

CRTF HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE (HSC) AUG 11TH MEETING NOTES

Participating in the zoom meeting: Ann Birner, Kathie Lynch, James Petersen, Bianca Monteiro, Stephanie Seacord, Kristin Shaw, Toni McLellan, Karen Conard. Also present: Andrew Bagley.

1) Covid testing: map and list of area test locations were sent by email to committee members prior to the call.

Ann retracted a previous statement regarding a goal of 5% testing. Testing target will vary depending on circumstances (number of cases) and whether the goal is mitigation or suppression. A reference was provided after the call (<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-testing.html?auth=linked-facebook>) and Bianca provided an example of how the target is calculated.

Testing capacity, assuming this information is available, how to access? City Public Health (**Toni/Kristin**) has reached out to the State of NH, awaiting a reply and will report back to the subcommittee upon receipt. City Public Information (Stephanie) has information posted on the City website to help residents find a testing location. Types of testing available vary in terms of accuracy, turnaround time, availability, etc.

Next steps: **Kathie and Stephanie** will begin work on a "FAQ" memo on this topic.

2) Public information

"Meet the HSC" press release was approved by the City Manager and is ready for distribution.

Letter to area towns seeking support for mask mandate is ready to go out, as approved by CRTF.

Letter to Governor Sununu – The process was reviewed – follow up to our first letter will be signed by Health Subcommittee members as well as Task Force membership if/when approved and including reference to Task Force organization (a templated letterhead with these features was provided by Stephanie late last week). Stephanie suggested we await feedback from area towns pursuant to our outgoing letter as above, with the possibility of referring to those replies in our letter to the Governor; and, add a request that the Governor more publicly endorse local mask mandates. That letter will need ratification by CRTF prior to sending.

Covid-19 Dashboard reviewed and Ann solicited advice for presenting on the CRTF call. Emphasize our area is doing relatively well in the context of the rest of the USA, but not necessarily in a global context. Important to watch regional trends, so **Stephanie** will try to make midpage JHU state summaries (MA/NH/ME) a bit larger.

Chamber of Commerce call: **Ann and Bianca** will represent HSC at a zoom meeting on Friday. Plan includes history of CRTF and HSC along with our purpose and accomplishments, including weekly dashboard. Audience will be interested in fall plans and will have time for Q/A, will likely want our opinions. Remind audience of the pivotal role of City Public Health and how we work together.

3) Masks – 2nd and 3rd reading take place at Aug. 18th City Council meeting, comments being taken until then

HSC agrees that masks with exhalation valves or vents should not be considered as adequate face coverings for protecting the public. **Ann and Stephanie** will draft a memo to the Council with this recommendation. The letter will cite the CDC on this point at a minimum, in terms of referencing. The letter will also reiterate our support for the ordinance. We discussed and will not suggest adding the concept of zonal application to the proposed ordinance at this time. CRTF will be asked to ratify the memo at tomorrow's meeting.

4) Autumn Plans/AOB – ventilation will become an even more important issue as we move indoors, as there is a limited ability to mitigate risk indoors. James taught us that air quality depends on many factors and is often poor indoors – in our homes, in old buildings as are common in the business district, etc. Newer construction is generally better than retrofits. ASHRAE is an organization that publishes and supports standards and codes. **James** to continue next week, first on agenda. **Kristin** is learning about ventilation including MERV-13 filters, aiming to learn whether these are present in Portsmouth schools (and a reference was shared after the call).