DRAFT HEALTH BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE (BRC) MEETING MINUTES
11MAY2021

Voting members present: Kathie Lynch (Chair), Ann Birner (Minutes), Kim McNamara, Richard DiPentima, James Petersen
Non-voting city staff present: Stephanie Seacord, Toni McLellan

Action items below identify name of responsible party in bold font.

Kathie read the approved waiver for remote meeting participation during the pandemic and participants identified location and any others present at that location. A motion to approve the minutes of May 4th was made Ann and seconded by James. The minutes were approved without comment or discussion.

The dashboard was reviewed by **Kathie**, who will present it at the next Reopen BRC meeting. Graphs are trending in the right direction, some green areas showing in the US map, and NH hospitalizations are going down albeit slowly. There was an outbreak at Sullivan Co. Nursing Home despite high level of vaccination there. Monoclonal antibodies may be underutilized but are actively being promoted (e.g. television ads). Kim reported they are halfway through the 2nd hospitality clinic effort with over 800 recipients expected overall. The broad reach is important given regional feed of workforce into Portsmouth (*Keep in mind for final report*). Stephanie noted the US map in upper right is now by county rather than state, more informative; vaccination data are now better aligned (CDC vs NH DHHS). She will update with new vaccination data this afternoon.

Since the BRC last met, consensus was reached via email to forego effort to use local metrics as constructed by a member or city staff. Stephanie has suggested use of data by county from CovidActNow as an add-on to weekly database. Various approaches, value of the "vulnerability" rating, pros and cons of these were discussed at length. **Stephanie** will take Rockingham County-based data for NH, adding in adjacent counties including York (ME) and Essex (MA), editing "vulnerability" out, include links to CovidActNow, and send a sample to members for review.

FAQs with proposed revisions were circulated by email earlier. Kathie stressed again the need to remove outdated and superfluous information while updating, in the interest of accuracy and brevity.

- Testing FAQ: approved as circulated. No need to describe use of home test to support US reentry.
- Vaccine FAQ: approved as circulated pending adding final decision on Pfizer vaccine for ages 12-15.
- Post-COVID FAQ: still useful as vaccine rollout has been in waves and is ongoing. Formal approved term for "long COVID" is post-acute sequelae SARS-CoV-2 infection (PASC) as explained in the FAQ.
- Mask FAQ: lengthy discussion on relative safety of completely outdoor settings; several members are more confident than the CDC per its current guidelines. **Ann** will distribute a NYT summary on this topic to all. FAQ will not directly contradict CDC. Implications of Portsmouth Mask Mandate as related to vaccinated individuals will be removed from the FAQ.
- Daily Life FAQ: will borrow from Kids and COVID final approved update for sports and activities section.
- Kids and COVID FAQ: edited reference to amateur sports document and replaced with Best Practices. Add CDC quick reference for international travel. Parenting advice is beyond the scope of the FAQ.
- Post-Vaccination FAQ: updated to match CDC guidance.

Action items: the FAQ's on Testing, Post Covid, and Post Vaccination are ready. **Ann** will make further changes to Daily Life and Mask FAQs. **Kathie** will update Vaccines and Kids and Covid following final action of the CDC. All of these will be sent to **Stephanie** for final edit and posting. She is authorized by the BRC to remove graphics as she sees fit.

Question: are links in FAQs up to date? Generally same link used when documents (e.g. CDC) are updated. No need to specify date posted at the source. Notify Stephanie if any discrepancies noted.

Health Department is ready to discuss sundown for BRC at end of May, and availability of Kim, Toni and Kristin may become limited as of that time. Mayor's charter extends to June 30th but need not meet every week. Possibly one meeting in June to discuss ending mask mandate. **James** and **Kathie** to follow up.
There were no public comments. Kim made a motion to close the meeting, seconded by Ann, all agreed.