



OBSERVER REPORT

Board of Health: Date - 11/10/20 League Observer - Thomas Krueger
Members in Attendance via Zoom - BOH: Andrew Petty, Todd Belf-Becker,
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:

No minutes to review.

COVID UPDATE:

Andrew began with an update of sobering COVID statistics, noting that MA has recorded more than 2000 cases per day for the first time since May. Testing is on the rise as are hospitalizations. In the past 14 days there have been on average 1649 cases/day with 20 deaths/day. The 7-day test positivity rate for the MA is now 2.3% for over 47,000 tests; hospitalizations are at 558 with hospitals now at 33% capacity. Non-ICU beds are available. 393 long term facilities have one or more cases there.

As noted earlier, the governor issued 3 new orders, #53, 54, and 55, that went into effect on 11/6 at 12:01 am. The governor as well as DESE are building on previous data to give updated guidelines. As more information becomes available this becomes clearer. What seems clear at this point is that there is low transmission in the schools. Daily case counts reports are available at [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov), and this has revealed that the age groups 0-19 have the highest positivity rate of all age groups. Clearly this age group is not immune. When viewing the reports and metrics, it is important to look at the what happens for 3 weeks in a row, and not come to a conclusion based on week. (For example, a town may in the "red" one week and not the next, but a town consistently in the "red" for 3 weeks is much more concerning.)

In MHD a large number of people get tested daily, 1200 or 10%, so it is possible to find new cases more quickly. There have been 2-3 new cases in MHD for the past 4 days. These tend to cluster in households, but what is unknown is the “root cause” - The gym? A restaurant? Other?

Now that the mask order, #55, is in place for all public areas, the HD is getting many more calls, and plans to have new signs emphasizing this, using similar graphics, at multiple locations (rail trail, parks, etc.)

As of 11/6/20 the MA DPH changed the color coding of COVID case per town - the colors remain the same - gray, green, yellow, and red - but the calculations depend on the size of the town - towns under 10K, 10K-50K, and >50K (for details see “Massachusetts COVID-19 weekly town-by-town risk assessment.”) As an example, for MHD (in the 10K-50K range), gray would be <10 cases; green, <10 average cases per 100,000 AND greater than 10 total cases; yellow, >10 average cases per 100,000 OR >5% positivity rate; red, > 10 average cases per 100,000 AND >5% positivity rate. In the future the map will no longer be color coded, but the color designation will be available with weekly town report.

Andrew noted that the situation is in flux with meetings with MA DPH occurring twice a week and frequent changes in orders. He suggested that because of the changes the need to go to [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) to be abreast the latest. He is hoping for guidelines regarding the upcoming holidays and events, such as, Christmas Walks, Santa visits, etc. Clearly parades are “out”, but if there is an event, does 100 participants mean all at once or throughout a day?

One BOH member asked Andrew what do with calls from people about reporting incidents where other are not socially distancing or wearing masks. Andrew replied that the HD is trying to educate people with CODE REDs, signs, etc. and that they don’t have the capacity for enforcement. The police are also trying to educate “offenders” – “Do you need a mask?” etc.

One BOH member was asking about the issues that will arise with college students returning for Thanksgiving and then the Christmas and often time the longer winter breaks. Currently if a college student tests positive at school, the case is considered to be “there”, but this could change with their return. This will probably have to be handled in a case-by-case manner. This becomes more complex with the travel advisory for returning residents, testing prior to travel (which should happen 72 hours prior to travel), testing after arriving, potential for infection during travel, etc.

OTHER

Hazardous Waste Day is next planned for 12/8/20, and will be using the same company as before, ACV. As before, it is a pre-register, pre-pay event, and the company itself will be the contact. The procedure will be to leave the hazardous waste out in the driveway, and the homeowner does not need to be home. As has been mentioned before it is hoped to do this about four times a year. This will certainly help with storing hazardous waste, and as homes are being sold in MHD often hazardous waste needs to be disposed of, this service will certainly help the sellers.

The **transfer station** continues to be very busy, and as a reminder MASKS MUST be worn when disposing of items or yard waste.

Curbside leave collection will continue and the collection dates are on the town website.

The meeting was adjourned and the next scheduled for 11/24/20 via Zoom teleconferencing.