



BOH MEETING MINUTES 01-10-2022

Council Committee Room, 140 Main Street
Joseph Tennyson, MD, Chair
Jim Griffin, Vice-Chair
Phillip Short, Member – Member (absent)

Also in attendance: Director John Garside and Clerk Tina Nolin

Meeting called to order 6:30 pm.

Reading and Approval of Minutes

- Minutes for December 6, 2021 meeting: Vice-Chair Tennyson motioned to approve and place the minutes on file. Chairman Griffin seconded the motion; the Board vote was 2-0 to approve the motion to accept the minutes.

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.

COVID-19 Cases

The number of active cases in the City is 653, the average daily number of cases over the past seven days has been 195.0 per day. The average number of active cases per day over the past seven days is 837.7, and the positivity rate over the past two weeks, as reported by the State, is 19.23%.

In the Marlborough Public Schools system-wide, there are 96 active cases. Specifically, in the high school, there are 15 cases. Among the elementary schools, Kane has 12 cases, Goodnow has 16 cases, Whitcomb has 27 cases, Richer has 13 cases, and Jaworek has 7 cases. In addition, there are six active cases at the Early Childhood Center (ECC). These numbers are down from a peak of 185 at the schools overall. The day off from school due to snow and the new isolation/quarantine guidelines seem to have helped to bring the numbers down.

Vaccine Update

We currently have 82% in the City with at least one dose, up 2% from our last meeting. We have 72% of the eligible city population fully vaccinated, up 2% from our December meeting.

We now notify most of our COVID-19 cases through text messaging. We send them links containing isolation/quarantine guidelines, and ask them to notify their contacts.

Vice-Chair Tennyson reported that the past 7-day positivity at Marlborough Hospital is 58%, 41% are fully vaccinated. At the end of December, it was around 30%, and at the end of November, it was about 0. Today there are 29 COVID-positive patients in the hospital, 13 in the emergency dept., 10 in-patients, and 6 in the ICU. Vice-Chair Tennyson also added that it is estimated that the R-naught is around 10 for Omicron.

The current R_t (reproduction of illness at a particular time) is 1.44 today. Additionally, there are 1.3 million current COVID-19 cases in Massachusetts, and there have been 5.1 million cases in the state since the pandemic began. Therefore, 25% of the people that have ever been infected with COVID-19 are infected at this time.

Vice-Chair Tennyson reviewed the MWRA Sewage data tracks COVID-19 viral RNA in sewage. He reported that Marlborough is above the peak from last year at this time.

Director Garside presented an update on the department's COVID-19 Clinics since the last meeting.

Type of Clinic	Dates
Booster Clinic – Jericho Hill	12/8 and 12/14
Pediatric Clinics – High School Supported Bouvier Pharmacy	12/11 and 12/22
UPCOMING CLINICS	
Booster Clinic – Bethel Presbyterian Church	1/12
Pop-up clinic at Brazilian Steak Grill	1/20

Director's Update

MASKING

Director Garside reported that the department had received some calls and emails regarding a potential mask mandate over the last 24 hours; half were in favor of having a mandate, and half were against a mandate. As you know, currently and throughout the pandemic we have been following the state guidelines and have not been any stricter than that.

Vice-Chair Tennyson said several communities had adopted them, although Governor Baker clearly said he would not do so. Masks have been shown to make a huge difference in reducing transmission.

Chairman Griffin said he would certainly not be against it as he wears a mask everywhere in public. The schools are masked through February; some of the churches in the city are mandated by their leaders. And city buildings are advising people to wear masks while in them, although not mandated.

Chairman Griffin expressed interest in getting some feedback from the people of Marlborough, understanding that they will not be making the decision, but it does affect all of us.

Director Garside reported that, depending on where you read, between 21% and 38% of Massachusetts communities currently have mask mandates. He also added that the department no longer has state counterparts to help with enforcement.

The Board heard from several people in attendance. Some were strongly against a mandate and wanted the city to follow the current state guidelines. Others felt the city should have a mask mandate to protect the citizens of Marlborough.

After further discussion, Chairman Griffin motioned to hold a meeting on Thursday, January 13th at 6:30 pm, and at that meeting to vote on whether to institute a mask mandate or not. Vice-Chair Tennyson seconded the motion; the Board voted 2-0 to approve the motion.

TOBACCO CONTROL

Director Garside reported that Melissa Evans, whom the Board had appointed as an agent of the Marlborough Board of Health to conduct Tobacco Control duties in the city, had resigned. Therefore, he asked the Board to appoint/authorize Mishel Caisapanta as the new agent.

Vice-Chair Tennyson motioned to appoint Mishel Caisapanta as the Marlborough Board of Health agent to conduct Tobacco Control duties in the city. Chairman Griffin seconded the motion; the Board vote was 2-0 in favor of the motion.

SEWER VARIANCE

Director Garside reported the department, in conjunction with DPW, had completed the first application for a variance to the Sewer Bylaw. It had gone well, and the application, letter from the City Engineer, the escrow agreement, and the notice at the registry were all completed. Therefore, the variance was approved at the staff level, as discussed at the December meeting.

UPDATE ON AAA VAPE

AAA Vape has paid their fine and completed their suspension as laid out in their cease & desist order discussed at the December meeting.

Scheduling of Next Meeting

The board's next regular monthly meeting will be on Monday, February 7th, at 6:30 pm. Attendance will be in person at City Hall in Memorial Hall.

ADJOURN

Chairman Griffin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 pm; Vice-Chairman Tennyson seconded the motion; the roll call vote was 2-0 in favor to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,


James H. Griffin

2/7/2022
Dated

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