

MARBLEHEAD BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES, February 1, 2022

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. The following roll call was taken: Ms. Joanne Miller, present; Mrs. Helaine Hazlett, present; Dr. Todd Belfbecker, present.

MOTION to move pursuant to G.L. c. 30A sec 21(a)(3) that the Board move into executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation regarding the Open Meeting Law complaints filed by Mark Pelletier and Dorothy Carlson the public discussion of which may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Board. The Board will be returning to open session. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Ms. Joanne Miller, in favor; Ms. Helaine Hazlett, in favor; Dr. Todd Belfbecker, in favor.

Andrew reported that since the pandemic there have been a total of 3144 cases of COVID-19 in town. A total of 186 active cases and 49 probable cases from January 14th through January 28th. The cases per age group are as follows:

26- 0-4yrs of age	47- 50-59yrs of age
23- 5-11yrs of age	29- 60-69yrs of age
58- 12-19yrs of age	14- 70-79yrs of age
18- 20-29yrs of age	8- 80yrs+of age
39- 30-39yrs of age	
51- 40-49yrs of age	

A total of 97,373 of tests have been given. In the last 14 days a total of 3024 have been taken. Vaccination rate as of January 28th have been excellent. Here is the age range listed below:

5-11yrs of age- 67%
12- 15yrs of age- >95%
16 – 19yrs of age- >95%
20- 29yrs of age- >95%
30-49yrs of age- >95%
50-64yrs of age- >94%
65-74yrs of age- 92%
75+yrs of age- >95%

Todd discussed the current mask mandate in town. The Board decided to revisit it again in approximately two weeks unless things change dramatically. A concern with the hospitalization rate will play as a factor to the Board about making a decision on lifting the mandate. School vacation is fast approaching as well with families traveling.

Todd opened the meeting to the public comment period on the mask mandate. The following citizens offered comments:

James Full – 21 Cheever Avenue
Kim Crowley – 21 Roosevelt Avenue

Emily DeWitt – 154 Atlantic Avenue
Nicole Cohen – 40 Clifton Avenue
Tom McMahon – 1 Gregory Street
David Ritchie – 1 Mechanic Street

Helaine gave a SALT (Superintendent Advisory Leadership Team) update to the Board. She stated there have been two brief meetings since the last Board of Health meeting. Last week there was a vaccination clinic held where 100 students were vaccinated. On January 25th it was noted that both absenteeism for teachers and students has decreased. “COVID-19 is still a problem” was stated by the Deanna McMahon, lead nurse for Marblehead public schools. Schools are not ready for masks to be removed and are concerned about vulnerable people within the community. Superintendent Buckey met with DESE on the topic of possibly changing the mask mandate to highly recommend wearing masks. The Board of Health and the public schools are two separate entities. The faculty has been given at home COVID testing kits which has been very helpful and 899 students that are involved in the pool testing of COVID are also receiving at home testing kits. Additionally, there have been 19 substitute teachers added to the faculty to assist in covering classes.

Joanne updated the Board on the Marblehead Mental Health Task Force. A second speaker program was held last night at the high school. The focus was on suicide awareness. Many mental health practitioners from the community participated. Melissa Kaplowitch was the moderator for the program. The program was recorded by MHTV and will be available for broadcast. Three student interns will join the task force and serve as a voice of the youth in the community as well as help engage with social media and live streaming. Teri McDonough, LSW of the Marblehead counseling center will be joining the task force. Another program is scheduled for April 6th on the topic of understanding grief.

Transfer Station Discussion

At the last meeting Dana Weeder of Winter Street Architects gave a site plan screen presentation on Option B – scale house, staff support building, swap shed & pit structure repairs. In this plan Green Street would be used as an egress for both commercial and residential use. A community forum will take place on March 1st to discuss concerns on the transfer station. Helaine thanked the community for all the positive comments.

Todd opened the meeting to the public comment period on the transfer station. The following citizens offered comments:

James Full – 21 Cheever Avenue
Tom McMahon – 1 Gregory Street
Jen Schaeffner – 20 Casino Road
Jack Attridge – 67 Beach Street

Director's Report

Andrew stated that the health department purchased rapid testing (COVID) kits. These will be made available to town employees, food pantries, housing residents and residents in environmentally vulnerable neighborhoods. He advised residents to sign up for Code Red alerts. This is available on the town website and informs residents about trash delays, parking restrictions etc.

Todd opened the meeting to the public comment period on any public health topic. The following citizens offered comments:

Kim Crowley – 21 Roosevelt Avenue
Phil Padulsky – 5 Countryside Lane
Sandra Callahan – 25 Naugus Avenue

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Andrea Flaxer
Senior Clerk

List of documents used:
OML complaint responses- Mark Pelletier, Dorothy Carlson
Transfer Station – Option B