

**City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire**  
**Portsmouth Citizen Response Task Force**  
**Remote meeting via Zoom**  
**Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, November 10, 2020, 2:00 P.M.**

**Call to Order**

Co-Chair James Petersen called the meeting to order at 2:05. Deputy City Manager Nancy Puff Colbert represented staff. Patience Horton took minutes. This 24<sup>th</sup> 2020 Citizen Response Task Force meeting lasted one hour. Votes were taken with a show of hands.

Task Force present:

1. James Petersen, Petersen Engineering, Co-Chair
2. Mark Stebbins, ProCon Construction, Co-Chair
3. Deborah Anthony, Gather Pantry Market (Non-profit)
4. Senator Martha Fuller Clark, NH State Senate District 21
5. Kim McNamara, Health Officer
6. Alan Gold, Economic Development Commission
7. Ann Birner, PharmD (Health Care Professional)
8. Sarah Lachance, Economic Development Commission
9. Jim Lee, REMAX Shoreline (Real Estate)
10. Bianca Monteiro, York Pulmonary Associates (Health Care Professional)
11. Valerie Rochon, President, Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth

Task Force absent:

12. John Golumb, Poco's Bow Street Cantina (Restaurant)
13. Russ Grazier, PMAC (Non-profit)
14. Karen Conard, City Manager
15. Kathryn Lynch, (Non-profit Health-care Organization)
16. Karen Bouffard, The Real Estate Market, Inc. (Real Estate)
17. Jeffrey Goss, The Clipper Tavern (Restaurant)
18. Joe Scarlotto (Restaurant)

City Staff present:

1. Stephanie Seacord, Public Information Officer
2. Joe Almeida, Facilities Manager
3. Todd Germain, Fire Chief
4. Nancy Puff Colbert, Deputy City Manager
5. Peter Rice, DPW Director
6. Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Director

Also present were:

1. Anne Weidman, Alliance of Portsmouth Design Professionals
2. Andrew Bagley, Board member, PopUpNH

## **I. Welcome & Approval of November 4, 2020 Minutes**

- Motion: Alan Gold moved to approve the minutes of November 4, 2020 as written. Valerie Rochon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## **II. Report on CRTF 2.0**

James Petersen: Twelve Task Force members are interested in coming back, plus Karen Conard, Kim McNamara, and Patience. Two Task Force committee chairs are resigning: Russ Grazier and Ann Birner.

The Citizen Response Task Force members who responded “yes” to the survey:

1. James Petersen
2. Mark Stebbins
3. Sarah Lachance
4. Valerie Rochon
5. Alan Gold
6. Deb Anthony
7. Bianca Monteiro
8. Kathie Lynch
9. Jeff Goss
10. Jim Lee
11. Martha Fuller Clark
12. John Golumb

James: Last night, Monday, November 9, we made a report to the City Council’s work session about the status of the Task Force. The City Council wants the force to continue. During November 17 City Council meeting, we should make recommendations on how we should move forward. How can we benefit the community?

### **Discussion: Should we go with the people remaining or should we bring in new people?**

Alan Gold: Filling in the skillset gaps would help us do the things we are chartered to do.

Ann Birner: With my departure, it would be great if a health care provider could be added who has an infectious disease or epidemiology background.

Sarah Lachance: We want people who want to participate and who are engaged like Anne Weidman and Andrew Bagley.

Kim McNamara: Rich Dipentema had originally applied. We should try to add him. He is a public health professional and R.N. with epidemiology experience. He was the Deputy

Director of the Manchester Health Department and worked for DHHS for years. He is a Portsmouth resident.

**Discussion. How would we handle money requests in the future?**

Mark Stebbins: Originally, we were told we could spend up to \$100,000, and we used \$62,000. We were very effective despite having to respond quickly. To be even more effective, we have to start planning earlier and have things planned out better. We want to have a contingency amount to account for things we don't expect.

Alan: I think getting an approval of an upfront budget makes a lot of sense. As things present themselves, going through a cycle of the City Council will complicate things.

**Discussion About Reporting**

The City Council wants us to have regular meetings. They don't understand that we have regular meetings and there are Minutes for the meetings. Maybe they would like to receive the Minutes? Maybe the Task Force should have a YouTube channel.

**Discussion: Brainstorming About Subcommittees**

James Petersen: The Health Subcommittee must go on. The reduction of risk has got to be through a lens of health and safety.

Kim McNamara: The rate of information coming out on research from the federal and state level and from research institutions is high and very rapid. The information that's distributed widely in media is not always accurate. It's an impossible task to keep up with everything. The Health Subcommittee has been able to accurately choose resources that are credible and reliable and useful on a local level. The Health Department could not have done this without the Health Subcommittee. My experience with the Health Subcommittee is that they have done the lion's share of work on the dashboard. Stephanie certainly works very hard for all departments, but there was no diminishing what that individuals on the Health Subcommittee contributed as far as workload. We couldn't have done it without them and we're not looking forward to the next year if we don't have them.

The Streets Subcommittee continues. There should also be an arts/entertainment/non-profit committee. The very vulnerable populations are not getting represented. Transit, like C&J Bus and airlines are being impacted. Microenterprises are being impacted significantly. The businesses of hospitals and doctors' offices could be represented. Also, if the task force is limited to residents of Portsmouth, many non-profit participants with vested interest in Portsmouth would not qualify.

## **Discussion. Council Membership**

Valerie Rochon: We are a blue-ribbon committee, created by the mayor's office. It is not required that we have a councilor on it. The City Council wants to move us forward on a month-to-month basis. That doesn't work. We are most likely going to be doing this a year from now.

## **III. Health Subcommittee Report**

### **CRTF HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING NOTES**

November 10, 2020

By Ann Birner

“The weekly dashboard presents a dismal picture. A NH press release stated that percent positivity cannot be accurately calculated right now due to laboratory reporting issue. Despite this limitation, an upward trend seems clear in positivity as do trends in cases and hospitalizations. The two maps of NH show dark shadings indicative of worsening conditions, as does the national map, particularly in the northern Midwest. Maine and Massachusetts also show rising cases and positivity. Although we continue to fare better than other regions of the country, it is important to remain vigilant. It is likely we have benefitted from unseasonably fair weather allowing many activities to take place outdoors well into November and the full consequences of seasonal change remain to be seen.

“The subcommittee plans to update the Daily Life FAQ to include more detail on avoiding congregation, highly relevant given the approaching holiday season, prior to creating a press release. Once language is agreed upon by HSC members, if the changes are considered to be substantial rather than minor tweaks, the document will be brought to the Task Force.

“Vaccine distribution- HSC members agreed to reply to questions from Kim but stop short of taking action as a Task Force subcommittee, as this could be considered outside of the scope/charge from City Council. The Task Force was informed of this plan, in case of any objection or disagreement. There was none, although there was a directive from Chair James Petersen to keep the Task Force informed of these discussions.

“There was a request from Valerie Rochon for an HSC member to join Kim McNamara on Friday's “Chamber Chat”. Bianca volunteered and will present unless the Task Force objects. There were no objections.”

*Submitted by Ann Birner*

## **IV. Streets Subcommittee Report**

Mark Stebbins: Right now, the goal is to have all the barriers off the streets by the first week in December. On Monday we will discuss how we will continue into the winter.

Anne Weidman: The categories I look for are design and planning. I have a lot of documents about survival that would interest businesses. The Facebook page for the Design Professional Group is my personal file cabinet for all that.

Adjourn

- Motion: Valerie Rochon moved to adjourn. Ann Birner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patience Horton  
Recorder