

MARBLEHEAD BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES, February 23, 2021

Present: Chm. Todd Belfbecker, Helaine Hazlett, Michelle Gottlieb, Andrew Petty, Director
Also Present: Dr. Tom Krueger (League of Women Voters), Benjamin Day (Marblehead Counseling Center)

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 January 5th as amended. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Ms. Gottlieb, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

MOTION to approve meeting minutes of January 19th as submitted. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Ms. Gottlieb, in favor; Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

Benjamin Day, LMHC, Executive Director of the Marblehead Counseling Center came before the Board to give his yearly report on the center. During the past year the center held 3800 sessions with approximately 371 residents from town. Some sessions were with families, adults, teenagers, and children. The center has been closed since February 2020 for face to face sessions due to COVID-19. Sessions are held via Tele-health. He stated that children are reluctant to have a session on Tele-health because there can be many interruptions at home and being home might not feel confidential enough for children. Two therapists have been hired and the center would like to hire three more therapists to help meet the demand of COVID. Therapists are speaking with school counselors about students having a hard time with hybrid learning. There is a wait list of 30 days for children who are willing to participate in a Tele-health therapy session. Marblehead residents are prioritized over out of town residents for new appointments. Ben thanked the Board for the \$60,000 grant which helps defray the fees to residents. Also, the center raised \$ 55,000 in fundraising and insurance last year which assists in the costs to residents who otherwise couldn't afford services. The Board thanked Ben for all his work during the year.

Michelle spoke about forming a Mental Health Task Force in town. The goal of the task force would be to address the increasing crisis of mental health in the community during the past year. Education and intervention on mental health would prevail along with specific strategies. Ideally, the representation would consist of a member of: Board of Health, Board of Selectmen, school administration, school mental health community, mental health professional, medical health professional, Council on Aging and two citizens. Further discussion at the next meeting.

Andrew told the Board on February 19th there was a total of 1146 cases of COVID-19 in town. The active cases at this time are 35 and there are 31 confirmed deaths of COVID-19. The age breakdown is as follows:

21– (0-19 yrs. of age)
10 – (20-29 yrs. of age)
13 – (30-39 yrs. of age)
2 – (40-49 yrs. of age)
14 – (50-59 yrs. of age)
5 – (60-69 yrs. of age)
11 – (70-79 yrs. of age)
0 – (>80 yrs. of age)

The current strategy from the state is to favor the mega sites for vaccine distribution. There will be a congregate care clinic on Tuesday and a 2nd dose for Phase 1 clinic on Thursday. The next group Andrew is working with is residents of elderly housing in town.

MOTION to recommend the CDC'S 'Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation' to Marblehead Public Schools. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Ms. Gottlieb, in favor; Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

Todd spoke on the importance of continuing to mask up and following all guidelines after individuals receive the second dose of vaccine.

The annual report is due by the end of the week with any corrections.

MOTION to enter into a five year contract with Waste Management. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mrs. Hazlett, in favor; Ms. Gottlieb, in favor; Dr. Belfbecker, in favor.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:20pm.

Andrea Flaxer
Senior Clerk