

CRTF HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING NOTES 10NOVEMBER2020

Present: Kathie Lynch, Bianca Monteiro, Ann Birner, Kim McNamara, Toni McLellan, Stephanie Seacord; Andrew Bagley listening in

Council work session update – Councilors spoke followed by public comment; support for the TF and the HSC was expressed, along with reservations and suggested improvements. One councilor suggested elimination of the HSC while the City Manager described its contributions to be of value.

Public information

The weekly dashboard presents a dismal picture. Press release from NH stated that percent positivity cannot be accurately calculated now due to laboratory reporting issue; also positivity rating may not match JHU data. Despite those limitations, upward trend seems clear in positivity as well as trends in cases and hospitalizations.

It is suggested to update the Daily Life FAQ to include more detail on avoiding congregation prior to creating a press release. **We** will need to reach a consensus on specific language TBD.

Stephanie has not heard back from Portsmouth Regional Hospital regarding our ability to obtain and publicize local COVID-19 data.

Health Department

Community Transmission Attenuation Efforts – there were a number of comments during the dashboard review relevant to community transmission including reopenings occurring despite worrisome positivity ratings nationwide, public perception of the dangers of COVID-19 being subject to personal experience and relative low rate locally, hospitalization rate known to lag behind rise in case numbers, and how larger regional municipalities such as Nashua and Manchester are handling contact tracing.

The school nursing staff has requested Stephanie's support for messaging regarding safe practices. After discussion, members agreed that this will take place without involving this committee. Similarly, Public Health and Public information will develop broad messaging regarding holiday celebrations independent of HSC.

Mask refusals – state's Attorney General has said business owners can refuse access to their establishment for refusal to wear a mask for any reason but has not put this into writing.

The Health Department has received an inquiry about the feasibility of using an outdoor "igloo" type structure for dining. Careful consideration of Fire Safety and Air Flow are needed before this can be approved.

Vaccine distribution- HSC members agreed to reply to questions from Kim but stop short of taking action as a Task Force subcommittee, as this would likely be considered outside of the scope/charge from City Council. **Ann** will inform the Task Force of our wish to take this approach at the next meeting.

AOB – there is a request for an HSC member to join Kim on Friday's Chamber Chat. **Bianca** volunteered. **Ann** will inform the Task Force and ensure there are no objections