

MARBLEHEAD BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES, March 8, 2022

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

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

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm. The following roll call was taken: Ms. Helaine Hazlett, present; Ms. Joanne Miller, present; Dr. Todd Belfbecker, present.

MOTION to approve meeting minutes of January 11, 2022 as submitted. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mrs. Helaine Hazlett, in favor; Ms. Joanne Miller, in favor; Dr. Todd Belfbecker, in favor.

MOTION to approve executive session meeting minutes of January 11, 2022 as submitted. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mrs. Helaine Hazlett, in favor; Ms. Joanne Miller, in favor; Dr. Todd Belfbecker, in favor.

Teri McDonough, LSW of the Marblehead Counseling Center (MCC), Tim Phillips, co-president of the board of Marblehead Counseling Center, and Frank Sweeney, co-president of the board for MCC - presented the annual update. Teri began with a history of the MCC which began 53 years ago and has provided counseling, education and community services to Marblehead and surrounding communities. The MCC is very grateful for the collaboration and support from the Board of Health. Over the years the case load has had a dramatic increase from less than 3000 visits per year 15 years ago to over 7000 a year presently. The building itself has needed many repairs which has exhausted funds. Many town departments rely on the MCC - police, fire, school and the MCC gets many referrals from other groups i.e.: veterans, library, etc. Tim and Frank both stressed the demand for services from the MCC with a wait list currently of 110 people with a backlog of 300 that is growing daily. Some of the challenges of funding are the shortage of mental health clinicians. There is a lot of competition for clinicians and the credential process is lengthy and could take 3 - 12 months. Only credentialed clinicians can work at the MCC for insurance reasons. The MCC will resume fundraising efforts that have been delayed due to COVID this fall.

Andrew reported that as of March 4th the total amount of COVID-19 cases in town is 3334; 25 active cases; 7 probable cases. The vaccination rate remains high with the exception of ages 5-11 yrs which is at 72% all other are at >95%. Boosters administered are as follows:

35% - 12-15yrs. old
64% - 16-19yrs. old
55% - 20-29yrs. old
63% - 30-49yrs. old
71% - 50-64yrs. old
78% - 65-74yrs. old
90% - 75+

Helaine gave her last SALT update for the year. She stated there was a discussion of when to stop the masks at school between the school committee and the superintendent after February school vacation. Many of the schools were mask optional - after vacation at Glover and Brown 30-40% were still masking, but this week even less. The next step is to begin opening the cafeterias. Some schools still have desk spacing - Village 5-6 feet, Glover 3 feet. In the pool testing only 2 cases in the elementary schools and 2 cases in the upper school were found after the vacation. Fewer families are requesting pool testing which will probably be eliminated soon. It was stressed that all should be respectful of those who wish to wear a

mask. Most classrooms are well ventilated with windows opened and the opportunity for outside lunch will begin soon.

Joanne gave an update on the Marblehead Mental Health Task Force. The most recent meeting was held on March 7th with an excellent turn out. Dennis King, the Marblehead police chief is in the process of getting a grant for a mental health clinician to work with the police department on a 24 hr. time frame. All 40 of the police members will attend crisis intervention training. The MHTF is looking into new initiatives and how to work with volunteers from the community and to include members of the religious community. The next meeting is scheduled for March 21st.

Transfer Station Discussion

The Board will make a decision on going with either Option A or Option B by April 5th for the transfer station in order to be on schedule with final requests for Town Meeting. Andrew said the community forum for the Transfer Station on March 1st was well attended. The major issue was that of traffic from Green Street, especially for its effect on the Arnold Terrace community. A traffic study was done in the past, 2012, but further discussion needs to be done with police department, DPW, etc. The board suggested that a pro and con list for each option be made. There is a possibility of forming a building committee for the project. The architect on the project will attend the next meeting.

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

David Lieberman – 5 Arnold Terrace
Terri Tauro – 113 Jersey Street
Erin Noonan – 15 Beverly Avenue

Director's Report

- Household hazardous waste curbside collection will take place on June 15th.
- All residents should sign up for Code Red.
- Transfer station will need a new roll-off truck.
- Shrink wrap dumpster will be available on April 1st.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Andrea Flaxer
Senior Clerk

List of documents used:
MCC-presentation

