



## OBSERVER REPORT

**Board of Health:** 12/8/20 LWVM Observer - Thomas Krueger

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

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.

### COVID UPDATE:

Andrew presented a summary of Governor Baker's 12/8/20 STATEWIDE ROLLBACKS in response to the rise in COVID cases and deaths in MA. The rollback is quite extensive and detailed - see <https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polity-administration-announces-statewide-rollback-to-phase-three-step-one-additional>. The rollback is effective 12/13/20.

- Briefly, the gatherings for events outdoors <50, hosts of outdoor gatherings <25, indoor theaters and performance venues closed, outdoor theaters 25% capacity or <50.
- For facilities, such as, libraries, gyms, retail, places of worship, etc. capacity is reduced to 40-50%. At restaurants, patrons are to wear mask at all times except when eating or drinking, tables are limited to 6 patrons, and a time limit is 90 minutes for eating.

In MARBLEHEAD, there were 64 new cases in the past week with the age distribution as follows: 9 (0-19),10 (20-29), 3 (30-39), 5 (40-49), 15 (50-59), 14 (60-69), 7 (70-79) and 1 (>80). This is all detailed on the website, [marblehead.org](http://marblehead.org), as well as on Town of Marblehead Board of Health on Facebook - the latter includes graphs of active cases, case counts for past 14 days, etc.

The health department has setup via Cataldo and Atlantic ambulance companies TESTING FOR MARBLEHEAD RESIDENTS. These will occur on the following dates and times: 12/11 8am-12 pm, 12/15 8am-12pm, 12/18 8am-12pm, and 12/21 2pm-6pm. Testing will require pre-registrations via the HD and will take place at Temple Emmanuel on Atlantic Avenue. Testing is free and offered to any MHD resident. The capacity at each testing time is expected to be 300.

**QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS** (for contacts of known cases) has changed as per the CDC. There are now three ways to fulfill these requirements: 1) ends Day 8 if the PCR test is negative on Day 5 and the person has no symptoms, and the individual continues to monitor for symptoms for 14 days.; 2) ends Day 11, if no symptoms, no test required, but monitor for symptoms for 14 days, and 3) ends Day 15 if some symptoms but has a negative test. This more flexible approach allows some to return to work sooner, increases compliance, yet does have a 5-12% risk of transmission.

Just to remind all, asymptomatic people can transmit the virus, so the practices of social distancing, wearing masks, frequent hand washing, and limited contact should be adhered to.

**TRAVEL GUIDANCE:** John Bucky, the superintendent of schools, wished to get some clarification from the HD and BOH about student travel, especially weekend travel as for skiing in other states. In particular, he said that for a student to be tested on a Friday, travel of the weekend, and return on Monday, even though this is 72 hr time span, is not in the spirit of the travel advisory. The BOH readily agreed, as one could easily be infected during this time. One needs to also be aware of travel advisories for the states being visited. It is best at this time to avoid such travel.

**INDOOR COMPETITIVE SPORTS:** a number of indoor school sports are slated to begin in December but this may be rolled back to January. Usually, the BOH does not make decisions about school sports but a recent MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) document suggests that this decision may be made by local schools and/or boards of health. Andrew will be meeting the superintendent, athletic director, principal, etc to discuss these issues - a decision that will probably be made by the entire region. Two schools, Lynn Classical and Lynn English have already “pulled out” for the season. At this point 145 students have signed up for indoor sports this winter. When these do begin, only 2 spectators for each athlete will be allowed.

### **REOPENING COMMITTEE:**

A meeting was held on 11/30, and a number of issues were discussed: 1) if a teacher knows a child is ill, he/she should contact the principal and reach out to the superintendent; 2) the health and safety committee supports the current hybrid model; 3) teachers are in “a good place”; 4) excused vs unexcused absences - the HS made travel excused for Thanksgiving; 5) the additional outside custodial staff has been cut from 30 to 13 without any “skimping” on cleaning. 6) regarding testing for students who have travelled: if the student is <10, the parent must have a PCR test; if >10, then the student is to have a PCR; 7) the school nurse has been working very hard, saying there are few positive cases, but lots of contacts that need to quarantine. The long delay getting test results back is what keeps many out.

## **QUESTIONS:**

Michelle Gottlieb, who manages the MHD BOH Facebook page, says that the site receives many questions from the community about kids playing sports in the parks without masks. This is technically the purview of the Park and Rec department. She asked about the COVID signs and Andrew said that the signs are up and more will be soon.

A community participant thanked the BOH and said that she was thrilled about the signs. She had reached out to the police department asking about a specific COVID outreach officer and monitoring the rail trails. The response was that what is wanted is compliance and not more enforcement - fines don't really help. The participant then reached out to the Marblehead Reporter about doing more stories and other articles re COVID to further interest and awareness, which they are willing to do.

The BOH then went into executive session and the meeting was effectively over. The next BOH meeting is scheduled for 12/15/20 at 7:30 pm - the link can be found on the town website, under meetings.