

# Burleigh-Morton COVID-19 Task Force

## Business Community Subcommittee

### MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 13, 2020

3:30 PM via Teams

**PRESENT:** Brian Ritter, Sheri Grossman, James Eastin, Dot Frank, Renae Moch, Erin Ouada, Dawn Kopp, Jennifer Wilson, Kayla Hieb, Maxine Herr, Chuck Clairmont, Scott Staudinger

1. **Introduction:** Brian Ritter called the meeting to order at 3:32 PM
2. **Discussion:** Brian opened the agenda with an introduction to the three primary discussion points, which were:
  - a. **Are there specific industries in which employees should be encouraged to test regularly? If so, how do we encourage them to do so?** Sheri, James and Kayla outlined their respective testing procedures after which Sheri expressed concern over how long it can take to get test results backs. James expressed the same concern sharing an example where an employee didn't get their test result back for 9 days during which time they couldn't work. James added that it would be beneficial for employers to know exactly where to go to get tested and how long it would take to get results. Erin noted that testing result times are improving rapidly while Renae noted that we should direct businesses to static testing sites which can be found here: <https://www.health.nd.gov/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/symptoms-testing-care/where-get-covid-19-test> Dot asked about the frequency of false positives and who generally is paying for employee testing? Erin responded that testing is free at static testing sites and false positives are rare, but generally occur after rapid tests in ERs. Finally, Chuck expressed concern he receives from employers about the environment they're working in, so how do we encourage being safe at work?

- b. **Do members of the Bismarck-Mandan business community need to be reminded of the ND Smart Restart Guidelines that directly their businesses?** Sheri agreed that employers have generally forgotten about them or simply disregard them to which James added that some employers do so (especially in bars & restaurants) because there's a balance between making sales and being safe. Jen agreed that the guidelines should be redistributed to businesses of all kinds including retailers. Chuck then asked who is policing the guidelines to which members of the subcommittee responded that there is no enforcement, or at least none that is seen. Regarding masks, members of the subcommittee agreed that there appears to be a growing acceptance in the community, but some local businesses are reluctant to require them if they're seen as the outlier because customers may choose to go elsewhere. In response, Chuck asked "How do we make it cool to comply?" Dawn relayed an example from California where posters are displayed at participating businesses to ensure customers that they're complying with regulations and the idea was put forth that perhaps a coalition of participating businesses could be formed? Both Dawn and Dot also noted that there are similar provisions as part of the Economic Resiliency Grant Program recently introduced by the State. Maxine asked if it's helped Laughing Sun that they require masks for staff and have stepped up their own voluntary policies to which he responded that they haven't had any positives since, but stressed the need for leadership in each place. Kayla noted that mask awareness has grown even within their own facilities to which Jen agreed citing Kirkwood Mall customers as an example. Lastly, Scott asked about concerns regarding PPE availability citing their own efforts at Cloverdale to which Chuck responded that he had not heard any.
- c. **How can we engage those businesses who are organizing large meetings, gatherings, etc. that may not be a part of a school or other institution?** Sheri reported that most large gatherings have been cancelled through the Fall, but that Bismarck-Mandan Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) Staff has developed recommendations for meeting planners. Brian asked if Sheri would be share those examples to which Sheri

said they would. Chuck added that given his own experience at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, he believes that venues need to be more pro-active in preparing protocols and that we should be sharing examples as noted previously. In area major employers such Cloverdale and Bobcat, have both taken steps to mitigate the interaction of large numbers of employees by enacting measures such as limiting entrances, staggering break times, making social distancing and more. Both Kayla and Scott also noted that given the measures enacted in the workplace, they believe their employees comply with best practices more outside of the workplace as well.

**3. Next Steps & Next Meeting:** Members of the subcommittee agreed to meet again next week Thursday, August 20 at 3:30 PM and that Brian would send out the virtual invite. Regarding next steps & action items, members of the subcommittee members agreed to address the following:

- a. Sheri: will contact Grand Forks and other communities to determine if there are guidelines / protocols / best practices being developed at the community level
- b. Dawn: will investigate if there are examples similar to that of San Bernardino where the community somehow promotes businesses who are complying with restart guidelines
- c. Dot: will develop a sample social media post regarding the most recent ND Smart Restart Guidelines so that subcommittee members can share them as part of a coordinated effort to make sure businesses comply with them
- d. Brian: will develop a sample social media post regarding testing sites & times so that the subcommittee members can share them as part of a coordinated effort to ensure that businesses know about them

**4. Adjourn:** There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 PM.