

Mayor's COVID-19 Community Task Force

Meeting Notes

Friday, January 22, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

What's On My Mind - Mayor Hagerty

- Mayor Hagerty shared that he is feeling optimistic about the leadership that is to come as it pertains to the pandemic response.
- As it pertains to the vaccine, the goal is to get everyone vaccinated especially those priority groups.
- The government vaccination plan is not concrete at the moment. There is misinformation and changing protocol and processes. Mayor Hagerty is sharing concerns with state representatives.

Brief Prior Day's Situation Report

- Continues to look positive.
- EMS Region 10 is below an 8% positivity rate. The rolling average is at 7.9%. Evanston continues to be below the region's positivity rate. Chicago is at a 7.8% positivity rate. More beds are becoming available in the ICUs.
- Region 10 moved to tier 2 mitigation measures. Community centers will start to re-open. Gatherings would be limited to 10 or less. Recreation would be limited to 25% capacity.
- Cook County positivity rate continues to drop. The County is at a .93% infection rate.
- Evanston's 7-day moving average confirmed cases is less than 12.
- Evanston's positivity rate is at 1.32%. The cumulative positivity rate is at 3.4% and the City is averaging 12 confirmed cases.
- Testing has been high. More than 20,000 individuals have been tested for COVID-19. 250 individuals are currently ill. There have been 10 staff cases and 4 resident cases at long-term care facilities in Evanston.
- Evanston has received 7,600 doses of vaccine. Of those, 4,000 went to Northshore Hospital, 1,700 went to Amita Saint Francis, and 2,500 to the City of Evanston.

Today's Spotlight - Data Analysis / Vaccine Contact Forms

- Katie Kleimola, City of Evanston Public Health Data Coordinator, noted the City of Evanston's vaccination interest form has been available to the public since January 7. Over 36,000 individuals have indicated an interest in getting vaccinated. The City is currently sorting through the forms to identify those priority groups for vaccination.
- Currently, the City is working to have those 85 and older vaccinated. Over 8,000 individuals 65 and up have signed up to get vaccinated. Of the 8,000, 600 are 85 years of age and older. 2800 individuals are in the 75 to 84 age range.
- Individuals in Congregate Care facilities are the City's next priority group. Those individuals would be vaccinated through the CDC and through the CVS/Walgreens partnership. Facilities not eligible for the partnership would be vaccinated by the City.

1021 staff and residents in those homes have expressed interest in receiving the vaccine.

- After the Congregate Care Facilities, the next priority group is those individuals who fall into the 1B Essential Worker Category (education, grocery workers, transportation and logistics workers, postal workers, and those with chronic conditions). An estimated 8000 individuals are expected to fall into this category.
- Most individuals that complete the vaccination interest form will not be contacted until they are eligible to be registered for the vaccine. Individuals who registered would be sent a confirmation email. Vaccination of the priority groups depends on the allotment of vaccines the City receives.

Hospitals

- St. Francis
 - St. Francis has 25 Covid-19 positive patients, 4 in the critical care unit. Numbers have been stable for 6 weeks. Will be shifting from the 1A vaccination category to getting those in the 1B category vaccinated.
 - Coordinating with Lincolnwood, Skokie, Rogers Park, and South Evanston as it relates to vaccine distribution. Doing education seminars with a focus on Latinx and African American communities.
- North Shore
 - North Shore has a 12.07% positivity rate. 57 in-patients, 14 in ICU, and 6 PUIs. Starting to vaccinate those 65 years and older. The vaccine would be offered at Evanston, Northbrook, and Lake Bluff sites. Individuals who sign up would be receiving a scheduling ticket through the EMR portal when the vaccine becomes available. Regular updates related to vaccines would be provided on the website.
 - 100 participants signed up for the Mental health /first aid training. The training helps individuals to assist someone who is experiencing a mental health crisis or who have a substance abuse crisis. The program is open to the public.

Senior Living Center

- Vaccination rates are high, nearing 100% for residents. 2/3 to 98% of staff have been vaccinated. One senior living community is working with IDPH and the City of Evanston to be scheduled for their first vaccine clinic.

PNPs

- Greg Olsen, City of Evanston Public Health Manager, provided information to the group on vaccinations. Group requested a 1-page document on the city's vaccination plan. The Group wants to support the process as it pertains to getting information out to the public and clients. The group also suggested a vaccination campaign. The early childhood community is trying to figure out where they fall on the vaccination list.

Northwestern

- Start of the winter quarter is going well. NU conducted 27,000 tests since January. The positivity rate is at 1.4%. The positivity rate for undergraduates is .3%. 25 students in isolation/quarantine housing.
- Looking at spacing for individuals. NU's focus has shifted towards vaccination.

Schools

- District 65
 - Schools will open on February 16 for in-person learning.
 - The district will have an am and pm model.
 - Community partners have submitted proposals to assist students beyond the time they are scheduled to be with their teachers.
 - Middle school students would be returning for in-person learning. Half of the students would have in-person learning and the other half would be remote.
 - Staff members have been getting vaccinated through a partnership with Amita Health. Over 600 staff have signed up to be vaccinated.
- District 202
 - High school athletics are open. Starting to open in-person activities for students.
 - Exploring study centers/tutorial opportunities.

Legislative Updates

- Schakowsky
 - President Biden has signed several executive packages. Biden extended the federal moratorium on evictions; required agencies to prolong the moratorium on foreclosures through March, paused federal student loans interest and payments through September; required international travelers to obtain a negative covid test prior to traveling to the US., required social distancing and mask-wearing on federal property, reinstated ties to world health, and gave agencies the green light to use the Defence Production Act.
- Fine
 - Busy with constituent issues such as unemployment and fraud.
 - Receiving a lot of questions regarding school openings and activities.
- Gabel
 - Gabel named Assistant Majority Leader in the state legislature.
- Gong-Gershowitz
 - Continues to help constituents address unemployment and other challenges
- Comm Suffredin
 - A website is being developed for those individuals in the Northshore and Rogers Park area as it pertains to vaccine distribution.

Business

- Group is discussing how to aid new businesses.
- Restaurants looking forward to limited dining options.
- There is an increase in applications for PPP loans.
- The Business Group is hoping to be part of the vaccine information sharing.

Mental Health

- Group decided to offer a monthly program to Spanish-speaking residents through the library. The program will be offered every second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. and will begin in March.

Faith Leaders

- MLK service took place last Sunday. Residents could watch the service on the Second Baptist Youtube station.
- A local Evanstonian has been named by the Biden/Harris administration as Chief of Staff for the National Endowment of the Arts.

Next Meeting: Friday, January 29 at 1:30 p.m.

Evanston Interfaith Clergy and Leaders

This clergy group is open to all clergy and community faith leaders in Evanston. We come together to support one another as colleagues, to share resources for the well-being of our collective community, and to unite our voices for justice and liberation. We meet monthly, at this time via Zoom. Hopefully soon, we will meet again in person.

[Clergy Letter Against Hate](#)

If you would like to sign on to this letter of solidarity,
please contact [Rabbi Rachel Weiss](#) with your name, congregation and title (if applicable)

In the week leading up to the celebration of the life and legacy of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, two Evanstonians and their families were the victims of public hate crimes in our very own city. Elisabeth "Biz" Lindsay-Ryan was attacked with anti-LGBTQ vitriol and Carolyn Dykes Murray was attacked with racist ideology. Both assaults were threatening and traumatic, and directly undermine the values of equity, anti-racism, and justice that these Evanstonians stand for. Both homophobia and racism are branches that stem from the roots of White Supremacy. As Evanston clergy and leaders, and as human beings, we are appalled, we are saddened and we are angered.

It has long been said that the role of religion is to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." As people of faith, we surround District 65 School Board VP Lindsay-Ryan and 5th Ward Alderperson Candidate Dykes Murray with care and with respect. These hate-filled actions are unconscionable, and we commit ourselves and our communities to upholding the dignity of every human being and putting more love into our Beloved community. We must care for one another.

At the same time, we commit ourselves and our congregations to be places that challenge us to speak up and speak out, to see our community as sacred ground for change that only comes when we actively resist bigotry, White Supremacy, and violence in speech and action. We commit ourselves to sound a clarion call for justice even when it makes us uncomfortable.

For "justice to roll like thunder and righteousness like a mighty stream," we are called upon to respond when hatred and injustice rear their ugly head. We must continually work to create a more equitable society, demand respect for all human beings, and shatter the foundation of bias and systemic hatred that continue to undergird hateful behaviors and attitudes.

We will build this world with love (Psalm 89:3)

Signed,

Evanston Interfaith Clergy and Leaders