

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Town Clerk's Office

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL

The Public Safety Committee meeting was called to order on Monday, March 9, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers. On roll call, Committee Chair Zeidman and Committee Member Araskog were both found present.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee Chair Zeidman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS – None.

V. WELCOME/ INTRODUCTIONS

Margaret A. Zeidman, Committee Chair

Committee Chair Zeidman announced that the first part of the Public Safety Committee meeting will be dedicated to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Outbreak. She introduced the panel that would be speaking on the topic which included, Town Manager Kirk Blouin, Chief of Fire Rescue Darrell Donatto, Division Chief of Emergency Medical Services Sean Baker, Good Samaritan Medical Center Dr. George Gurdock, and Chief of Police Nicholas Caristo.

Town Manager Blouin provided a brief overview of how the Town is preparing and responding to the spread of Covid-19.

Committee Chair Zeidman offered a thank you to Mr. Bill Metzger, the Palm Beach Civic Association and Adriana Delgado of the Palm Beach Daily News for their support and helping to spread the word. She also offered words of clarity and comfort with regards to what is happening in the news.

Committee Chair Zeidman presented a PowerPoint regarding an overview of the Novel Coronavirus, COVID-19, symptoms and transmission, what the public can do to stay healthy: self-isolate, wash hands for 20 seconds, disinfect surfaces, cough or sneeze into tissue or elbow and keep hands away from face. In addition, Chair Zeidman reviewed the guidelines for isolation of COVID and persons. She defined what qualifies as a pandemic, the numbers of cases around the world and included an example of a case study.

VI. PRESENTATION

Dr. George Gurdock, Good Samaritan Medical Center

A. “How do I know this is not just the flu or a cold?”

Dr. George Gudock, Good Samaritan Medical Center, presented insight on “How do I know this is not just the flu or a cold?” He spoke regarding the differences between a cold, the flu, or Covid-19, noting the symptoms of Covid-19 and some of the developments since the outbreak started.

B. Emergency Room Protocols for Covid-19

Dr. Gudock provided an overview of the procedures used by the hospital and by the Palm Beach Fire Rescue during a practice drill. Additionally, commenting on healthcare provider’s protective gear and why it is necessary. Dr. Gudock spoke regarding how screen procedures have changed for anyone entering the hospital whether the person is a visitor or a potential Covid-19 case.

C. Criteria for Isolation, Diagnosis & Admission

Committee Chair Zeidman asked Dr. Gudock to explain what “shortness of breath” really means. In response to her question, Dr. Gudock provided an explanation of the Covid-19 symptoms and how a patient would feel if they experienced “shortness of breath.”

Committee Chair Zeidman asked Dr. Gudock to provided additional information on how to test for Covid-19. In response, Dr. Gudock expressed currently testing is limited but, most people will be able to be treated at home and will be fine. The test is a nasal swab, the swab is sent off to the hospital lab, if it is suspected to be Covid-19 the sample will be sent to the Department of Health and a confirmation from the Center for Disease Control. 36:35

Committee Member Araskog inquired about symptoms related to Covid-19 cases in California, what to do if you have mild, moderate and severe symptoms, and how long the incubation period is for Covid-19. Dr. Gudock provided a detailed response to each question stressing each person is affected slightly different but, if symptoms are severe call 911 allowing emergency services to provide supportive care.

VII. FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

A. The Fire Department’s Role Regarding Covid-19 *Darrel Donatto, Fire Rescue Chief*

Darrel Donatto, Fire Rescue Chief, provided an overview of the Palm Beach Fire Department’s Role regarding the response to Covid-19 emphasizing the role of educating the public on the science of the virus, staff preparation for higher emergency services and personal responsibilities to protect yourself. He explained Palm Beach Fire Rescue is committed to the residents, visitors and its employees’ overall well-being and safety by having a great emergency plan in place to ensure all departments are prepared and ready to respond.

B. Covid-19 Case Study and Protocols *Sean Baker, Fire Rescue Division Chief*

Sean Baker, Fire Rescue Division Chief of Health Services, provided a detailed presentation of operational tasks, protocols regarding communication in both Fire Rescue and Police Departments, paramedic response including what to expect when services come to your home, hospital notification regarding strict respiratory precautions, process of transitioning a possible Covid-19 patient from ambulance to hospital and the disinfectant procedure for equipment, crew and truck. He concluded that a successful trial drill was executed with the staff of Good Samaritan Hospital to identify any issues or changes that needed to be implemented before an actual incident happened.

1 Fire Chief Donatto commented that every emergency service department in Palm Beach County is
2 communicating closely with each other and reinforced that everyone has planned and remains
3 prepared.
4

5 VIII. POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

6 *Nicholas Caristo, Chief of Police*
7

8 A. Police Response to Covid-19
9

10 Nicholas Caristo, Chief of Police, briefly reviewed the Police Department's Response to Covid-19
11 including safety protocols in police patrol cars, inside the department's building and close
12 communication with the Fire Department as the issue develops.
13

14 ***Clerk's Note: Committee Chair Zeidman called for questions from the citizens before the Covid-19 part of the***
15 ***agenda was completed.***
16

17 Communications/Questions from Citizens for the Panel:
18

- 19 1. Lew Crampton, Town Council Member, thanked the Public Safety Committee for having the
20 Covid-19 forum at the meeting, inquired if enough testing kits are available for our area and where
21 they are coming from and if there any cases of Covid-19 in Palm Beach County.
22

23 Dr. Gurdock explained the answer is still unknown as to if our area has enough kits available, the
24 kits that are available are coming from Miami, Tampa and Jacksonville and only one case of
25 Covid-19 has been confirmed near our area.
26

27 Fire Chief Donatto commented that testing kits are a means of offering statistical information and
28 regardless of a positive test for Covid-19 or not, the person will be treated the same as someone
29 with a severe respiratory illness.
30

- 31 2. Mary Robosson, Palm Beach Civic Association, asked for guidance regarding cancelling or
32 postponing large benefits and luncheons that are coming in the next few weeks.
33

34 Dr. Gurdock, Committee Chair Zeidman and Committee Member Araskog explained the Town
35 can only suggest that everyone practice social distancing, look at how the spread of the virus
36 develops, take steps to postpone or cancel large conferences and only attend events that are
37 absolutely necessary.
38

- 39 3. Catherine Lily, condominium resident in Palm Beach, asked for guidance regarding people who
40 have travelled to restricted places, are sick and choose not to follow protocols.
41

42 Fire Chief Donatto provided the contact information for the Palm Beach County Health
43 Epidemiology Department and explained an investigation will be completed regarding the issue.
44

45 Discussion ensued regarding how local government does not dictate how the public should
46 respond to such an issue at this time, personal responsibility is important to contain the spread of
47 the virus, explanation of what the Town is doing such as education, planning and preparing for
48 next steps in dealing with Covid-19 and the guidelines that emergency management policies
49 follow.
50

- 51 4. Donald Singer, Co-Chair of the Citizens Association, requested that the Town provide any
52 additional information to share with the residents and the Citizens Association will assist with

1 distribution.

2
3 Discussion ensued among the panel regarding proper hand washing techniques, Covid-19 cases
4 where an individual has contracted it two times, being proactive and socially responsible. Lastly,
5 be vigilant about not getting sick.

6
7 Committee Chair Zeidman closed the comment and question session and thanked the panel.

8
9 ***Clerk's Note: Committee Chair Zeidman resumed the general public safety portion of the meeting with the***
10 ***Police department update.***
11

- 12 B. Crime Statistics Update
 - 13 C. House and Senate Bill Amendments Regarding Drones
 - 14 D. Recent Incidents
 - 15 E. Anti-Crime Unit
 - 16 F. South Florida Auto Burglary Task Force
 - 17 G. Lake Trail Safety
 - 18 H. Valentine's Day Traffic Update
 - 19 I. Behavioral Officer and Chaplains Unit
- 20

21 Police Chief Caristo provided an overview of the crime statistics explaining the reason the Town's
22 statistics are low is due to the strong relationship with our community, the department being proactive
23 in using an Anti-Crime Unit and having a detective involved in the South Florida Auto Burglary Task
24 Force. He spoke regarding recent incidents involving immigration landings and drug smuggling on the
25 beaches within Town describing the date, who was involved, the outcome of the event and expressed
26 how well trained the Police Department is in handling these situations. He also asked that residents do
27 not call 911 for information on the events unfolding instead, look at the Town's social media accounts
28 for updates.

29
30 Police Chief Caristo discussed the House and Senate Bill amendments regarding drones explaining
31 that the bills will not be passed due to resistance at the Senate level. He noted that the Police
32 Department was interested in the use of the drone to assist with enforcement on the Lake Trail due to
33 selective enforcement. He informed the committee that signs have been ordered for the entrances of
34 the Lake Trail that will include the Ordinance information, no motorized vehicles and the speed limit.

35
36 Police Chief Caristo an overview of the Valentine's Day traffic issue within Town explaining the
37 several traffic incidents, the Presidential visit, construction in West Palm Beach and the malfunctions
38 with the bridges built up to cause such a hectic day.

39
40 Police Chief Caristo provided an update regarding the addition of a Behavioral Service Officers and
41 the Local Chaplin Program to the Police Department staff. He explained that Behavioral Service
42 Officers provide follow up in domestic abuse cases, referrals for mental illness services and to act as
43 a liaison regarding the Department for Children and Families. The Local Chaplin Program will provide
44 services to residents coping with an incident.

45 Discussion ensued regarding thanks to the Police Department for providing the additional services,
46 children's safety crossing Coconut Row to the Mandel Recreation Center and safety crossing Seaview
47 Avenue from the Palm Beach Day Academy.

48
49 In response, Chief Caristo explained that he would speak with Carolyn Stone, Director of Business
50 Development and Operations to work out specific times for additional policing or crossing guards.
51
52

IX. CANE "BUFO" TOAD UPDATE
Julie Araskog, Committee Member

Committee Member Araskog provided a short story of a personal experience of her pet having an encounter with a Cane "Bufo" Toad and commented on two families that have lost their pets in a similar situation. She continued with an informational Power Point presentation regarding Cane "Bufo" Toads and suggested looking at the Town's page regarding this topic. The presentation included a description of the toad, how the toxins affect animals and humans, how to care for your pet once encountering or biting this species of toad, deterring Cane Toads from private property, recommendations of eradicating this amphibian from the Florida Wildlife Commission, and a brief look at the Town's website in this regard.

Jennifer, Queens Lane, provided her story of her dog that passed away due to an encounter with a Cane Toad to bring awareness to this topic and suggested collecting data to help protect residents and their pets.

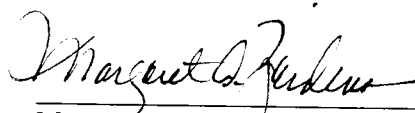
Discussion ensued on techniques to eliminate tadpoles in fresh bodies of water and providing resources for people to use privately.

X. ANY OTHER MATTERS- None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the Public Safety Committee adjourned at 4:20 pm on March 9, 2020.

APPROVED:


Margaret A. Zeidman, Committee Chair

PREPARED BY:


Antonette Fabrizi, Board Secretary

ATTEST:


Patricia Gayle Gordon, Acting Town Clerk

4/15/2020
Date