units that can’t really distance) and INTRAMURAL SPORTS (travel, carpooling). Note - that this does NOT refer to high school sports, just other sports that are in the community.

## TOWN MEETING RECAP

Andrew was pleased with the preparations (giant tent) and the turnout (>300 people.) He related that the blue light initiative for parking during the winter passed, and that the leaf blower restrictions did not. He said that there was a good debate about the issue with more attention spent on the debris that is blown, rather than the noise. After some procedural votes the final vote for “indefinite postpone” was entertained and was passed, 121-111.

The warrant articles, 29 and 30, proposed by Sustainable Marblehead were withdrawn before the meeting as it was felt that good progress was being made working with the Board of Selectman.

## SCHOOLS REOPENING

Helaine reported that each of the principals reported about their schools and were having listening sessions this week nightly with parents, and felt these were going well. Each principal felt that school was “generally going well.” Remote learning needed to change and become more robust, but was going in the right direction. The chairperson of the School Committee said that it was especially difficult organizing remote learning for the middle school. Lunch time was perhaps the most difficult now that it is inside and required lots of “juggling” for students and teachers, especially in a limited space. At the high school there is further space limitation as “classrooms” were set up for 60 in the lunch room.

Helaine further reported that the North Shore Superintendents Round table all support and are using the parameter of 6 feet separation of desks, etc. (DESE had previously suggested that 3 feet was sufficient.)

Regarding the Health and Safety Committee much was presented and Dr. Bucky wished to form a committee consisting of a member from the BOH, the health director, the head nurse, a physician, an epidemiologist, and a public health professional. The committee could help formulate a “health matrix” about how classes could meet, e.g., if the case count is low (<4), a

“green zone”, then in-person; if 4-8, then yellow, and hybrid; and if >8, then red, and remote. This would require looking at relevant, on-going statistics of case counts to be determined – 7- day average? 14-day average? Other. It would also require looking at the surrounding communities and their experiences. One concern would be how there could be lots of “jumping” from one zone to another, e.g. a green or a yellow to red, and then back. The committee would also have to decide about where cases are contracted - in-school or out-of-school. The Board and director again wished that the state could take leadership to create these matrices rather than leaving the onus on each town. (Of special note, there have been NO cases in school so far, but some students have been quarantined because of family members.)

Team sports according to the athletic director are going well with practices and games and all using facial coverings. He did opine that it is frustrating to see kids playing on basketball courts nearby without any masks. He wished for more signs regarding masks.

The Facilities and Technology Committees reported that they were doing well. Air purifiers are all in. Teachers now have the 300 laptops to facilitate teaching. Chromebooks (240?) have been purchased and are available for those in need.

The lunch and breakfast programs are robust. Initially, 50 lunches were served, later 100, and now up to 300 lunches. Lunch will be FREE this year for ANY student through to the end of June. No child should go hungry and parents need any additional stress eased.

On a happy note “The Crucible” will be performed at the high school under a tent this year.

The next BOH meeting is scheduled for 11/2/20 7:30PM via Zoom teleconferencing. The current meeting was subsequently adjourned.