

**Minutes for the May 26, 2021 meeting of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee to Reopen  
Portsmouth 2021**

**MEETING LOCATION: ZOOM**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Co-Chair James Petersen called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and read the following declaration: Per NH RSA 91-A: 2, III (b) the Chair has declared the COVID-19 outbreak an emergency and has waived the requirement that a quorum be physically present at the meeting pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 2020-04, Section 8, as extended by Executive Order 2020-25, and Emergency Order #12, Section 3. Members will be participating remotely and will identify their location and any person present with them at that location. All votes will be by roll call.

**ROLL CALL:** Members answering present were: Co-Chair James Peterson, Co-Chair Mark Stebbins, Members: Alan Gold, Anne Weidman, Deborah Anthony, Jim Lee, John Akar, John Golumb, Karen Bouffard, Kathie Lynch, Martha Fuller Clark, Valerie Rochon, Karen Conard, Kim McNamara. Non-voting members present: Petra Huda, Bianca Montario ABSENT: Ann Birner, Jeff Goss

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Kathie Lynch and seconded by John Golumb to cease weekly meeting and default to ad hoc status until the current Mayor's term expires at which time this committee will sunset. Passed by unanimous roll call vote of those voting members present.

**HEALTH UPDATE:** Kathie Lynch reported current NH positivity rates at 2.3% vs. past week at 2.9%. Trends look good, all trends are down. NH is in the green column relative to COVID deaths. High vaccination rates throughout the state.

**UPDATE FROM BLUE RIBBON HEALTH COMMITTEE:** Kathie Lynch again. Echoed above health update. Their committee has also entered ad hoc status. Will keep city FAQs updated. Will send letter to city council and mayor encouraging indoor mask mandate to remain in place until expiration on June 30<sup>th</sup> if council ends mask mandate before. Asked Blue Ribbon Committee to join them and send similar letter.

**MOTION:** a motion was made by Kathie Lynch, seconded by Martha Fuller Clark for Blue Ribbon Committee to send a letter to city council encouraging retention of indoor mask mandate until June 30<sup>th</sup> when original mandate expires. Outdoor masking would end if city council votes to do so. 12 votes in favor, 2 in opposition. Motion passed and adopted.

**PORTSMOUTH:** City Manager Karen Conard reported outdoor dining restrictions ended as of Friday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. 51 approved restaurant applications for outdoor dining. Tuscan Market still pending.

**RESTAURANTS & RETAIL:** Valerie Rochon reported staffing remains a huge issue with some businesses closing some days a week and limiting hours. Still concerns with masking for businesses.

**STREETS:** Anne Weidman showed slides of planters and installations. Huge kudos to Steve Jones at Portsmouth High and his CTE program for excellent job building planters. Ann Weidman awarded MVP (Most Valuable Planter) from BR committee.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Jim Lee and seconded by Mark Stebbins to allocate up to \$1,000 for final expenses related to streets. Anne Weidman will submit invoices to City for approval and payment from our allocated funds. Motion passed by affirmative vote of all voting members present.

**STREET CLOSURE:** Valerie Rochon formulating proposal to take to affected residents and businesses for their consideration.

Co-Chair James Petersen remarked this was the Committee's 49<sup>th</sup> Wednesday meeting since its inception. Great job by all and now knows all Committee members much better, a positive.

City Councilor Petra Huda expressed thanks on her behalf and city council for work well done.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Bianca Monterio congratulated committee for job well done.

**ADJOURN:** Motion to adjourn was passed unanimously by all voting members present.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Lee, Acting Secretary