



OBSERVER REPORT

Board of Health: Date - 3/24/21 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 gave a brief update of the case report and information that are all included in the 14 page weekly Case Report that is available at marblehead.org, Information Alert/ Coronavirus Disease....TOWN UPDATES. This includes the MHD specific statistics, hospital bed utilization, capacity limits for various indoor and outdoor activities (the latest, order #66, released on 3/22/21, Phase 4 Step 1); the eligibility of various groups for the COVID vaccine (with 3/11/21 including educators, child care workers, etc.); the anticipated vaccine rates in MA; specific advice about COVID vaccine side effects, time before effective, etc; and finally numerous mass.gov address for specific issues. In addition, the MA Travel Orders has changed to an advisory now.

Specifically, for MHD, total cases to date = 1213, which is modestly higher; the average daily incidence and percent positive tests are also slightly higher. The age group 0-19 remains the largest group of positives. (Contact tracing, quarantines/isolation continues, and the HD is working with the schools.) Andrew stressed the importance of following the COVID advisories, noting that the COVID variants are in the area. It has become increasingly easy to get tested.

Much of the recent efforts have been about vaccinations. The HD working with the COA and Elder Housing as well as nursing associations in the area to vaccinate home bound individuals (those for whom it is extremely difficult to travel to a facility.) They are vaccinating in the homes, using the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. There is still a need to sign up for the vaccine. On 3/23 there was a seniors vaccination clinic lead by the HD, working with the COA, and 110 vaccinations were given.

Marbleheaders have been excellent about being vaccinated, especially those 75 and over where 95% have received at least one dose so far.

SELECTION FOR BOARD OF HEALTH MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

As decided at 3/9 meeting of the BOH, the addition of two citizen and one health professional would be added to the task force. Since that meeting, resumes of interested individuals in the above categories were sent to the HD, and reviewed by each BOH member before this meeting. All the BOH members lauded the excellent candidates, saying each was well qualified with an appropriate background. In order to maintain some confidentiality, the candidates were numbered. The first candidate chosen was a health professional. This went quickly as all had chosen the same one. Next, the citizen candidates were chosen and there was rapid agreement about these individuals. The members now include: health care professional = Kim Howard, citizen = Melissa Kaplowitz, citizen = Kimberly Levental, BOH = Michelle Gottlieb (chair), BOS = Moses Grader, School = Dan Bauer, Guidance = Jeff Newsome, MCC = Ben Day, and COA - to be determined. The first meeting of the task force is scheduled for 3/29/21 at 7:30pm

REOPENING COMMITTEE

Helaine gave a brief update of this committee. The efforts now are to return to school in person full time. All involved (from superintendent, to teachers, parents, and students) are being prepared. So far, KG to 6th grade has gone smoothly with desks and chairs being spaced out. Pool testing of student has also gone well with initially 555 participating, but soon 624 and more recently 800+. (Students are asking to be signed up.) Athletics is going smoothly. At the high school, it is still the hybrid model with the full return anticipated by 4/15. The discussions about all the other school events (plays, prom, graduation, senior show, etc.) have started in earnest. Andrew has been conferring with the high school principal, Dan Bauer, as well as student liaisons. The plan is proceed with the guidance from DESE so that all the schools follow the same guidelines, avoiding each town making their own rules.