

Board of Health
Meeting Minutes Summary – March 4, 2025

Attendance: Members in attendance: Chair Helaine R. Hazlett, Thomas Massaro, MD., Tom McMahon, & Health Director Andrew Petty.

Call to Order – 7:30 p.m.

1. Helaine Hazlett Comments:

“Before we go to this evening's agenda, I want to share with the Town what has been reported in the local press. At the upcoming Town Election voters will not be voting to increase the Board of Health from 3 to 5 members even though it was overwhelmingly approved at last year's Town Meeting. It seems that the Select Board only recently sent the request to the State House. Now, it has to go in line with all the other bills to be passed. Even our State Representative, Jenny Armini says she cannot perform any miracle to push it through at this late date. It is truly disappointing that the Board will have to wait another year.

Last meeting, one of the reporters asked me if I planned to run again when my term was up in June. My reply was the Board was too busy and it was too soon for me to think about it. Since then, I have had time to come to the decision that after 37 years in elective office in the Town of Marblehead, I will not be seeking re-election.

It has been my honor to have served 28 years on the Board of Health, 5 years as chair. Prior to that I was elected 3 terms, 9 years, to the School Committee.

I am proud of the numerous accomplishments the Board of Health has made during the almost 3 decades I have served. The one of which I am most proud and certainly the most challenging was working with my Board of Health colleagues and Director Petty guiding the Town through the COVID 19 pandemic. During that difficult time, the Board met weekly on Zoom as we navigated our way through protocols and decisions following the Commonwealth's guidelines regarding masking, distancing, outdoor dining, vaccinations, testing and record keeping. When mental health issues began escalating with isolation, child care needs, lack of work and food insecurity starting to affect so many residents, the Board of Health established the Mental Health Task Force.

Over the years the Board of Health has been on the cutting edge of adopting policies and regulations including organic pest management for Town owned properties, banning tobacco use on all public properties, banning the idling of buses and delivery trucks and banning the use of plastic bags in markets and shops. The transfer station continues to be the Board's most extensive project with curbside pickup, recycling and composting an important component.

I want to acknowledge my former Board members, Attorney Carl Goodman, Dr David Becker, Dr Todd Belf Becker, Michelle Gottlieb and Joanne Miller. I learned much from them as we worked collaboratively as a team to maintain and improve the health of our community.

I look to my current fellow Board members, Dr Tom Massaro and Tom McMahon to continue their dedication to our mission “to promote and protect the health, wellness and safety of all citizens.” With the findings of the Bureau of Substance Abuse Survey occurring during the next month and the U Mass Boston's Creating a Healthier Marblehead survey being conducted in the fall, the upcoming substance abuse seminar and the completion of the final phase of the transfer station, they have a busy and productive rest of 2025.

I must thank the former Director Wayne Attridge and the current director Andrew Petty for their guidance and all the day to day work involved while managing a dedicated staff.

When I step down in June from this very large part of my volunteer service to the town I love, I am not giving up my other community work which is so meaningful to me.

I encourage those of you who have the knowledge and expertise in medicine, health care or public health to take out nomination papers to run for the one open seat on the Board of Health. The nomination papers will be available at the Town Clerk's office on Monday, March 17th. I know the Town needs you and I'm sure you will be fulfilled.

Now, back to our business of the night.”

2. Board Expansion Update:

- Increasing the Board of Health from 3 to 5 members will be delayed until the Town Election of 2026 due to a delay with Select Board filing request of bill approval with the State House.

3. Retirement Announcement:

- Chair Helaine R Hazlett announced her decision not to seek re-election after 37 years of service.
- Encouraged public health professionals to consider running for the open seat.

4. Town Website Update:

- The transition to a new town website has been delayed due to technical issues.
- Once live, board members will review and ensure information is accurate and accessible.

5. Mental Health Task Force Evolution:

- The Task Force will transition to a closer partnership with the Marblehead Counseling Center.
- Plans to integrate resources and maintain accessibility for residents seeking mental health support.

6. H5N1 Avian Influenza Advisory:

- Monitoring and reporting of affected wild birds and backyard poultry emphasized.
- Public health officials will keep the community informed with evolving scientific findings.

7. Creating a Healthier Marblehead Initiative:

- Collaboration with UMass Boston to assess local public health needs and priorities.
- Surveys will be conducted across age groups to gather data on community health.
- Community and stakeholder involvement emphasized.

8. Transfer Station Updates:

- Installation of a new tipping floor and compactor is progressing on schedule.
- Additional site improvements planned, pending funding availability after July 1st.

9. Tattoo and Tobacco Regulation Updates:

- Proposed updates to tattoo regulations reviewed; board to move forward with legal review. Voted to increase the Establishment permit cost up to \$750.00, Practitioner went to \$350.00, Establishment Plan Review is \$400.00, Apprenticeship Permit is \$200.00, Guest Practitioner Permit is \$200.00.

MOTION: Refer regulations to Legal Counsel for review. Second. All in favor, passed.

- Following Counsel review, Tobacco regulations will have a Public Hearing after two week Public Notice
- Public hearing dates to be scheduled for community input.

Next Meeting: March 24, 2025

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. Second. All in favor, passed.

- **Adjournment:** 9:05 PM