Minutes for the May12, 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 Petersen, Co-Chair Mark Stebbins, Anne Weidman, Deborah Anthony, Jim Lee, John Akar, John Golumb, Karen Bouffard, Kathie Lynch, Martha Fuller Clark, Karen Conard, Kim McNamara, Petra Huda.

Absent: Alan Gold, Ann Birner, Jeff Goss, Valerie Rochon, Ben VanCamp

PORTSMOUTH CITY MANAGER: Tuscan Market submitted revised request for street seating, being considered. Striker still outstanding. 42 planters being constructed at Portsmouth High. Kudos to class for building planters.

HEALTH UPDATE: Kim McNamara. Focusing on vaccinating workers that are not Portsmouth or NH residents. Allowable space between tables shrunk to 36 inches. May 18th clinic for hospitality workers. By Memorial Day weekend all outdoor seating back to normal. Looking for walk in clinic sites for Johnson & Johnson 1 dose vaccine.

Kathy Lynch: Infection rate now 3.4% was 3.5% last week. Trend is in the green. Manchester is of concern. Rockingham County looking good. 33% fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated people are safe outdoors. Kim McNamara. Last concern, vaccines for children. James Petersen added that outdoors spaces are safest because of air flow.

RESTARUANTS: James Petersen reported for Valerie Rochon. Hotels 90% or more occupancy on weekends. Wedding venues fully booked for summer. Retail reports expanded traffic boosted by extended restaurant hours. Some frustration with those who don't follow city, state, or CDC guidelines and rules. Entertainment venues, same issues. Happy with effort to get all vaccinated. Communication critical during this flux period.

BARRIERS: Anne Weidman reports planter boxes delivered starting May 26th. Garden club may create plant stakes identifying types of plants in boxes. Doing PR to recognize student involvement.

STREET CLOSURE: Martha Fuller Clark reported that still in ongoing discussions re closing Pleasant Street from Porter to Market Square.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Andrew Bagley spoke, kudos to committee for work.

Motion to adjourn and accept minutes from April 28th meeting. Vote was unanimous. Meeting closed at 3:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Lee, Acting Secretary.