

Minutes – BRC Meeting – April 26, 2021

Russ called the meeting to order at 12:01

Committee Members in attendance: Russ Grazier, Barbara Massar, Larry Yerdon, Jason Goodrich, Bill Humphreys, Robin Albert, Renee Giffroy, Kathleen Somssich and Nihco Gallo (on phone).

Also attending: Nancy Carmer, Stephanie Seacord, Mayor Rick Becksted and Monte Bohanan (for Tina Sawtelle).

The motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Russ proposed meeting every other week and alternating with City Council meetings so that decisions can be presented to the City Council at their next meeting to prevent time delays. Our next meeting will be on May 10.

A discussion regarding the expiration of the mask ordinance on June 30th followed.

Mayor Becksted: the City will not be changing its mask ordinance until the end of June and thereafter any changes will be in 1 month increments.

Russ asked if the organizations would initiate new guidelines, if the city ordinance changes.

Larry: Strawberry Banke will require masks until September unless the City issues changes.

Jason: SRT asks patrons to wear masks. If a patron refuses, they are asked to leave.

Renee: Staff & board of the NHAA want to continue with the mask mandate. It's easier to enforce the mandate with patrons when the City declares the mask mandate.

Robin: The Portsmouth Discovery Center will continue with the mask mandate. She feels more guests would leave if others are unmasked.

Kathy: WSCA, NHTP and Historic New England will continue the mask mandate and have no plans to change at the moment.

Barbara will keep an eye on the CDC. Their outdoor guidelines will impact Pro Portsmouth.

Russ: There is talk of regulations that would possibly differentiate between indoor (masks) and outdoor (no masks). If that is the case, the organizations should make straightforward recommendations based on science.

Nancy: The surveys indicated that patrons prefer a mask mandate to keep safe.

Stephanie: The Mayor's BR Committee on Health is following the CDC, State and Dr. Chan, all of whom support a mask mandate.

Russ: This committee should wait until the next meeting when the large presenting organizations are present to formulate a recommendation for City Council.

Monte: The Music Hall has yet to see a large return of patrons, some of whom will need "reentry training" to feel more confident.

Robin suggested that Russ craft a draft of a recommendation that we can discuss at the next meeting.

Russ agreed and will ask Beth to join him and asked for other volunteers to help. They will present their draft at the next meeting on May 10th.

Russ adjourned the meeting at 12:36.

Submitted by Kathleen Somssich