



BOH MEETING MINUTES 10-13-2020

Attending via TEAMS Conference Call
Call # 1 617-433-9462, Conference ID: 178 207 317#
Joseph Tennyson, MD, Chair
Jim Griffin, Vice-Chair
Robin Williams, Member

Also in attendance: Director John Garside, Public Health Nurse Michelle Andrade, and Clerk Tina Nolin
MPS Superintendent Michael Bergeron, Assabet School Superintendent Ernie Houde

Meeting called to order 6:30 pm

Reading and Approval of Minutes

- Minutes for September 14, 2020 meeting: Vice-chair Griffin motioned to approve and place on file, Chairman Tennyson seconded the motion, Board roll call vote was 3-0 to approve the September 14th, 2020 minutes and place on file.

New Business

- Discussion & Update of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Director Garside updated the Board on the recent activities of the Health Department regarding COVID-19.

- As of this meeting, the City has had 1335 cases since February 1st, 1183 people have recovered, and there have been 72 deaths. We currently have 80 active cases. We are seeing a switch between age 60 and below and a significant increase in school-age positives ages five years to 19 years over the past six weeks.
- It is anticipated that Marlborough will remain in the red, high-risk category for the 4th consecutive week when DPH releases their cases per 100K population metric on Wednesday. We estimate that we will be at about 19 per 100K, compared to 12.2 per 100K population last week.
- Director Garside updated the Board on the COVID-19 numbers at the Marlborough Public Schools (MPS). Not all of these children were in school when they became positive. The protocol of MPS is that if one person in a class tests positive, the whole class remains out of school in quarantine. In addition to students, often 1- 4 teachers, a specialist, or anyone in the room for an extended period is also quarantined.
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School	Positives	Quarantine
Kane Elementary	0	2
Richer Elementary	0	5
ECC	0	1
Jaworek Elementary	4	30
Goodnow Elementary	5	30
Whitman Jr High	3	13
Marlborough High	3	43

- Director Garside reported that Assabet Valley Vocational School currently had three positive cases and six quarantined persons. Assabet's protocol for quarantining follows CDC and DPH guidelines, which is anyone within six feet of a positive person for 10 – 15 minutes, which results in fewer people being sent home.
- Both school superintendents were at the meeting and seeking feedback from the Board. Superintendent Bergeron was looking for feedback concerning going fully remote at MPS. He cited the DESE guidelines of three weeks in the red, high-risk category and cases continuing to rise as the metrics for his decision. Also, his decision was influenced by the number of schools in the system and staff shortages when whole classrooms are quarantined. Currently, MPS students have a hybrid structure with one week of in-person learning and then one week of remote learning in 2 cohorts. Superintendent Bergeron said they were having success with the remote learning. He will be recommending to the School Committee to go fully remote on the coming Monday (October 19th, 2020). Superintendent Bergeron reported that kids with special needs would continue with in-person learning due to the nature of their schooling needs.

Dr. Tennyson motioned to support the superintendent's motion for MPS to go fully remote on Monday, October 19, 2020. Member Williams seconded the motion. A roll call vote was 3-0 in favor of the motion.

- Superintendent Houde, from Assabet Valley Vocational Technical High School, was seeking feedback regarding keeping Assabet in the hybrid model they were currently using. He cited the single building aspect of managing such a model and the need for many vocational classes to be in person as many class activities cannot be done at home. Currently, the school is on a 50% model, where 50% of the students and staff are in the building, and 50% are remote. The school has 1200 students from seven member towns in the area and roughly 200 staff. Students are nine days off (2 weekends and one week) and then five days on. Their overall positivity rate is <1%. They also follow DESE guidelines and take guidance from the Marlborough BOH. Given their low rates and that no parents or staff were pushing for fully remote learning, Superintendent Houde wanted to tell his school committee and parents that they would stay hybrid. He also explained that while there was no testing on-site for staff, they knew where to go should they need or want to be tested. Masks are worn at the school at all times with 10-minute mask breaks throughout the day. Mask breaks take place outside, between classes with a 6-foot distance being maintained. Masks must also be worn on the buses.

Chairman Tennyson was comfortable with Assabet continuing with the hybrid model based on their situation and the countermeasures they had in place. Vice-Chair Griffin said he agreed it seemed to be working well and that the superintendent had a good system to handle it.

Member Williams expressed some concern why the Board felt MPS should go remote but were not saying the same for Assabet, given the high-risk status of the City and bringing in children from other towns. Vice-Chair Griffin felt the two schools are two different systems with different needs and abilities at this time. Also, as mentioned previously, the type of school offered at Assabet cannot occur in a home setting.

Vice-Chair Griffin motioned not to oppose the superintendent's recommendation to remain with the hybrid learning model. Chairman Tennyson seconded the motion with the amendment that we continue to keep a very close monitor of both the rates within the schools and the rates within the contributing communities. Robin Williams seconded the motion with the amendment. A roll call vote was 3-0 in favor of the motion.

Director's Update

- Director Garside reported on the two Flu clinics that the department had held so far. One was at the Senior Center for seniors only on October 1st. Here 110 flu vaccines were administered. This is up from last year due to demand.
- The City's first-ever drive-thru clinic was held at the High School on October 15th, and it went well. Nine MPS nurses helped, along with two nurses from AFC Urgent Care. Two hundred seventy-five doses were administered, with AFC Urgent Care doing roughly 1/3 of them. The department appears to have ample vaccine or the ability to get vaccine from the State to meet the Governor's mandate that all school children be vaccinated by December 31st. We'll be looking at doing clinics at the schools. The high dose vaccine has been in demand and is a little less available. Marlborough Hospital has offered us twenty doses for our clinic at Senior Housing at 240 Main St. The Public Health Nurse also has five home visits scheduled to administer the flu vaccine to non-ambulatory residents.
- We had one staff member go out on quarantine when his roommate tested positive, so he will be out the 14 days. So far, he has no symptoms. We have, however, been sending work for him to do at home.
- Director Garside gave an introduction and background to an MOU between JRI Advocates and the City regarding post-substance abuse follow-up. Advocates has a jail diversion officer that works over at the police department and has been for the past five years. They have offered a real benefit to the police dept. JRI will be offering harm reduction support services, and this will be a new benefit for us. The MOU will be going to the Mayor for sign off. Hopefully, it will be executed within the next week or two. Director Garside said it did not require a vote by the Board, but he trusted everyone is in support. All agreed.
- Director Garside reported that the Stop the Spread program had been extended through December 31st. The challenge now is with the weather turning, trying to find shelter for those operating outside.
- The department has just onboarded two more part-time public health nurses within the last week, and one more will be coming on part-time to alleviate the workload being carried by nurses Michelle and Sheila.

OTHER BUSINESS

Site Plan, Subdivision, and Special Permit Updates

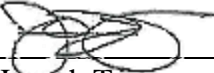
For informational purposes, Director Garside presented a draft of a special permit from the City Council for another Adult Marijuana Facility, located at 910 Boston Post Road East. Garside stated that they would need to apply for a permit from us and pay the fee once they have approvals from the other departments and the Cannabis Control Commission. Board agreed with this process.

ADJOURN

Chairman Tennyson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 pm; Vice-Chair Griffin seconded, roll call vote was 3-0 in favor to adjourn.

The next meeting of the Board will be on November 9th at 6:30 pm. Attendance will continue to be remote via Teams meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Joseph Tennyson

11/09/2020
Dated

Cc: Board of Health Members
City Council, City Clerk, and City of Marlborough Website