



OBSERVER REPORT

Board of Health:10/6/20 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:

Minutes: the minutes of the meeting of 9/29/20 had minor corrections and were approved.

COVID -19 UPDATE:

Andrew presented the most recent statistics for MHD: 4 new cases (past week), 276 case total (to date). There were on 10/5/20, 454 cases in MA for a total of 133,059 cases to date. The travel advisory for residents and travelers coming from other states has changed in the past week, reflecting increased case counts in previously allowed states and across the nation. Currently one is to quarantine for 14 days unless traveling from CT, ME, NH, VT, and WDC. As before, contact the MHD BOH to report contact with a positive case. The R factor (effective reproduction factor) for MA is now 1.24 - any value above 1 means that spread will continue.

The CDC has now posted that COVID is spread not only by droplets but also by airborne (aerosolized - micro droplets) means. (Droplets which are larger and heavier tend settle nearer and earlier; airborne particles are smaller, lighter, stay in the air longer, and float more.). This information further emphasized the need for facial coverings, social distancing, etc.

The state of MA is now entering Phase 3 Step 2 reopening orders which applies to certain activities and business, excluding those cities or towns that have been in the "red" zone for infection rates. (As a reminder from least to most: gray, green, yellow and red. MHD is currently in the "green" but may be moving to the "yellow" zone.) See [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) for specifics.

HALLOWEEN:

In conjunction with recommendations from the CDC and other health departments, Andrew drafted a guide to having a safe and healthy Halloween. He listed three different types of activities: LOW risk, moderate risk, and high risk. In the low risk area are activities that are family events: carving pumpkins, decorating the house, virtual costume parties, physically distant scavenger hunts, etc. In the MODERATE risk are offering candy in separate bags placed outside the house at least 6 feet away, parent accompanying children to be sure this is being done safely, small groups of <10, using hand sanitizer before and after getting treats, and remembering the 3 Ws = wear a mask (facial covering) in addition to any costume mask, wash your hands > 20 seconds, watch your distance. In the HIGH- risk category are “traditional” door knocking T or T, indoor costume parties, going into “haunted houses”, and group hay or tractor rides. The Board wished to add a statement to the effect that as with all family decisions, Halloween is one a family should make”, leaving open that families can certainly decide not to go out at all. In addition, it is also highly recommended to just “leave” candy unopened for 24-48 hours before eating. With the additional comments to be incorporated, the draft was approved by the Board. The plan is to convey this via the newspapers, listserv, and CODE RED. Sara Gold, chair of the School Committee, was in attendance at the meeting and was asked her reactions. She said that she highly approved, liked that it was guidance not an edict, would discuss with the superintendent, Dr. Bucky. It would be good to share with the schools. Many parents have already been asking.

WARRANT ARTICLES and TOWN MEETING: The MHD Town Meeting is to be held on 10/17/20 at 9am. There are articles on the warrant that the BOH may be asked to comment on, and the chair offered draft responses to these. The first is Article 25 Leaf Blowers to which the BOH has had numerous discussions over the past several years and the BOH declines to support ban for various reasons. (See minutes or Observer’s reports from 12/10/19 and 1/14/20). Article 29 Sustainable Marblehead - Greenhouse Gas Emissions - the BOH is in support as it addresses an important issue. Article 30 Sustainability Coordinator - much discussion ensued about this article. The BOH believes this is an important position, but had concerns about the funding for this job, especially as the article is written. (It is also unclear to whom this individual would report to.) After much discussion, the Board decided (paraphrasing) a response that the BOH recognizes the importance of this position and would like the Board of Selectman to further investigate.

The meeting was subsequently adjourned with the next scheduled October 19, 2020 via Zoom teleconferencing.