

City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Portsmouth Citizen Response Task Force
Remote meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, November 4, 2020, 2:00 P.M.

Call to Order

Co-Chair James Petersen called the meeting to order at 2:00. City Manager Karen Conard represented staff and was the moderator. Patience Horton took minutes. This 23rd 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. Russ Grazier, PMAC (Non-profit)
4. Deborah Anthony, Gather Pantry Market (Non-profit)
5. Karen Conard, City Manager
6. Senator Martha Fuller Clark, NH State Senate District 21
7. Kim McNamara, Health Officer
8. Alan Gold, Economic Development Commission
9. Ann Birner, PharmD (Health Care Professional)
10. Sarah Lachance, Economic Development Commission
11. Jim Lee, REMAX Shoreline (Real Estate)
12. Bianca Monteiro, York Pulmonary Associates (Health Care Professional)
13. Valerie Rochon, President, Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth

Task Force absent:

14. John Golumb, Poco's Bow Street Cantina (Restaurant)
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. Juliet Walker, City Planner
4. Patrick Howe, Deputy Fire Chief
5. Todd Germain, Fire Chief
6. Mark Newport, Police Chief
7. Kristin Shaw, Deputy Health Officer

Also present were:

1. Petra Huda, City Councilor
2. Anne Weidman, Alliance of Portsmouth Design Professionals
3. Andrew Bagley, Board member, PopUpNH
4. Torey Brooks

I. Welcome & Approval of October 21, 2020 Minutes

- Motion: Jim Lee moved to approve the Minutes of October 28, 2020 as written. Alan Gold seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Health Subcommittee Report

- a. Daily Life FAQs**
- b. Mask Ordinance Memo**

CRTF HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

November 4, 2020

By Ann Birner

“A draft of the Daily Life FAQs was sent to the Task Force for consideration and a motion was made by Martha Fuller Clark and seconded by Russ Grazier. The motion included making the current version (minus the reference to the MyCovidRisk application) publicly available on the City website while simultaneously posting on a shared drive for continued comments by Task Force members. [The HSC is not ready to endorse the MyCovidApp as included in draft circulated.] In discussion, Sarah Lachance commented that if reconsidering that or any other app, security concerns would need to be taken into account. The motion was unanimously approved.

“A memo requesting an extension of the City Mask Ordinance #3-2020 “until revoked” was presented and a motion to ratify and send to the Council was made by Martha Fuller Clark and seconded by Mark Stebbins. The motion passed with one dissenting member, Jim Lee.

“A new version of the dashboard was reviewed. Case numbers continue to trend upward in NH, Rockingham County, and in Portsmouth as are hospitalizations statewide. JHU state snapshot section mid-page has been replaced with graphics from www.covidexitstrategy.com. Data shown include rolling average new cases *per million* and positivity; both are trending upward in NH (categorized as “trending poorly”), MA (“uncontrolled spread” category), and Maine (“caution warranted” category). NH data in more detail is shown at bottom of page as before, along with a national “hotspot” map. Discussion included number of tests performed which can be found in the detailed NH graphic at bottom, also reason for recent surge? Moving indoors, visitors and students traveling to NH from out of state, and specific outbreaks all may have contributed.

“Other activities, in brief:

- Kim McNamara has provided background for Senator Fuller Clark to support her outreach out to Governor Sununu as requested.
- She is trying to improve communication from DHHS to City Health.

- Stephanie Seacord is awaiting information from Portsmouth Hospital as to whether we will be able to retrieve and publicize local COVID-19 hospitalization data.”

Report submitted by Ann Birner

III. Streets/Fall/Winter Subcommittee Report

a. Recommended Actions for the CRTF in 2021

b. Winter Extension of Outdoor Dining Recommendation

Group Discussion

Alan Gold presented the “Recommended Actions for the CRTF in 2021” document he and his subcommittee had drawn up. The general Task Force members had already received the document for their review. Alan edited the document live during this meeting.

Alan Gold: The document consists of nine recommendations to inform the City Council what they might think about where the Task Force could go as defined in 2021. My job, said Alan, was to compile, not create the document. The major emphasis of the document is to broaden the reach of the Task Force to go not only beyond the hospitality business but also to report on health. We talked about not only outdoor permitting but about building consumer confidence for indoor dining and indoor services, as well.

Karen Conard: If I were a council member, I would want to have a sense of who might want to continue on the Citizen Response Task Force and who might not. They might have further recommendations about who to recruit.

Alan: People who have a vested interest in what is going on in the city should be considered for the Task Force, no matter where they live.

Juliet Walker: Some outdoor businesses have taken down their café tables. Some businesses are interested in keeping those café tables open as long as they can. Many seem to be interested in being permitted until the end of November.

Among other tweaks in the document, it was understood that one goal of working with City staff should be to extend permits as much as possible.

- Motion: Bianca Monteiro moved to ratify “Recommended Actions for the CRTF in 2021.” Martha Fuller Clark seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Karen Conard said that the cost of purchasing the 60 Jersey barriers that have been loaned by Severino (at \$300 per barrier) is \$18,000. In conjunction with this would be the purchase of a tool to move them around as it is seen fit. (Previously we have rented that equipment.) That brings the total to \$20,500. Funding could come from some of the remainder of the allocation of \$100,000 from the initial approval by the Council. Another source might be

the CARES act allocation. The recommendation from the staff level is that we purchase the barriers.

- Motion: Valerie Rochon moved to allocated \$20,500 from the budget allocated to the Task Force, unless funds can come from some other grant, for 60 concrete barriers and the tool used to move them. Senator Fuller Clark seconded.

In discussion, the purchase does not include the water-filled barriers or the Prescott Park barriers. If we own the barriers, they can be decorated. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Bridge Street Lot Subcommittee.

**Portsmouth Citizen's Response Task Force
Bridge Street Subcommittee Report on PopUpNH
November 4, 2020, by Russ Grazier, Jr.**

“All data provided is preliminary. PopUpNH will file form 990 with the IRS as required, and at that time final numbers for their current fiscal year will be available. The numbers provided in this report are based on the best available data, provided directly by the board and staff of PopUpNH. GOAL OF THIS PROJECT: To provide opportunities for Portsmouth restaurants, retailers, and arts and culture organizations an opportunity to operate in a safe and responsible manner, and in doing so allowing them to earn much needed revenues at a time when they were most significantly feeling the negative economic impact of the pandemic. • The project began with an idea to utilize the rooftop of the Foundry Garage for community gathering space. It was brought to the Citizens Response Task Force in early June 2020 and this subcommittee was formed to act as a liaison between the city and the independent group managing the project, later to be named PopUpNH. • Moved to Bridge St Lot over safety concerns. • Seven weeks of planning before launch. Typically, it would take a year or more of advance planning to prepare for this type of effort. • Attendance was limited by safety considerations. • City staff were excellent partners, working hard to find solutions to every challenge. • Constantly evolving situation. It was always difficult to predict what would happen next. PopUpNH by the numbers: • 11 weekends, Thursday through Sunday – 4 rainouts • 40 live performances • 2,144 event tickets sold • 60 restaurant customers on average, per day • 6 arts and culture nonprofits participated – 3S Artspace, Seacoast Rep, Opera on Tap, Prescott Park Arts Festival, Portsmouth Music and Arts Center, and the Portsmouth Halloween Parade. • 4 restaurants, with 4 FTE onsite employees • 4 breweries, with 2 FTE onsite employees • 4 FTE onsite employees operating PopUpNH • 1 FTE sound and lighting engineer (independent contractor) • \$129,880 in charitable donations and sponsorships • \$50,000 in city funds covered public use of the space, including fencing, power generators, portable restrooms, connection to city sewer. • \$132,707 in restaurant and beverage revenue – 98% went directly to the restaurants and breweries • \$49,024 in performance revenue – 75% went directly to the artists and nonprofits • Local plumbing, electric, construction, lumber,

supply, and propane companies were engaged in the creation of the PopUp and were a part of the economic impact of this project in our community. Lessons learned: • Under the gun from day one. This was emergency response. It took a lot of work, by many volunteers, to get this effort up and running, and as I said in virtually every meeting from the very beginning, this meant doing a lot of tasks concurrently. Tasks that are typically done one step at a time and take time. We were fighting against the clock, and needed to act swiftly, as is the task force's charge. As a result, it was very much a scramble, an all-hands-on-deck situation. • The retail aspect did not go as planned. The concept of how outdoor retail kiosks work and succeed was in conflict with needed safety protocols. The result was a few failed attempts at having outdoor retail present. It didn't work with the social distancing model. • Scale is an issue in this type of effort. Safety protocols prevented the possibility of anything close to a self-sustaining model. This was new territory, not just for us, but for any type of nonprofit setting. Attendance had to be purposely limited in a severe manner. As a result, charitable contributions and sponsorships are what made this possible. The city's significant efforts to make the Bridge Street lot accessible and safe for community use were critical. And the upfront funding from sponsors and donors allowed the infrastructure to be built in a way that passed city inspection. The nonrecurring costs for a one-time effort were significant. And almost all of the funds generated by this effort went directly to the restaurants, arts organizations, and performing artists. The portion of proceeds that went to overhead was not even enough to cover staffing. • Many community members said that their visit to the PopUp was their first venture out to a restaurant or performance space. Many took it as a stepping stone to returning to visit some downtown businesses. • Sheds are scheduled to be picked up November 12. • The hundreds of donors and the many sponsors were responsible for the effort's success, notably the lead sponsor, Service Credit Union. • Dozens of volunteers contributed to the success of this effort, including the day to day volunteers who helped at the PopUp, those who helped with all of the onsite construction, the design professionals, and the members of the PopUpNH board of directors. • Special thanks go to Deb Anthony, and Ben van Camp for their work on the subcommittee."

Respectfully submitted by Russ Grazier, Jr, 11/4/2020

Adjourn

Motion: Jim Lee moved to adjourn. Bianca Monteiro seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Patience Horton
Recorder