



**Community COVID-19 Task Force
Meeting Minutes
May 27, 2020**

This meeting was held via Zoom.

1. Welcome and theme

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

2. Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

3. Review most recent disclosures from MCDC

Charley LaFlamme

- Total number of tests given in the State of Maine so far 49,599.
- There is a difference between the PCR test and the Antibody test, most have been Antibody tests. PCR tests =45,961 and Antibody tests = 3,638.
- The positivity rate on Wednesday was 5.2%, went down .2% from prior week.
- The national average is 11% of positivity rates.
- Massachusetts has a 17% positivity rate.
- Rhode Island has a 10% positivity rate.
- New Hampshire as a 7% positivity rate.
- Dr. Shah reported that Maine's has gone down in the last 6-7 days.

4. Update from the field

Lt. Matt Buttrick, Ogunquit Police Department

- Updated the Task Force on how the past weekend went.
- Busiest day was Friday due to the very warm temperatures (mid 80's)
- Overall the biggest challenge: the amount of people at the beach who didn't know or were not aware that couldn't sit.
- That were not as many signs in place locally to alert the people that there was no sitting on the beach.
- Plan on working on having signs in place, if the rules stay the same, that outlines the guidelines at the beach.
- Had between 2-4 Officers and Community Services Officers on the beach or at the parking lots throughout the weekend. They made contact with lots of people that were sitting down.
- The amount of people wearing a mask was fairly low, but the beach was never filled up like it is during the summer.
- The Officers and CSO's at the beach were asked to take pictures to record the social distancing.
- The biggest challenge for social distancing was the access to the beach by the Norseman as it is a small area. The other area was the crossover at the Footbridge Beach because of the smallness of the area.
- Noticed that people are not wearing and/or keeping masks on long enough.
- Traffic volume is down significantly down as compared to prior Memorial Day weekends.
- PPE for Visitor Services has been allocated. Currently working on roll-out plans for the staff. In much better shape this week than last week.
- Town Hall opening back up on June 1st.
- No definitive plan for paid parking at this time.
- Bathroom protocols are still being worked on. Using the CDC guidelines for best bathroom practices. Developing a cleaning check list for staff.
- Have traffic counts coming into town from the south and can give comparative numbers from last year. No plate data.

5. Sub-Group Reports

➤ **At Risk**

Pamela Sawyer

- All know that people over the age of 65 suffer from more serious illness from COVID-19, but people of all ages that have underlying medical conditions are also at risk.

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- As a Task Force cannot overstress the need for education and for the public at large to protect them.
- Did note that every third or fourth person has their mouth covered, but not their nose covered with the mask.
- Would like to see if the website could be updated with educational material.
- Would like to see the existing information that is on the website updated also.
- Would like to see a more robust site under the COVID-19 section.
- Could also put the minutes under the COVID-19 section.

➤ **Data**

Kent Bridges

- Governor Mills put out a press release earlier this week about expanding contact tracing to limit the spread of COVID-19.
- Kent gave a definition of contact tracing.
- 59 were hospitalized as of today, 25 are in critical care and 14 are on ventilators.
- The capacity for critical care beds is 157 and the total critical care beds 406. We have available ventilators of 232 and total ventilators of 315 and alternative ventilators of 439. There is still capacity available.
- Cases by age group during a period from April 15 to May 26:
 - ❖ Under 20 group: the number of new cases rose 453%, from 50 to 98 cases.
 - ❖ 20-30 age group: rose 276-267% respectively.
 - ❖ 40 age group: rose 208%. (251-327).
 - ❖ 60 age group: rose 114%.
 - ❖ 70 age group: rose 95% (184-228).
 - ❖ 80+ age group: rose 135% (179-235).
- The age groups that were worried about and focused on seem to be flattening out more quickly than any of the other age groups.
- Looking at the age groups by percentage of total cases, 60's and 70's age groups are declining as a percentage of the total cases. The 20's and 30's age groups are increasing at a rate much higher than that.

Rebecca Fox

- In terms of monitoring, know the Marginal Way counter, the parking lot numbers and could get counts on line-ups from businesses.
- In terms of density, know bed capacity of overnight visitors come from the number of parking spaces.

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- Don't have much information on day-trippers, but with Lt. Buttrick's traffic count on Route One and the number of cars on Interstate 95 give some idea of the influx of visitors.
- In terms of Phase II and III on the beaches, do get reports from Visitor Services, CSO's, Police and Lifeguards on public behavior and also from Public Works on bathroom lines when they open.
- In terms of the at-risk group, know that there is some worrisome data on potential crowds. Such as, the incubation for COVID-19 is 4.2 days from exposure to symptoms. Tourists may arrive well, and thereby infect people in the meantime.
- The CDC estimates that 20-50% of contagious people have not symptoms at all so they pose an even greater risk.
- Transmission can occur within 8-14 minutes of exposure.
- The other issue is that if you get seriously ill, spend an average of 16 days in the hospital, and so take up a lot of healthcare resources.
- Can also get reports from EMS and Lifeguards regarding first aid and emergency calls to watch the trends in the number of cases and number of occupied hospital beds.

➤ **Public Health**

Buzzy Roy

- Regarding public health, seeing clear, fragmented information that is out there.
- Unknown if people are absorbing the information, ambiguous at best.
- Narrow down to basic tasks - masks, social distancing, those are the things that have to have. Need to be consistent with this message.
- Need to work on the smaller issues that are confusing people.
- Should move to Phase II at the beach and open the beach fully up with all the rules, concentrate on social distancing and mask wearing.
- When the restaurants open up, they will be modeling for the public...the mask wearing, social distance.
- The more model it and move forward on the simple tasks, the information won't worry about sitting on the beach because you can.
- Will start working conflict resolution out between individuals, will come down to people meeting on the street so need to be clear on the mandates of social distancing and masks.
- Create social unity.

Terry Ann Lunt

- What trying to achieve is behavior change. Have signs, but don't have really good messaging system to engage everybody in the community.

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- Want to achieve 70-80% compliance with social distancing and wearing a face covering if you can.
- Implementation can be making recommendations about what are some of the things that can be done to achieve it, then the town has to decide what they actually can do and will do.
- Monitoring is another issue; there are a couple of things that can do to objectively monitor how achieving compliance is. Still cameras along Marginal Way, consider using a drone when beach gets really busy, and to discuss some of the options to consider if cannot gain cooperation.

➤ **Business**

Alice Pearce

- Started talking about congestion and how to deal with potential congestion in town.
- Need to take a more positive approach with an educational tact with guests, residents and businesses.
- Create a culture of following the two (2) primary rules: wear a mask and social distancing.
- Best approach is to promote guests, glad they are back but we need to keep our town safe so please follow these two rules.
- Educate the business community; most responsible businesses are already operating under this premise.
- Talked about where the target audience primarily come from; Massachusetts, Connecticut...there is a pretty engrained culture of wearing masks in those communities.
- Here in New England it is more accepted, people are more comfortable with wearing a mask.
- Developing branded signage for the Ogunquit community. The signage will be available to all businesses, not just Chamber members. There will be some protocol on how to obtain the signage.
- Developing signage for the "sandwich boards" with a welcoming overtone that will be placed in town where the Playhouse normally places signs with the guidelines expected of the public.
- Chamber plans on polling business to see what their plans are going to be for public space, Main Street and the Cove, there could be potential congestion points.
- Attended Commissioner Johnson's (the first half) weekly conference, she reemphasized what the Governor had said at her 2:00pm conference.
- Asked Lt. Buttrick about parking plans for the future.

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➤ **Beaches**

Phase II recommendations - Ogunquit beaches open to the following conditions:

Activities

- Walking, surfing, paddling, fishing, swimming.
- Chairs, blankets, etc. allowed; six feet social distancing in place for non-family units.
- Social Distancing protocols in place per CDC and Maine CDC recommendations.
- Sports related activities allowed in designated areas as determined by Lifeguards.
- Estuary access allowed with social distancing protocols in place.

Parking

- Parking open at Main, Footbridge and North beaches to residents and non-residents.
- Cashless payment system in place to sell spaces throughout the week.
- 2019 and 2020 beach stickers, Transfer Station stickers accepted for free access on days there is a charge to enter the lots.
- Bicycle racks available at Maine Beach and Footbridge Beach.

Important Considerations and Needs

- Appropriate PPE for Visitor Services colleagues.
- Beach users to wear masks when social distancing is not possible.
- Utilize a checklist system to ensure all services are ready for moving to Phase II: Police, Visitor Services, and Facilities.
- Necessary signage in parking lot, other public information tools.
- Necessary signage at the beach entrance.
- Select Bord determines the appropriateness of moving to the next phase.
- Monitoring compliance and impact of beach re-opening overseen by the appropriate town authorities: Police, Visitor Service and Facilities with input from the Public Health sub-group of the Task Force.

Timing

- Beaches open as posted.
- Visitor Services personnel empowered to close parking.

Bathhouses

- Bathhouses remain closed until cleaning and sanitizing protocols are in place.

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Chair Whitelaw has been asked to attend the Select Board meeting next week to review Phase II with them.

6. Task Force Member Comments

Buzzy Roy

- Asked about the use of the riverside.
- Commented on the PA system announcements.
- For the date of opening the beach - as soon as possible.
- Asked about fishing on the bridge in Phase II.

Terry Ann Lunt

- Since have passed Phase I, have learned from experience and received a lot of comments.
- Would like to think about the social distancing as 6 feet for an individual, but for a family or small group would like to see it connected to the state guidelines that no groups gather greater than 10 and that it be 12 feet apart between groups.
- Would like to suggest, since got a lot of comments from families that bring their kids to play, need to make it clear that families and children who are digging in the sand and making sand castles and playing in the water, that that be part of sports activities. It has not been specifically addressed.
- Comments on groups of 50 that cluster at the ramp, how do they socially distance themselves from others.

Rick Barber

- The Governor today stated that groups of 50 could start gathering as of June 1st.
- It is much easier to monitor masks and social distancing than people walking on the beach or kids playing in the sand.
- Kids' playing on the beach has never been considered a sports related activity.
- Lifeguards have a certain protocol that they expect people to follow (football, volleyball, and surfing). Once the lifeguards are on duty that will follow itself naturally. Don't want to overcomplicate the rules.

Pamela Sawyer

- Just wanted to reiterate what Rick had spoken about, the Governor's next phase starts on June 1st, gatherings of 50 or less. Putting other numbers out there confuses the public.
- Stay with the regular beach activities.

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Rebecca Fox

- In terms of the lifeguards, that 12 come on duty on June 8th, and an additional 12 on June 15th. Not in full swing until the third week of June.
- Wondered if there were some recommendations they could do regarding the Main Beach Ramp, which is a really congested place.
- Could get a bigger sign to disperse people a little bit more.

Alice Pearce

- Groups of 50 refers to maximum occupancy, still have to socially distance 6 feet.

7. Public Comment

Comments/questions from:

- Jordan Freedman
- Joan Griswold

8. Any Motions for Recommendations to the Select Board

Motion made by Buzzy Roy and second by Charley LaFlamme to reapprove Phase II with the following amendments: social distancing on the beach for people who sit is 12 feet and verbiage about traditional beach activities; approved 9-0.

Next meeting - June 3, 2020

- Agenda items:

Rebecca Fox - Criteria, not just taking in the monitoring information, but developing a plan for the future.

9. Adjourn

Motion made by Charley LaFlamme and second by Buzzy Roy to adjourn the meeting at 6:08pm; approved 9-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl L. Emery
Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager

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