

Mayor's COVID-19 Community Task Force

Meeting Notes

October 16, 2020

Opening Remarks (Mayor Steve Hagerty)

- Many changes in the last week regarding the pandemic
- Midwest pandemic numbers are increasing. For example the state of Wisconsin is almost out of hospital bed capacity
- Evanston metrics continue to be stable overall; however, have increased the last two days
- The state reflected an increase in cases. The metrics for Region 10 are increasing
- One reason for the increase in numbers is cooler weather. People are indoors. Public health officials confirm the transmission is greater inside
- Concerned about the positivity rate, increase in the number of cases, and resident's mental health

Situation Report (Mayor Steve Hagerty)

- No update

Meeting Spotlight: Continued Response to the Pandemic (Greg Olsen, Public Health Manager)

- As of 10/15 daily case numbers have increased to 18 new cases, no deaths
- The new seven day average for new cases has increased to 8.57%
- Positivity rate metrics are measured daily and on a seven day average
- The 18 new cases represents roughly 3% of all residents who were tested
- The seven day positivity rate accounts for number movement throughout the week
- 1.97% was the positivity rate for 10/15
- The state's current threshold for the positivity rate is 8%
- Surrounding areas have been higher than the Evanston rate but continue to remain below the threshold
- Evanston is linked to Region 10 - the surrounding areas for Cook County
- Restrictions that impact the area are based on elements such as the positivity rate holding above 8% over a three day period
- To keep the positivity rate below the threshold will be a community wide effort
- The effects of the stay-at-home order did flatten the curve
- From June to September, Evanston's trend was below 50 cases per 100K residents
- Within the last week, metrics reflect a large spike in cases
- Illinois is at 160 cases per 100K residents
- Evanston daily testing metrics reflect a 24% positivity rate in April; however, as more residents are tested, the rate decreases
- Evanston needs to continue to seek the positivity rate trend downward
- Contact tracing staff has been diligent with follow up and recording results

- Low metrics in Evanston are in part due to the robust contact tracing efforts from the onset of the pandemic
- Illinois regional information is available on the IDPH website and shows items such as the positivity rate increases, hospital admissions, and ICU bed availability
- One study from the CDC mortality weekly report monitored transmission hotspots throughout the country - 767 counties
- A common theme was that as the positive rate increased among a younger demographic, a trend was followed by an increase in the positivity rate for an older population
- This dynamic may result in more hospitalization, more illness, and death
- This will be substantial to monitor because of indoor activity in the upcoming months
- Efforts for prevention need to be focused on the younger community to contain the spread
- Another study spoke about factors influencing young people to prevent the virus from spreading to family members
- Surveys and interviews were conducted to reveal common themes:
 - Peer pressure from friends
 - Social interactions
- Messaging towards the younger demographic can not be just the facts, but the realization you may pass this infection to loved ones
- Please feel free to visit the City's website for updated details on the virus

Sector Updates

Hospitals

- Northshore Evanston Hospital (**Matt Plofsky**)
 - 26 patients - 9 patients in ICU, 5 PUIs, and 5 patients are vented
 - Positivity rate has also increased to 9%
 - Confident in the plan for residential spikes for the virus
- Amita St. Francis (**Danielle Norman**)
 - 15 PUIs in house - 5 cases are confirmed, 4 patients in ICU, and 2 are vented
 - Also seeing an increase in the positivity rate
 - The infection prevention team informed the administration that 1 in 8 people are testing positive
 - Currently at 12% positivity rate

Senior Living (Mary Leary)

- Congregate housing providers are noticing an increase in the number of positive cases
- No meeting for the past week; however, she spoke with City officials for increasing meeting frequency to strategize on plan for the increase in cases going forward
- Will share best practices and lessons learned with congregate housing providers

Private Non-Profit (Monique Jones)

- Working group committee has decided to decrease the meetings
- Focusing on subcommittee efforts - twice a month and an additional 15 minutes
- Created another task force focusing on best practices for recovery efforts
- Erie health collaborated to offer testing with 24 hours turn around

Northwestern University (Dave Davis)

- No update

Education (Eric Witherspoon and Devon Horton)

- First quarter is complete and will remain closed for the second quarter (mid December)
- Remaining vigilant as we monitor numbers

Legislators

Jan Schakowsky's Office (Ann Limpco)

- Speaker Pelosi & Treasury Secretary Mnuchin spoke for over an hour on Thursday as they continue to try and work towards a stimulus agreement before the election.
- Speaker Pelosi has indicated that a number of important issues continue to divide negotiators, but progress is being made on the establishment of a national coronavirus testing program.
 - Speaker Pelosi and the Democrats had long demanded \$75B for implementation of a science-based strategy and program to test, trace, and treat the virus in addition to vaccine distribution
- Key remaining differences include:
 - Funding for state and local governments
 - Small business assistance
 - Working families assistance
 - Child-care funding AND
 - Liability waivers for companies that make it nearly impossible for workers to sue their company should they get sick from COVID 19. Congresswoman Schakowsky did an op-ed piece on this issue in the publication Roll Call and can be found [here](#). In addition, Representatives Schakowsky (IL-09), Bill Foster (IL-11), Robin Kelly (IL-02), joined by Democratic Policy and Communications Committee (DPCC) Cochair Debbie Dingell (MI-12) and Congressman Dean Phillips (MN-03) hosted a video press call for regional reporters this past Wednesday urging the Senate take action to defeat the COVID-19 virus.
- Beyond those particulars, Sen. McConnell indicated that he believed the price tag of the bill was too large for his Senate majority to pass. This was seen as a rebuff of the ongoing negotiations between Speaker Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Mnuchin.
- President Trump continues to try to blame Speaker Pelosi for this and outwardly expresses confidence that the Senate Republicans will vote for a deal if one is reached between Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and Speaker Pelosi

- Treasury Mnuchin is also expected to leave the country in the coming days, so it's unclear whether a deal will be reached.

Senator Laura Fine's Office (Laura Fine)

- Working on codifying telehealth within the state
- The Governor is signing an executive order to expand telehealth for one more month

Robyn Gabel's Office (Robin Gabel)

- Preparing for veto session
- Anticipating Governor announcements

Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz's Office

- No update

Commissioner Larry Sufferdin's Office (Adam Newman)

- No update

Business (Roger Sosa)

- Committees continue to meet weekly
- Will review survey information regarding winter protocols for restaurants
- Setting up a meeting with Economic Development staff to discuss findings on solutions for local businesses
- Collaborating with neighboring communities on business protocol for the upcoming season

Recovery (Kimberly Krull)

- Continuing interviews with taskforce sectors
- By October 30, there should be additional information for follow up

Mental Health (Adina Gooden)

- IL NAMI Conference in session
- Collecting resources for resident organizations
- The dashboard working group is continuing to collect data from information received

Faith-Based (Rabbi London)

- No update

Next Meeting: Friday, October 23 at 1:30 p.m.