

Neighborhood Association Town Hall

Virtual Meeting

Friday, May 22, 2020

Attendance

Borough: Douglass Shontz, Tom Fountaine, Natalie Vercillo, Tom King, Ronald Filippelli, Brian O'Donnell, Jesse Barlow, John Gardner, Roger Dunlap

PSU: Matthew Ferrari, Charima Young, Meg Small

Neighborhood Associations: Carrie Jackson, Donna Queeney, Eric White, Glenda Palmer, Gordon Kauffman, Mark Huncik, Mark Johnson, Stephen Smith, Steve Mower, Susan Rogacs, Thomas Daubert

COVID-19 Data for Action Project

- Studying the Impacts of COVID-19 on the Centre County Community
 - Measuring human behavior, social relationships and infectious disease dynamics
- Comprehensive look at these factors and to collaborate with community to get their voice in the decision-making process (short term and long term)
- Purpose of study
 - Pandemic was unprecedented
 - We don't have prior experience to rely on how to respond to such an event
 - Each community has a unique experience with the pandemic
 - Prevent transmission as University resumes operations
 - Promote county-wide resiliency over the next months and years
- Looking for local input and date to help with future local decision making
- Centre County is a unique community means we need to understand our situation as best as possible
- Expect to have a large population influx with students returning, so researchers will continue collecting data
- Potential to bring infected individuals from parts of the country and around the world
- Our community (related to the pandemic) is unique because we know eventually the students will come back and have new impacts on the community
- Measuring the biology of COVID-19 in relation to the community as well
- Study will unfold over the next 1-2 years
- Critical piece is the initial survey to Centre County residents
 - Please encourage residents to participate
 - Need a broad representation of Centre County
- Survey Logistics
 - 10-minute survey
 - Runs through June 12th (may extend date)

- Any adult residing in Centre County can participate
- For every 100 responses = \$100 to the local food pantry (up to \$10,000)
- Respondents would be able to tell us if they would be interested in participating in next phase of study
- Survey will vet out community members who fled the area during the pandemic

Centre County Community Cohort

We will offer repeated testing of participants:

1. for active coronavirus infection (swabs or saliva)
2. for antibodies to coronavirus (blood/serum)

Will quantify amount of active and undetected coronavirus transmission AND duration of immunity

3. In-depth surveys about behavior and impact of coronavirus control efforts

Will identify risk categories and allow targeted communication/education efforts.

The diagram shows two cohorts: 'Resident Cohort' and 'Possible Returning Student Cohort'. Testing occurs in June, August, September, December, January, and May. A 'Repeat in 2021' label is at the bottom.

- Hopeful Intentions: Build a long-term multi-year study of both populations
 - Student community and long-term residents
- Future Surveys & Data
 - public perception of a new vaccine
 - How successful public health interventions are going forward
- How to participate : <http://covid-19.ssri.psu.edu/data4action>



Community Survey May 18th – June 12th

How to Participate

- Online at: Data4Action.psu.edu
- By phone toll-free at (814)753-4799
- Monday –Friday 12:00p.m. – 7:00p.m.
- Contact data4action@psu.edu

Topics

- Demographics
- Health concerns
- Employment impacts
- Small business impacts
- Preventive behaviors
- Information sources

- So much of public health comes from civically engaged, but we want all voices in Centre County to be heard to really learn the needs of the community
 - Call to action for broad representation of Centre County
 - Please spread outreach materials provided

Q&A on Study

Q: Is your goal also to get data now in this phase from students who are in town (or just permanent residents)?

A: Survey is trying to understand individuals living and experiencing the pandemic right now. Whether they be long term residents or students. We want to follow these individuals throughout the study.

(Survey contains eligibility questions for students not living in Centre County now)

Q: Charima offered materials – can she just go ahead and send them so they can be appended to the notes that will come from this meeting?

A: Yes, will be included with notes

Q: Ideally, how many total respondents do you hope to receive for this first phase?

A: Looking for a broad representation of the county. Goal would be 30,000 participates total

Researchers will use county demographic data, so it's reflective of county. If not, we will use special outreach methods to engage those hard to reach communities

Q: Can PSU provide an update next week on response rate so we can outreach again?

A: Yes, we are tallying the number of respondents daily and are happy to update response numbers.

Researchers are in close communications with county officials to reach other townships (electronic flyers, media, etc.)

Q: I don't understand purpose and outcome of this survey? Can you provide an easy and concise sentence before they commit themselves?

A: Bottom line is to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the Centre County community that will in turn assist policy makers to target or use resources more effectively. There are professional communication materials that have been developed that will be provided.

Q: Will results from this survey be used by PSU to decide when and how Penn state will open?

A: Matt Ferrari is part of one of PSU's Coronavirus Task Force Team. "All I can say the info will be brought to those committees, but committees have their own survey they are distributing as well"

Business Needs Survey - Douglas Shontz

- This survey, which was launched last week, is for businesses in the Borough of State College to help develop programs to assist businesses to bounce back after covid-19

Link to survey: <https://polco.us/surveys/8403d877-eb8e-446d-9b50-82c3d9110e08>

Parking - Tom Fontaine

- Beginning Tuesday, May 26th overnight parking will be enforced.
- Enforcing 2am – 6am parking restrictions (only downtown meter district) will occur for street sweeping and other maintenance issues
- The Borough will regularly assess the other parking demands to determine when any additional parking enforcement changes are necessary.
- Establishing a 2-hour parking limit in the downtown will most likely be next step

Borough Financial Report – Tom Fontaine

Regarding the Borough's financial report presented at the Council meeting on Monday, the figures shown in that report seemed to be somewhat different than what was reported a few weeks ago (700K loss in parking revenue and 1.7MM total loss so far). Can you provide detail now or at our next virtual meeting?

The March report (slide below) estimated that the Parking Fund would realize a revenue loss of \$729K through May 31, 2020 (due to COVID19). I think this is the \$700k number you mention below.

The report (slide below) as of the end of April 2020 shows an actual YTD loss of revenue in the Parking Fund of \$417,471.

The March report also shows an Operating Net (positive) Variance of \$1,708,402. This positive variance is primarily due to better than budget collections in Realty Transfer Tax.

COVID-19 Impacts (through May)

| Description | Y-T-D Costs | Total Estimated |
|---|-------------|-----------------|
| Technology and PPE Costs | \$13,000 | \$15,000 |
| Police, PW, Health Services Overtime | | \$63,000 |
| Parking Fund Lost Revenue | | \$729,000 |
| General Fund Meter Lost Revenue | | \$200,000 |
| General Fund Violations | | \$122,000 |
| Refuse Lost Revenue (Commercial Accounts) | | \$250,000 |
| Sanitary Sewer Lost Revenue | | \$320,000 |
| Earned Income Tax | | ? |
| Local Services Tax | | ? |

COVID-19 Impacts (Y-T-D April)

| Description | Amount |
|---|------------------|
| General Fund Lost Revenue (Meters & Fines) | \$132,864 |
| General Fund COVID-Related Operating Expenses | 23,147 |
| General Fund Total Impact | \$156,011 |
| Parking Fund Lost Revenue | \$417,471 |
| Total Impact Y-T-D April 2020 | \$573,482 |

Q: Boroughs plan to reopen and students return in the fall?

A: To date the Borough does not have much information from Penn State on their plans to hold in-person classes. Their decision impacts the Borough's plans. There are numerous PSU Committees working on the issue and brainstorming ideas about whether to bring students back for the Fall and if so, with what precautions. We hope to know more after June 15th.

The Borough is beginning to focus on more accessible testing and contact tracing in the event students return. Social distancing will be very challenging. As we learn more about PSU's plans and we know more about how our community responds while in the Yellow and then Green phase, our plans for the Fall will become clearer.

Q: Mask wearing and voting?

A: Voters cannot be required to wear a mask but are highly encouraged to do so.

Q: How is the Borough responding and enforcing open container ordinance with new "cocktail to go law? Or will open container ordinance be waived?

A: There are no plans to waive the Borough's Open Container ordinance. Staff researched this issue after this meeting and the new law that took effect on May 21, 2020 does not permit open containers of alcohol to be sold and removed from the establishment. Though they are "cocktails to go," they must be served in a closed container and persons walking in public places with an open container of alcohol would be in violation of the ordinance and appropriate enforcement action would be taken.

Q: Update on progress of Memorial Stadium?

A: Optimistic the stadium will be open for fall football season, assuming high school football is held with spectators this Fall.

Q: Any update on State College Spikes?

A: No updates, just speculations in the newspaper

Q: Is there any updated on the user agreement for the South Track?

A: The SCASD is currently reviewing the agreement but the Borough has not taken any action on it yet. It is likely this will be reviewed in June when we will have more updates.

Q: Ferguson Township reported 3 police officers contracted COVID-19...any issues at Borough PD? IS PD still fully staffed?

A: State College police is fully staffed and healthy. No Borough Employees have tested positive for COVID-19. Borough employees continue to take temperatures, wear masks in the office, and work remotely whenever possible