Minutes for the April 7th, 2021 meeting of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee to Reopen Portsmouth 2021

Meeting location: Zoom

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: Answering present were: Voting Members: James Petersen, Co-Chair, Mark Stebbins, Co-Chair, Alan Gold, Anne Weidman, Jim Lee, John Akar, John Golumb, Karen Bouffard, Kathie Lynch, Martha Fuller Clark, Valerie Rochon, Nancy Carmer for Karen Conard, Kim McNamara.

Non-Voting Members: Councilor Petra Huda, Ben VanCamp

Absent: Ann Birner, Deborah Anthony, Jeff Goss

Health Update: Kathie Lynch gave the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Health update. Positivity is up to 7.1 this week from last week's 7. 40.4% of New Hampshire vaccine has had at least one dose of a vaccine. Reinforced importance of getting vaccinated and social distancing. No data available on how many refuse vaccine. Martha Fuller Clark asked best way to reinforce message to young people of importance of being vaccinated.

Kim McNamara is doing outreach to homebound and hospitality industry.

City Update: Received 47 applications for street dining, 2 new. Barriers; many already in place and needs are being matched with available supply. Portsmouth Farmer's Market will begin at Little Harbour School parking lot on Saturday, May 1st.

Tourism and Hospitality: Valerie Rochon reported camps, hotels busy on weekends, wedding booking increasing and more sidewalk traffic downtown. Staffing remains a big problem, looking to bring in more visa workers for summer. Asked what businesses wanted planters for their barriers, 11 takers so far. Mentioned need to longer term planning. State target for opening at 100% capacity is Memorial Day.

Barriers: Anne Weidman reported that reflectors have been placed on all barriers because of complaints about color being hard to see at night. We're under budget for planters thanks to generous discount from Ricci Lumber Company.

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Potting soil will be needed for planters and plants being grown will need to be supplemented from Wentworth Greenhouse. Anne Weidman moved to allocate $2,200 for potting soil and additional plants. Alan Gold seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote. Voting affirmatively: James Petersen, Co-Chair, Mark Stebbins, Co-Chair, Alan Gold, Anne Weidman, Jim Lee, John Akar, John Golumb, Karen Bouffard, Kathie Lynch, Martha Fuller Clark, Valerie Rochon, Nancy Carmer for Karen Conard, Kim McNamara.

Streets: Martha Fuller Clark discussed closing selected downtown streets such as Pleasant Street from Porter St. to Market Square on selected weekend, Questions to be worked out. ;

Public Comment: Andrew Bagley remarked that anyone could get vaccine that wanted it. Need to promote more.

Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn and passed unanimously by a roll call vote of all present voting members. Voting to adjourn: James Petersen, Co-Chair, Mark Stebbins, Co-Chair, Alan Gold, Anne Weidman, Jim Lee, John Akar, John Golumb, Karen Bouffard, Kathie Lynch, Martha Fuller Clark, Valerie Rochon, Nancy Carmer for Karen Conard, Kim McNamara.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Lee, Acting Secretary

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