



**Community COVID-19 Task Force
Meeting Minutes
May 22, 2020**

This meeting was held via Zoom

1. Welcome and recitation of our charge

Meeting called to order at 4:00PM.

Members present: Rick Barber
Kent Bridges
Rebecca Fox
Charley LaFlamme
Terry Ann Lunt
Alice Pearce
Bruce Roy
Pamela Sawyer
Robert Whitelaw

This meeting was called today at the recommendation of the Select Board to discuss what day the committee will hold its meetings.

Chair Whitelaw encouraged discussion about what, if any, is the next mission or role of the committee. The committee was charged to make recommendations and recommendations have been made on the beaches. Phase II and Phase III have been approved by this committee and have been forwarded to the Select Board, but they have not acted upon it at this time.

Marginal Way is going to be opening based on the committee's recommendations and also outdoor dining at businesses pursuant to suggested guidelines.

Little Beach has not been part of the discussion, was supposed to be included in the Marginal Way discussion. The committee needs to make a recommendation, which should be pretty simple as Marginal Way is open Little Beach should be open to the same Phase I guidelines.

An item that came up today is that the town owns tennis courts, should the committee make a recommendation on this?

This team has done remarkable work in a very short period of time and really gave 100% commitment, proud of what this team has accomplished. This group has made invaluable contributions to the town. There are some things that this committee can be doing, need input from each as to what they would be.

There is the possibility that have done everything that has been charged to do, not sure if that is the case. Also, may re-configure into a different form.

Pamela Sawyer

- Implementation is the hardest thing of everything that has been recommended.
- With no disrespect to the Police Department, most of this falls on their shoulders.
- The beach was crazy today, not matter what time of the day. People were not following the regulations; the parking lot was a free-for-all.
- One that that needs to be done, whatever goes forward with, is to be there for implementation.
- Recommend that Lt. Buttrick needs to be part of the Task Force to help guide the Task Force.
- Going forward the tennis courts are something that this group could discuss.
- As far as the restaurants and hotels, there is nothing that can really do, this falls under the guidance of the State of Maine and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Not sure what else the committee would really be looking at.
- If make a recommendation, who will implement, who will enforce...this is the biggest sticking point.

Lieutenant Matt Buttrick

- From last Monday until today the beach has not been very busy.
- Today felt like a summer beach day, so the parking lot was about $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- Made contact with lots of people on the beach who were sitting, many claimed medical issue that necessitate sitting, which is the extent as to an inquiry by the Police. Then the department gets calls about sitting on the beach.
- This creates a cascade of issues.
- The department has people assigned specifically to the beach who make contact with the people that are sitting and letting them know the guidelines that are in place (walking, surfing, fishing, and paddling).
- The Norseman does own a section of beach directly in front of them, they own the wall that protects, own 19 feet out from the front corner of the walkway tapering back to 15 feet from the end of the building which is their private property.

Rick Barber

- Concern about the beach with all the rules in place is not so much enforcing them but that people may not know them.
- Asked about a couple more signs for the ramp with the guidelines.
- As a group, need to continue on to see what happens as experience conditions going forward and then make recommendations to the Select Board about what else can be done that is within reason.
- Do not think that it is time for this group to pack up and be done.
- Made recommendations, need to be there to flush out how the recommendations worked, not necessarily if they are implemented completely but how did they work.

Charley LaFlamme

- Has a request, hoping some on this Task Force will work with him on the "Age Friendly Committee" and get it off the ground. A lot of the things that this group is doing right now is looking after the elderly in this community.
- Stated that he has been in touch with the Office of Aging and Disability, Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging, the Maine AARP Chapter, the Maine CDC, the Tri-State Learning Collaborate on Aging and the Maine Council on Aging. Stated that there are no services for Ogunquit's elderly.
- Hoping some members of this Task Force will be willing to be on the Age Friendly Committee.

Rebecca Fox

- Stated that she did not vote for opening the Footbridge, but was fine with opening the parking lot, ramps and access to the river. Concern was the bridge itself and the walkway path over the dunes to get to the bridge. This is a similar situation to the Marginal Way. Suggested a similar kind of sign at the Footbridge and potentially North Beach also.
- The larger topics could be town congestion, do research and look what other towns are doing.
- What kind of monitoring is possible to do?
- More discussion on Phase II and Phase III for the beach.

Kent Bridges

- Not certain whether it is in the scope of the committee's charge to make recommendations to the Select Board on how to transition from Phase II and Phase III of opening the beach.
- Congestion in the downtown, especially the sidewalks. What to do with the as patterns have already been established and there are no guidelines.

- Gathering is an area of concern regarding congestion, specifically on the corner of Main Street and Beach Street. What should be recommended or should the committee make recommendations to the Select Board to controlling congestion in that area.

Buzzy Roy

- The committee should keep going now that recommendations have been implemented to assist the town through this issue.
- Have a long way to go, and there is the possibility of going backwards.
- Would like to hear what the Select Board thinks about the continued work of committee.
- The re-opening will be happening all the way through Labor Day-Columbus Day.
- There are a lot of things that this group could talk about, plenty of ideas.
- Suggested meeting Wednesday or Thursday.

Terry Ann Lunt

- A public health approach to any problem requires that people do things in different ways. Individual enforcement actions are not the best way to do it. Have to encourage, support and educate again, again and again. The Town has done the best job they can right now, getting as many signs up as possible.
- It is not a short-term problem, posting signs and calling police officers to get people to comply is not the best way to get behavior change.
- Don't change behavior overnight, need to figure out a way to for all parts of the community to be involved in encouraging people.
- Did not see a lot of compliance today with masks, kids playing up in the dunes; but by the end of the day did not see people sitting...were moving along.
- Three things that need to focus on: 1. How are we doing with compliance with what has been put in place, 2. What can recommend for promoting compliance, 3. And what recommendation the committee might have to the Select Board if there is really low compliance.
- Agree about gathering and congestion, not sure how to deal with this. When get into July and August it will be more difficult with the motels/hotels open there are going to be a lot of people in the street; how going to manage and promote compliance.
- The public areas that have not been addressed, Little Beach, Tennis Courts and some parks, what is the Task Force recommending for these areas.
- Developed a draft tool for observing compliance.

Alice Pearce

- Commented on the Select Board meeting which attended last night.
- Stated that going to have to be very fluid with this entire season.

- Couple of things to keep on the radar screen, need to monitor how things are going. These are all new ideas for everybody. A lot of behavior change has to take place.
- The committee's role should be to recommend an amended recommendation based on monitoring.
- Voiced concerns about congestion also.

Pamela Sawyer

- Follow up to committee comments. There have been a lot of great ideas, whether its congestion, beach, restaurants or hotels/motels. Have no idea about the number of people that will be coming here this summer.
- Asked about having articles in the local papers, NH and the Boston area, stating that Ogunquit is open, but these are the things that will be expected to do when come here.
- Masks and social distancing will never go away this summer, so if could get the communication out to people then maybe could get up to the 70% compliance.

It was the consensus of the Task Force members to continue meeting.

It was the consensus of the Task Force members that Wednesday at 4:00pm would work as a new meeting time for the committee.

Public Comment and Questions:

- Steve Duffy
- Mike McDonald
- Muriel Freedman
- Elaine Cooper
- Mary Ross

Charley LaFlamme

- Commented on the Tennis Courts and how maintain the CDC guidelines.
- Town Manager Finnigan stated that the tennis courts are open to singles as recommended by the US Tennis Association.

Pamela Sawyer

- Asked the chair to review the specific items that he would like the committee to review prior to the meeting next week.

Chair Whitelaw

- Congestion.
- Monitoring.
- Incorporating Implementation and Enforcement monitoring.

- Little Beach - the Marginal Way is opening on June 1st. This is mainly used for surfing, not very much room to sit on the beach. Makes sense that if Main Beach is open and can launch a surfboard, then should be able to do the same at Little Beach once the Marginal Way is open.

2. Adjournment

Motion made by Buzzy Roy and second by Rick Barber to adjourn the meeting at 5:08pm; approved 9-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl L. Emery
Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager