



**Community COVID-19 Task Force  
Meeting Minutes  
January 27, 2021**

*This meeting was held via Zoom.*

**1. Welcome**

Meeting called to order at 4:00pm.

Members present: Robert Whitelaw, Chair  
Rick Barber  
Rebecca Fox  
Terry Ann Lunt  
Charley LaFlamme  
Buzzy Roy  
Pamela Sawyer

Members absent: Kent Bridges  
Alice Pearce

Others present: Lt. Matt Buttrick, Ogunquit Police Department  
Erich Fogg, PA, York Hospital  
Phil Pickering, Superintendent, Ogunquit Sewer District

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the December 9, 2020 COVID-19 Task Force were accepted by the members in attendance.

**3. CDC Update**

**Charley LaFlamme**

- 463 new cases and 4 additional deaths today.

- Yesterday, 662 new cases and 11 deaths.
- The worst counties are Cumberland and York.
- Cumberland County has 144 new cases, with a total of 10,920.
- York County has a total of 8,179.
- Piscataquis has 193 and 1 death so far.
- Ogunquit is one of the lowest town's in the area.
- Kittery Point is 20-49, Ogunquit is 50-99.
- Cape Neddick is 92 positives.
- Wells 362, York had 387 according to the CDC.
- If break down by age, the older you get the less likely of getting it.
- The highest are group is the 50's followed by the 20's and then 30's.
- 80's and above are only 5.9% of the population.
- More deaths occur in the older population.
- More women have died in Maine (289) but more men have been hospitalized (764) compared to women (602).

**Erich Fogg, PA, York Hospital**

- Good news - last week did 1,180 tests at the drive-through, that's down from the peak around the holidays of around 1,800 per week. So seeing signs of a drop off of people requesting testing.
- The percent positive rates; last week were about 11.%, down to 6.8%.
- Only have 2 patients in the hospital, a few weeks ago had a high of 15.
- Numbers seem to be plateauing and/or declining.
- In the State of Maine have given well over 100,000 total vaccines, about 8% of total population. About 2% have received both doses.
- Averaging about 8 vaccines per 100 people in the State of Maine, which puts in the top third in the country.
- The State of Maine got 17,000 vaccines this week as part of its allotment, had ordered 25,000-28,000.
- York Hospital has spent hours preparing a public roll-out program.
- Reported that the drive-through at York Hospital has put through 35,000 in the last seven months.
- Discussion was held regarding vaccines.

**Comments/questions:**

- Charley LaFlamme
- Terry Ann Lunt
- Bob Whitelaw

- Rebecca Fox
- Pamela Sawyer
- Lt. Buttrick

#### 4. Vaccine Report

##### **Lt. Buttrick**

- As a town constantly monitoring updates and on calls with the State of Maine CDC as well as local contacts in York County.
- Aggressively working to ensure that have local vaccination clinics available to residents and have the most up-to-date information on how to get enrolled or signed up to receive a vaccination.
- Have started to work on logistics of transportation to get residents who need vaccinations and can't get to the vaccination site to provide transportation for those residents.
- Also starting to work with our partners to see what can be done for homebound seniors or people that can't leave their house (for any reason) to get the vaccine at home.
- The biggest frustration is that there is not a real supply of vaccine for the amount of those 65 and older who are eligible to receive the shot.
- Working with York County EMA and Maine Emergency Management as well as other State partners to get the backend logistics in place to be able to roll out when the supply comes online.

##### **Comments/questions:**

- Pamela Sawyer
- Carol Kane

#### 5. Water Treatment Project

Chair Whitelaw introduced Phil Pickering, Superintendent, Ogunquit Sewer District. Mr. Pickering is working on a project to look at waste through the OSD system .

##### **Phil Pickering, OSD**

- Have been looking at COVID biomarker since last spring to see if there was any benefit to run these tests on wastewater samples coming into the treatment plant.

- The virus does live in wastewater for up to 15-20 days.
- Last fall contacted UNH in Durham and set up a trial study with them for 2.5 months doing twice weekly samples. Were disappointed at the onset, not getting any biomarkers coming into the wastewater treatment facility but were just coming off a very wet fall which watered down the effluent.
- After the ground froze, started seeing some results. Not terribly consistent or terribly high.
- Got in touch with Bob Whitelaw and started sending him the results to see and share with the Task Force.
- Shortly after the Christmas and New Year's holidays had very sharp spikes.
- The testing was good for the OSD as it let them know that the virus survives all the way through the collection system and pumping stations.
- Received a grants study from UNH where they come in and test out the process all the way through.
- The good news is that long before it reaches disinfection the biomarker was completely gone.
- Due to budget constraints, do not plan on continuing testing.
- Effectiveness for the town, would continue to do the sampling and make sure that the samples got to UNH if the town would back them on the cost.
- Biomarkers can actually detect probably three to five days before actually showing symptoms.
- The costs of the tests are \$200 each, were doing 2 tests per week.

**Comments/questions:**

- Terry Ann Lunt
- Rebecca Fox
- Charley LaFlamme
- Bob Whitelaw
- Pamela Sawyer
- Peter Kahn
- Rick Barber

**6. Review of Recent Citizen Contact**

No recent citizen contacts.

7. **Old Business**

- Review Select Board Response to the Business Recommendation

Chair Whitelaw did not make the recommendations as he was pre-empted and rescheduled until the next meeting of the Select Board.

- Communication Working Group

**Pamela Sawyer**

Working with Lt. Buttrick regarding the website, what information is there, what needs to come down as it is old and outdated and to put the information on one COVID website.

Sent an email to the Town Manager asking her to re-prioritize this effort and to consider looking for funding to help to keep the citizens of the community informed of things that are happening in the COVID world.

**Terry Ann Lunt**

Since have to money to be able to hire a web designer, Lt. Buttrick has, for someone who is not trained but self-taught, has done an amazing job. Suggested that find some funds (re-allocate for communications) to be used for COVID-19 communications strategy for a web designer.

**Comments/questions:**

- Bob Whitelaw
- Rebecca Fox

8. **New Business**

There was no new business for the Task Force to act on.

9. **Public Comment**

**Comments/questions:**

There were no comments or questions from the public.

10. **Call for Motions and Recommendations to the Select Board.**

Motion made by Terry Ann Lunt and second by Pamela Sawyer to recommend to the Select Board to consider funding the continued testing of the effluent (OSD) once weekly for six months at \$200 per week; approved 6-2, with LaFlamme opposed and Roy abstaining.

This would be to provide the Task Force with data and information that could be used for communication, at the very least, and gathering scientific data that could help track asymptomatic spread.

Motion made by Terry Ann Lunt and second by Pamela Sawyer to reallocate from this year's operating budget up to \$7,000 to continue the communications work to be used to enhance the COVID-19 Task Force website with a one-time cost for design.

Rebecca Fox asked to table this recommendation until there was additional information.

Terry Ann Lunt withdrew her motion.  
Pamela Sawyer withdrew her second.

11. **Adjourn**

Motion made by Charley LaFlamme and second by Rick Barber to adjourn the meeting at 5:49pm; approved 8-0.

Next meeting will be on February 10, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl L. Emery, Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager