

City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Portsmouth Citizen Response Task Force
Remote meeting via Zoom
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, June 24, 2020; 2:00 P.M.

Call to Order; Determination of Quorum

Co-Chair James Petersen determined a quorum and called the meeting to order at 2:00. Karen Conard, City Manager, represented staff and was the moderator. This intense, information-packed meeting lasted one hour.

Task Force present:

1. Co-chair James Petersen, Principle, Petersen Engineering
2. Co-chair Mark Stebbins, Principle, PROCON, Inc. (Hotel Industry)
3. Senator Martha Fuller Clark, NH State Senate District 21
4. Valerie Rochon, President, Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth
5. Deb Anthony, Gather Pantry Market (Non-profit)
6. Russ Grazier, PMAC (Non-profit)
7. Marylyn Morin, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (Health Care Professional)
8. Dr. Bianca Monteiro, York Pulmonary Associates (Health Care Professional)
9. Ann Birner, Pharmacist (retired) (Health Care Professionals)
10. John Golumb, Poco's Bow Street Cantina (Restaurants)
11. Jeffrey Goss, The Clipper Tavern (Restaurants)
12. Samantha Finigan, Gus & Ruby Letterpress (Retail Business)
13. Alan Gold, Economic Development Commission
14. Sarah Lachance, Economic Development Commission
15. City Staff, Health Officer Kim McNamara
16. Karen Conard, City Manager

Task Force absent:

17. Kathryn Lynch, (Non-profit Health-care Organization)
18. Joe Scarlotto, The Shanty Seafood & Grill (Restaurants)
19. Karen Bouffard, The Real Estate Market, Inc. (Real Estate)
20. Jim Lee, REMAX Shoreline (Real Estate)
21. Nathan Moss, Citizen-at-large

City Staff present:

1. Todd Germain, Fire Chief
2. Patrick Howe, Deputy Fire Chief
3. Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Manager
4. Stephanie Seacord, Public Information Officer
5. Joe Almeida, Facilities Manager

Also present:

1. Andrew Bagley, Rooftop Subcommittee
2. Sue Black, Islington Street/North Pond Neighborhood
3. Mr. Black, Islington Street/North Pond Neighborhood

4. Nicole LaPierre, Islington Street/North Pond Neighborhood
 5. Robin Husslage, Islington Street/North Pond Neighborhood
 6. William Peirce, Islington Street/North Pond Neighborhood
- Patience Horton took minutes. The meeting lasted one hour.

On June 18, 2020, Russ Grazier led task force and City leaders through an update of the Foundry rooftop project. Present at the Zoom meeting were:

1. Russ Grazier, subcommittee chair and task force member
2. Deb Anthony, subcommittee member and task force member
3. James Petersen, task force co-chair
4. Peter Rice, Director of Public Works
5. Robert Marsilia, Building Inspector
6. Todd Germain, Fire Chief
7. Patrick Howe, Deputy Fire Chief
8. Kim McNamara, Health Officer
9. Ben Fletcher, Parking Director
10. Mike Casad, General Foreman for Parking Division
11. Kathleen Cavalaro, Seacoast Rep, independent working group
12. North Sturtevant, JSA, Portsmouth Design Professionals Alliance

Approval of Minutes from June 17, 2020

Motion: Sarah Lachance moved to approve the June 17, 2020, minutes as amended. Valerie Rochon seconded the motion. In discussion, the corrections were: Sarah Lachance had attended the June 17 meeting. Permits for spaces usually designated for hotdog carts will not be issued if the spaces are needed for dining. The motion passed unanimously.

Communication Plan—City Manager or Designee

Members of the public who have questions or comments should email the City Manager [kconard@cityofportsmouth.com]. Guidelines and a map describing how to get involved in the Public Realm were emailed and/or personally handed out to all restaurants in town.

Review Rent Relief Proposal

Karen Conard and Nancy Carmer’s discussions with the Governor, Senators’ offices, and other communities make it clear that rent relief must come from within the city.

Ratification of Use of Public Realm—Mark Stebbins

Mark Stebbins ratified the Worth lot, Market Street, both ends of Congress Street (I and II), and Penhallow Street as the focus of the Public Realm. Those areas will be set up as quickly as possible. The Street Use Subcommittee will meet Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom.

The entire task force was originally charged with the task of processing café applications, said Karen Conard. City staff will assist with the approvals, she said.

- Motion: Mark Stebbins moved for the street use subcommittee to:
 1. Concentrate on the Worth lot, Market Street, Congress Street I and II, and Penhallow Street for setting up restaurants;
 2. Have subcommittee meetings three times a week (Mon. Wed. Fri.); and
 3. Enable the subcommittee to work with the city staff to approve permits for restaurants' outside seating.

Martha Fuller Clark seconded the motion. In discussion. Senator Clark said some people are not willing to go downtown because people are not wearing masks. This led to a discussion about the availability of masks (hopefully easily handed out at most businesses) and the proposal of signage encouraging visitors to wear masks.

The motion passed unanimously.

Decision on Use of Foundry Garage—Russ Grazier

Russ Grazier thanked North Sturtevant and JSA Designs for providing pro bono designs on short notice. James Petersen described the Zoom meeting on Tuesday. There were about 34 attendees. People are concerned about noise, parking, alcohol, and that it is a one-summer duration. There was substantial, not entire, empathy on the part of the participants about what the community is facing and the downside risk, said James. Russ added that Eric Ritter and Associates is working pro bono to address sound issues.

The Need for Fundraising

The City cannot allocate the full amount of money to pay for the popup rooftop, said Russ. It will take a significant amount of fund raising. Endorsement by the Task Force is important, meaningful, and impactful. This following motion demonstrates the milestones fundraising must make to trigger City funds to be released, he said.

1. Motion: Russ Grazier moved that the Citizen Response Task Force allocate \$50,000 of the city funds that were approved by the city council on Monday, June 15, 2020, to support the proposed Foundry Place Garage Popup Rooftop project, with the following stipulations:
2. A complete budget for this project must be submitted to the task force and city staff for review no later than July 1 and must be approved by the task force before funds are disbursed.
3. The \$50,000 must be matched by support garnered through donations, sponsorships, and other sources of community-based fundraising.
4. The first \$25,000 of these funds will be released when the first \$25,000 of matching funds have been both secured and guaranteed to be disbursed by funders within one week of releasing these funds.

5. The remaining \$25,000 of these funds will be released when the second \$25,000 of matching funds have been both secured and guaranteed to be disbursed by funders within one week of releasing these funds.
6. The \$50,000 in city funds being put forth by the task force may only be used on infrastructure and health and safety needs as to be defined by the task force.
7. The Foundry Place Garage Rooftop Popup project is understood to be a one-time effort for summer 2020. The purpose of the project is understood to be the mitigation of the economic impacted faced by Portsmouth-based businesses and nonprofits in the midst of the current pandemic.
8. Any funds secured for this project via fundraising must be kept in escrow until each match level is met. If fundraising goals are not met and the project does not happen, donated funds will be returned to donors.

Deb Anthony seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

- Ann Birner said that distance of 6’ between tables is to be upheld and there has to be a limited number of individuals up on the roof.
- Senator Martha Fuller Clark asked if the matching dollars will be tax deductible.
- Neighborhood member Mr. Black asked what types of entertainment will it be that is carrying sound over North Mill Pond to his house. He can’t imagine this being added to downtown noise he already hears.
- Deb Anthony said there are so many safety nets appropriately put in this motion that, if at any point things are not moving in the direction that is comfortable, the action will simply stop.
- Valerie Rochon asked for funding details.

The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meetings

Wed	6/24 at 3:00	Street Use Subcommittee
Fri	6/26 at 9:00	Street Use via Zoom
Fri	6/26 at 3:00	Street Use via Zoom w/City Staff
Mon	6/29 at 3:00	Street Use Subcommittee w/City Staff
Wed	7/1 at 2:00	Weekly Task Force via Zoom
Wed	7/1 at 3:00	Street Use Subcommittee w/City Staff
Fri	7/1 at 3:00	Street Use Subcommittee w/City Staff
Wed	7/8 at 2:00	Weekly Task Force via Zoom

Adjourn

- Motion: Jim Lee moved to adjourn. Alan Gold seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimously. The time was 3:00.

Respectfully submitted,
PG Horton