



MAYOR & COUNCIL
SPECIAL COVID-19 CONFERENCE CALL MEETING MINUTES

May 7, 2020

***Meeting minutes are transcribed in a summarized format.
Tape recording of actual discussion is available at Town Office***

Mayor Jacobs called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. In attendance were Vice Mayor Andrews, Councilmember Jones, Councilmember Edwards, Councilmember Collyer, Town Manager Resele and Acting Chief Dempsey.

New Business -

Mayor Jacobs felt it was important to have this meeting in light of the Governor's lifting of the restrictions that he did yesterday. It was somewhat of a surprise and it makes a difference to this community especially.

Mayor Jacobs wants everybody to know where we really stand as a community in this virus situation. She is on a conference call every morning with the Emergency Management Center along with Town Manager Bob Resele and Acting Police Chief Dempsey and it helps in knowing a little more about what is going on with the virus then perhaps the general public is hearing. It is important because things are very different from 2 weeks ago. You probably all heard about the outbreaks that centered around the poultry industry that started around the lower end of the Eastern Shore which got a lot of Tri-state Taskforce attention but now there are outbreaks around Galena which is new to us. More recently, within the last 2 days, an egg production operation and a mushroom operation in Warwick have had some outbreaks. The 3 poultry industry situations involve 30 employees at each facility and the mushroom operation includes 300 employees. There is a lot of serious testing being done today and tomorrow in cooperation with CDC Taskforce and

both Kent and Cecil County Health Departments at the mushroom plant. So, by Monday everybody should have a sense of what impact their testing will have on the residents here in Kent County. She wanted to share all of that, so everyone is aware that the possibility of infection is significant. All these locations were discovered late in the game and it is important that people realize that no matter whether you are already here or you will be someone new coming in as a result of the restrictions that are being lifted, we still have a very serious situation on our hands.

Mayor Jacobs also wants to talk about where we are in terms of some numbers. The State website is indicating Kent County as of today has 98 confirmed cases and 8 deaths. If you went and looked at the nursing home statistics that are being tracked, there are 74 cases between the residents and staff so that represent 75% of the confirmed cases here in Kent County. So, there is a majority of the cases are not community wide but again these outbreaks that are not being measured will probably affect these numbers. She would recommend that you go to the Maryland COVID website <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/> and see what is going on from one day to the next. There is also a Chestertown link <http://kenthd.org/covid-19/> that is tracking the change in the number from one day to the next that are relative to Kent County. Mayor Jacobs has asked the Health Department to get the extended information you see on that website for the County to view so everyone can see more of what is happening. The Governor has made the decision to ease up some restrictions and allow recreational boating, marina's, golf courses and campgrounds to open. So, that means is there will be increased traffic coming into the Town.

Mayor Jacobs said there is another website which is the Governor's Road Map to Recovery <https://governor.maryland.gov/recovery/> The building blocks of the plan focus on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Surge Capacity, Testing and Contact tracing at the State and County levels in order to further ease up on restrictions. Fundamentally, they feel they have achieved those performance parts so that the hospitals could handle any significant surge and they would be able to deal with the surge in terms of understanding where it is coming from and being in a position to react to it. The Governor said his information is indicating that the key statistics of hospitalizations was more or less flat over the last 8 days, he is including the flat part in 14-day downward trend called for by the recovery plan.

Mayor Jacobs had the chance to talk to some Rock Hall businesses today. The Marinas are still doing a good job working within the guidelines. They have been communicating with their customer base and they are expecting for at least the first

week or 2, primarily just having people in coming and working on their boats. Restrictions do not allow restaurants in the Marina's to be open but takeout service is allowed. Their staff is on 24/7 to help where needed. Restaurants like Harbor Shack will open Thursday, May 21st. for carry out service. Waterman's will open the weekend before Memorial Day to whatever extent they can. That will depend on how much further we get into Phase 1 and Phase 2 as it comes along.

When we met last time, Mayor Jacobs was talking in periods of 14 days in each phase. She thinks it is now changing because things are moving much more quickly in terms of folks at the State level are deciding what they think the next move should be and when.

Mayor Jacobs stated that what this whole situation boils down to at the end of the day, is personal responsibility for protection. Everybody, everywhere, needs to wear a face mask when in retail establishments, the Post Office, or any of the other essential services. Practice social distancing. The dynamics of the recovery are going to change and it's going to be up to the individual to just practice what is important to protect themselves. We still are under the Executive Order to Stay at Home.

Town Manager Resele's Comments – The Governor announced that beaches run by the DNR are open for exercise walking but no chairs, no blankets, and no picnicking. Rock Hall's beach is not a very large beach, walking would be limited. It has not yet been prepared properly to open for the summer. Recommended not opening the beach until next Wednesday pending more information from the Governor.

Acting Chief Dempsey said he agreed with the Town Manager because the beach is a point of congregation. He feels the beach should stay closed until we meet again on Thursday and see if the stay at home order is lifted. The Police Department's concern is congregation, lack of social distancing. Acting Chief Dempsey request the beach stay closed at this time. There is no easy way policing this pandemic. Folks that are visiting our community are coming from hotspots like Philadelphia, New Jersey and New York and we have to make sure our community protect itself against this.

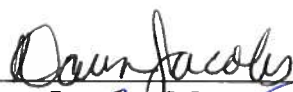
A small discussion about opening the beach continued. The Council decided to keep the Beach, Playgrounds, Rest Rooms, and the Pavilion at the Community Center closed until the next meeting on Thursday, May 14, 2020 pending further changes in the Governor's Recovery Plan.

A motion to adjourn the Special Workshop Meeting was made by Councilmember Collyer. Seconded by Councilmember Jones. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned 7:12 p.m.

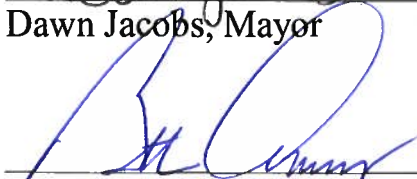
Respectfully Submitted:

Cheryl M. Butler

Approved by:



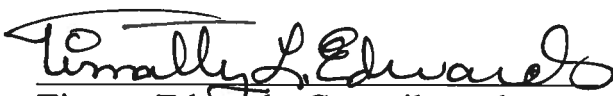
Dawn Jacobs, Mayor



Beth Andrews, Vice Mayor



Carolyn Jones, Councilmember



Timmy Edwards, Councilmember



Eleanor Collyer, Councilmember