



**Community COVID-19 Task Force
Meeting Minutes
June 10, 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

Others present: Lieutenant Matt Buttrick, Police Department
Erich Fogg, York Hospital

2. Minutes

There were no minutes for approval.

3. Public Spaces Memo (See attached document)

Chair Whitelaw stated that the next issue that the Select Board would like them to look at is public spaces, essentially spaces owned by the town and how those might be able to be used to enhance some of the businesses that are suffering right now because they do not have their own personal space, particularly in the case of restaurants who do not have their own space to put out tables.

Would like to begin a discussion on this, basically to start, does the Task Force want to pick this up? Also would like to garner everyone's opinion on this; will probably not come to a conclusion today.

Pamela Sawyer

- Read the memo in detail and went to talk to the Town Manager about the memo since did not understand some of the details.
- Might be something the Task Force could address, but feel that don't have enough information about it.
- There has been no input at all from many of the vendors or businesses people along the areas that closure has been brought up.
- Feel that do not have enough information to make a concrete recommendation at this point at all; need a lot of input, lot of data and density.
- When you open the area/street for a larger expanse to social distance does not guarantee that people will social distance.

Rebecca Fox

- Stated that she has easier time thinking about restaurants than retail.
- In terms of restaurants, how do it fairly.
- How feasible is it for restaurants to cart out stuff, set up tents and extra staff?
- What is considered outside space?

Kent Bridges

- Need more information for certain.
- The public spaces available, repurposed for this type of use, where does the parking go at this point?
- If the sidewalks are used for businesses, where do the pedestrians go?
- If the parking lots are used, where does the traffic go?

Terry Ann Lunt

- Was hoping to have a little more clarity about what the Town Manager and the Select Board were looking for from the Task Force.
- From a public health perspective, anything that can be done outdoors is better than indoors.
- Looking for guidance, do the decision makers want from the Task Force a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down", do use public spaces or not?
- If this is to be considered, are public spaces on the list?
- Which ones are they looking at?

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- If it is some or all, is guidance around the conditions that would be recommended being met to optimize public health and safety for residents, for workers, for business operators and for visitors?
- What is the town looking to the Task Force for?

Charley LaFlamme

- Anything the town can do to help someone stay afloat during this pandemic is okay as long as it does not make it more unsafe for anyone.
- If things continue the way that they have been, see very little trouble with the lack of numbers.
- Safer to be outside, in favor of trying to help by allowing outside sales.

Buzzy Roy

- Agrees with the statements by other members so far.
- Definitely should have a voice in this decision.
- Against using any public spots for any businesses individually, should make community spots/tables that everyone could take take-out to.
- As for closing streets right now, should focus on the masks, distancing and hand sanitizing is key enough, bet then start diverting Ogunquit traffic...whoa.

Rick Barber

- The Select Board sent this to the Task Force for a reason.
- If closed off the tip of Shore Road and diverted traffic through Jacobs Lot you could allow pedestrians to use Shore Road and those areas where people are waiting outside of restaurants and shops.
- Need to think about the areas that could be used to create a pedestrian corridor.

Bob Whitelaw

- Think that shouldn't close roads, but look at issues on a case-by-case basis.
- Big crowds are coming after July 1st, will be seeing a greater influx of people.
- Currently, pretty flexible with the ability to address certain issues.
- Not in favor of closing roads, impacting traffic.

Alice Pearce

- As a member of the Task Force, need to have a better understanding of the business needs in the community.
- Based on the business needs, develop some scenarios.
- Give the scenarios to the Town Manager and have her work with the Police and Fire Department to develop a proposal for the Task Force to review.

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- Definitely need to have a voice.
- Help the Town Manger define what the Select Board is allowing her to do by making recommendations to the Select Board.
- When it comes to private space, allow the private businesses work together to determine the need then come to the town for approval.
- Public space - it is quiet now, but do not know how it will look in a month from now; wait on the public space until after receive data back from the businesses.
- The Chamber of Commerce has sent out a survey to all their business members about a proposal to use private land space. This survey is due back by Thursday; this will give the Chamber a sense of the needs of the businesses regarding public and private spaces.
- Lines do not seem to be an issue with restaurants at this point.
- Need to help educate the retail businesses.
- If close down public space, need to make it available for tables and for pedestrians to walk.

Chair Whitelaw

- Comments about the foot traffic on the bridge.
- Let the Select Board know that the Task Force is still thinking about the memo subject, still working on it. The Business subgroup needs to meet to fine-tune what can be done.

Rebecca Fox

- Stated that the Town Manager has a request from Bessie's for use of public space.

Pamela Sawyer

- Stated that Bessie's is looking for the use of two parking spaces on Shore Road (not the handicap space). They have had discussion with the Town Manager, but have not received any feedback (Yes or No) as of this date.

It was the consensus of the Task Force not to make any decisions today on the memo from the Town Manager.

4. Review most recent disclosures from MCDC

Charley LaFlamme

- Watched Dr. Shah's press conference today and would like to give a quick update:
 - Positivity rate is continuing to go down, at 4.68%.

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- There were no deaths today, currently at 100.
- Tests performed - 1,541 within the last 24 hours, of which 26 were positive. This would give a 2.99% positivity rate for the last 24 hours.
- Met Erich Fogg on the golf course, he has information that would like to share.

Erich Fogg, Director of Walk-in Services, York Hospital

- Oversees the drive-thru testing site on Route One in York.
- Spoke about the "Keep Maine Healthy" program.
- Track at York Hospital "gaiting criteria" which looks at the percent positive cases, total number of tests, total number of positive cases as well as hospital admissions.
- Last week, May 31st to June 6th, which has not been done since the first week of March ...that is to show a 0% positive rate for that week (8 days).
- Hovering around a 2% positivity rate since the last week of April.
- Last week did 327 tests, the week before did 307 tests with 5 positives.
- Reviewed the Eldredge Lumber situation regarding the 13 positive tests.
- Another local facility, Durgin Pines in Kittery, had 6 positive tests three weeks ago.
- Overall, York Hospital, since the inception of the pandemic state of emergency has had 20 patients hospitalized since the first week of March. Currently at about 70% capacity hospital-wise and at 40% capacity in the ICU. Have six ventilators at the hospital but only using one as of today.
- The State of Maine CDC is putting up 20 new test sites, of which 4 are in York County.
- Maine CDC has listed a standing order, which means that there exists the ability for someone to get a test through the standing order without a provider; York Hospital is trying to implement that standing order within their testing protocol.
- People who come seeking the testing which would allow them to stay in state, the hospital is making that testing happen. The time turn-around is currently 8 hours through Seacoast Labs in New Hampshire; total time is about 24 hours.
- Any positive tests, the CDC gives credit to the state of origin.
- In York County there has been a request to how the numbers are reported. The request is to have it by town. Seeing more of the 40-70 age group and the majority of those hospitalized patients have been in the 60+ age group. There have been five deaths at York Hospital which was in the 70's age group.
- Seeing the "At Risk" group being more conservative.
- Cases are milder in the younger age groups.

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- There are certain cases that the CDC intervenes with when there is an outbreak if it meets a certain threshold.
- There have been a lot of people trained as tracers.
- Take precautions, wear mask, stay six feet away...but people need to get out. Think that groceries stores are doing a great job. Suggest that people stay conservative, use common sense and good judgment.
- Right now the cost at the hospital the test is \$225.00, but the federal government has mandated that insurance companies cover the cost of the testing with no shared costs from the patient.

Comments/questions: (answers above)

Rick Barber - question about testing for out-of-state visitors.

Pam Sawyer - does this apply to Maine residents or out of state visitors?

Kent Bridges - are tests from out-of-staters reported in their home state?

Kent Bridges - second question is about age groups.

Rebecca Fox - question about contact tracers.

Bob Whitelaw - what are the parameters that would suggest getting out and about?

Terry Ann Lunt - what does a COVID test cost?

5. Update from the field

Lieutenant Matt Buttrick

- Not a huge update today.
- CSO's on the beaches, Marginal Way and in the square.
- On the beach did notice that there is not a lot of mask wearing once people are on the beach and spaced out appropriately. Appear to be following the twelve foot distancing.
- On nice beach days, it does get a little congested near the ramps.
- Observational data of mask v. non-mask received from Joan Griswold.
- The CSO's have masks to hand out if someone does not have a mask.
- Some complaints on the Marginal Way about people not wearing mask.
- Increased signage and moved mobile sign to a better spot.
- Beach signage has been made and installed.
- Will install signage on the Wharf Lane Bridge.

Pam Sawyer left the meeting at 5:06pm.

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6. Sub Group Reports

- Data

Kent Bridges

- Bench mark on the three counties in Maine that were unable to open their inside dining.
- Of the total positive tests in the state, Cumberland County accounts for 51%, York County is 16.5% and Androscoggin is a 14%.
- Reported on age groups a couple weeks ago. On May 26th:
 - 20 and under - 4.5% increase to 6.4% of the total positive cases.
 - 20's - 12.5 % increase to 14.6%.
 - 30's - 13.6% increase to 14.8%.
 - 40's - stayed relatively flat.
 - 50's - starting to decline, 18.4% to 17.3%...
 - The age groups after the 50's are showing a decline.
- Now have data at the zip code levels.
- Ogunquit is reporting 0-5 cases which would average to 3 cases or .32% of the total population.
- Compared to Portland - reporting 202, which is .63% of their total population.
- Data of surrounding towns is relatively low. As head further north the rates increase.
- Had a chance to review the vehicle count data that received from Lt. Buttrick. Can't draw any conclusions from it. Were trying to figure out if could extrapolate any day trip density rates from the vehicle count. Cannot do this from the data set that have.
- Would like to figure out a way to track cars in this area to see how many cars stay in the area for any period of time and to see if can extrapolate any day trips data.

Rebecca Fox

- Information from the New York Times, five safety rules:
 - To check the health of your state and community and to particularly pay attention to the positive test number.
 - Limit the number of your close contacts, have a limited social circle, people that you trust and have an established risk that you are going to abide by.

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- Make an exposure budget, choose the activities that are important to you and skip the ones that are less important; trade-offs of what you are willing to do and need to do at the moment.
 - Keep high risk activities as short as possible, keep indoor close contact to ten minutes, and things like haircuts and shopping to about an hour.
 - Keep up the precautions, don't lose sight of social distancing, keep a mask handy, wash your hands and if there are reasons for you to be stricter then should practice stricter precautions based on your particular situation and the people that you are with.
- Public Health

Terry Ann Lunt

- Spoke about the presentation from Joan Griswold - Marginal Way.
- Since June 1st, there have been 4,300 visitors to Marginal Way, a lot fewer than at this time last year (11,600).
- The first week, 5 day average compliance, of 49%.
- Expect the numbers to increase over time as people learn more and more.
- Trying to encourage people to protect themselves and to protect others, it takes time for people to think differently about how they go about business.
- Thank you to Joan and her group for their assistance.
- Earlier today the Governor renewed the *State of Emergency* for another 30 days.
- Visitor Services are starting to collect money from the parking lots and they have all their PPE, but there is a very high level of anxiety because they have to have contact with people when they are processing credit cards.
- Given the rapid spread in congregate settings, in Ogunquit have a number of what could be considered congregate settings. Is this a Code Enforcement issue?
- Are businesses doing anything to assist employees in congregate settings to help them comply with the practices that keep them safe? Alice Pearce addressed this issue, stating that businesses are doing what they need to do to keep employees safe.

Buzzy Roy

- Thank you to the Marginal Way group for gathering the data.

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- Business
- At Risk

Charley LaFlamme

- Thank you to Erich Fogg for the great information.
- Willing to attend Task Force meetings.
- To the "At Risk" people, the article in the New York Times that Rebecca referred to was very helpful to "At Risk" people.
- Comments regarding outdoor groups and the risk.

- Music in the Park

- The Music in the Park group met, they will be following the Governor's guidelines for gatherings of 50 and under.
- The Swing Band was cancelled.
- Social distancing will be adhered to and masks will be required if this cannot be accomplished.
- They will be following the Task Force recommendation of groups of people seating together need to maintain a twelve (12) foot distance, like the beach.
- There will be no tables set up for handouts or literature, signage is being developed, and will be strategically placed so that residents and guests are made aware of COVID protocols.
- Parks & Recreation will be asking that a CSO person be on site during the concerts.

7. Task Force member comments

Rebecca Fox

- Maybe develop a checklist to aid the Select Board in making determinations.
- NAMI website for Maine Mental Health Support.

Charley LaFlamme

- Comments regarding the Age Friendly Community Committee.
- Comments regarding the Department of Health and Human Resources receipt of grant to help Maine residents.
- Comments about pursuing some grants for the town.

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8. Public Comment

Comments/questions:

- Amy Forbes
- Mike ___strowski?
- Joan ?

9. Any Motions for recommendations to the Select Board

There were no recommendations to the Select Board.

10. Adjourn

Motion made by Charley LaFlamme and second by Buzzy Roy to Adjourn the meeting at 5:50pm ; approved 9-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl L. Emery, Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager

Office of the Town Manager

To: Bob Whitelaw, Chair, and Members of the COVID 19 Community Task Force
From: Pat Finnigan, Town Manager
Date: June 6, 2020

RE: *Business Use of Public Property*

In order to support Ogunquit's local businesses during this pandemic, on May 21st the Select Board voted to support the Task Force's recommendation to relax zoning and other ordinances to allow outside sales and to allow restaurants have outdoor dining on their own property.

In its proposal, the Task Force noted, but did not make a recommendation to the Select Board regarding two other steps the Town could take to support our local businesses: (1) allow businesses to develop agreements with other property owners to operate their business on private property they don't own; and (2) allow restaurants and shops to expand on to Town-owned outdoor space, including parking lots, parking spaces, and streets to conduct their business while meeting occupancy and physical distancing guidelines.

Restaurants expected to be able to resume service on June 1, but on May 27 the Governor determined that three counties, including York County, could not resume business due to the incidence of the virus. That order did not affect retail stores.

Recognizing the shortened season due to COVID-19, that Ogunquit's business area is compact and some restaurants and shops do not have their own outdoor space to provide service, and many shops are small and cannot welcome people into their shops and meet the occupancy and distancing standards, on June 2nd the Select Board voted to approve the concept of allowing businesses to use public property. That vote was necessary for the Task Force to proceed with developing specific recommendations, locations, and guidelines for businesses to use of public space.

Understanding that time is of the essence, the Select Board authorized me to make decisions on specific, limited requests. We have received one request thus far for a restaurant to use parking spaces on the street. The Select Board retained the responsibility to close streets and parking lots and other large-scale changes.

The Select Board would like the Task Force to consider and make recommendations regarding the larger issues of closing portions of streets, parking lots, whole areas of on-street parking spaces, and the use of any other Town-owned property. Please feel free to consider any site where shops or restaurants could locate in a way that enhances public health and safety. The goal is to provide open-air dining and shopping in a way that helps the Town and businesses promote physical distancing, the local economy, and keeping people safe while visiting, dining, shopping, and walking in Ogunquit.

All the changes that have been adopted to date have affected abutting businesses and adjoining neighborhoods. As we move into the area of use of Town-owned spaces, the impacts will be more expansive and affect businesses and residents. Providing advance notice and opportunities for people to be informed, ask questions, and offer ideas will improve our ability to get buy-in and make these temporary changes a win for the whole community.

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The following is a list of ideas that have been suggested to us thus far. Please note, we have not had conversations with abutting business or residents which needs to be taken into consideration:

- Close Shore Rd from Main St to just short of School St., and the Jacobs Lot Parking lot (we refer to this as the 'Bonaire option' since that was the area designated for the Bonaire event)
- Close the south bound lane of Shore Rd as well as the Jacob's Lot area
- Close access to Jacobs lot from Shore road: make that whole area a pedestrian mall
- Close a portion of Perkins Cove where parking is currently allowed and/or is a travel lane
- Close the north bound lane of Beach Street from River Rd
- Convert the parking spaces on Main St into a pedestrian walkway to reduce congestion

The above ideas only apply to Town-owned property. Regarding the use of private property not owned by the affected shop or restaurant, the Task Force may want to make recommendations in support of such arrangements with certain "good neighbor" criteria (opening and closing times, etc.), and of course adherence to CDC guidelines.

I have talked with the Police, Fire, and Land Use Departments about potential locations and assessing their practicality. We are ready to be a resource to the Task Force as you consider your recommendations to the Select Board. If you have any specific questions prior to your meeting, please me let know so you can have as much information as possible before you begin your discussions.

Thank you for all your efforts to date to keep Ogunquit healthy!

cc: Ogunquit Select Board

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