

MARBLEHEAD BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES, August 10, 2021

Present: Chm. Todd Belfbecker, Helaine Hazlett, Joanne Miller, Andrew Petty, Director
Also Present: Dr. Tom Krueger (League of Women Voters)

Web-based video conferencing meeting of the Board of Health via Zoom.

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm.

MOTION to approve meeting minutes of June 29th as submitted. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Ms. Miller, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

MOTION to approve facility sticker rebate in the amount of \$80.00 to Leslie Downie of 66 Lee Street #1. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Ms. Miller, in favor; Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

Andrew reported that as of August 6th there are a total of 1387 cases of COVID-19 in town with 16 active cases. The total number of Covid tests given in town is 63,441. The positivity rate for the tests is 2.24% which is higher than in the last 6 months. The vaccination rate in town has been excellent with 78% of residents fully vaccinated and 1900 one dose away. The percentage breakdowns in ages that are fully vaccinated are:

- 79% - 12-15yrs of age
- 94% - 16-19yrs of age
- 83% - 20-29yrs of age
- 89% - 30-49yrs of age
- 89% - 50-64yrs of age
- 88% - 65-74yrs of age
- >95% - 75yrs of age and over

He also discussed three important points. First, is the need to vaccinate as many people as possible. Second, when cases occur, contact tracing will continue and help will be available from the state collaborative. As conditions were improving, the collaborative decreased staff but is now adding staff again. All positive cases are contacted within twenty four hours. Lastly, testing should continue to be robust, so that anyone with symptoms or contact should get tested. It is necessary to have a surveillance strategy.

Andrew read aloud MA DPH advisory from 7/30/21. This advisory regarded facial coverings for unvaccinated; those fully vaccinated may resume many normal activities. In response to the Delta variant, however, even fully vaccinated who have certain risk factors (immune compromised, age, underlying medical issues, etc.) should wear masks indoors. A PCP should be able to tell you if you are at increased risk. Masks need to worn regardless of vaccine status in all transportation (buses, trains, livery, etc.) and health care facilities. As a reminder one is considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after the second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines, and 2 weeks after the Johnson and Johnson vaccine. If one does develop symptoms, one should get tested then wear mask awaiting test results. Andrew restated that masks should be worn by all unvaccinated persons. They should also maintain 6-foot separation; avoid crowded or poorly ventilated places, wash hands, etc. MA DESE and DPH issued a joint memorandum on 7/30/21 for COVID guidance for districts and schools. The document outlines the recommendations for masking, COVID testing and quarantine protocols. Masking is recommended for all K-6 when indoors except for medical conditions or behavioral needs. No masking for outdoors and masks can be removed while eating. Unvaccinated staff and unvaccinated students 7-12th grade, and unvaccinated visitors should wear masks indoors. Anyone with a household member at high risk should wear a mask. Masks need to be worn on

school buses. COVID testing at all schools should maintain a robust plan for testing both diagnostic and pooled testing of students. This will be at no cost. Contact tracing and quarantine - with testing there will be a new “test and stay” protocol in lieu of requiring asymptomatic close contacts to quarantine.

MOTION the Marblehead Board of Health strongly recommends that the School Committee require that all students in kindergarten through grade 6 wear masks when indoors, except students who cannot do so due to medical conditions or behavioral needs. Masks are not necessary outdoors and may be removed while eating indoors. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Ms. Miller, in favor; Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

MOTION the Marblehead Board of Health strongly recommends that the School Committee require that unvaccinated staff in all grades and unvaccinated students in grades 7 and above wear masks indoors. Masks are not necessary outdoors and may be removed while eating indoors. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Ms. Miller, in favor; Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

MOTION the Marblehead Board of Health strongly recommends that the School Committee require that all visitors including vendors wear masks at all times. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Ms. Miller, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

These recommendations will be given to the Superintendent and School Committee.

Joanne gave a report on the work of the Mental Health Task Force which continues to meet biweekly this summer. The task force has collected resource information and is the process of building a website for this based on a very successful one that the town of Lexington has had running for 3 years. The priority is getting this up and going and make it easily accessible. Also, to start a speaker series with the first topic as how non-professionals can recognize mental health symptoms and areas of concern. The next meeting is August 23rd.

Andrew told the Board there is approximately \$1.25 million dollars left to complete the transfer station. All mediation and litigation between the town, engineers, contractors and home owners has been settled. The scale house needs a permanent location and the scale needs to be placed in a more accessible area. The compactor building needs sheathing on one side and a new roof. The entrance and front location need to have motorized gates installed to help with the flow of traffic. Also, a new swap shed is necessary. Andrew will talk to the architects about redesigning and getting revised estimates. Further discussion at the next meeting.

Director's Report

Andrew stated beach water sampling has continued throughout the summer. Grace Oliver's Beach recently had a geometric mean of 36 which is just over the acceptable 35 level. The beach was closed due to this sample result. The source for this occurrence is the contamination of rainwater washing down pollutants into the ocean.

Household Hazardous Waste Day will be Wednesday, September 15th. This is a pre-pay event that residents will sign up for online at marblehead.org. It is opened to 100 residents in Marblehead and Swampscott. Items for pickup must be left on the porch or near the garage of the residence.

No EEE or West Nile virus detected this season.

Todd opened up the meeting to public participation.

The next meetings will be Monday, August 30th and Tuesday, September 14th at 7:30pm.

MOTION to close meeting. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Ms. Miller, in favor; Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Andrea Flaxer
Senior Clerk