

# SALISBURY AREA CORONAVIRUS RECOVERY TASK FORCE



## Mayor's Emergency Business Roundtable – Henceforth known as the Salisbury Area Coronavirus Recovery Task Force

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting – March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – 2:00pm, SVN Miller Conference Room, 208 E. Main Street, Salisbury, MD

### Minutes

#### I. Welcome

#### II. Acknowledgement of those present

- a. **In room:** Mayor of Salisbury Jake Day, Brent & Amy Miller of SVN Miller, Bill Chambers CEO of Salisbury Chamber of Commerce, Bill McCain Councilman at Large Wicomico County, Mike Dunn CEO of Greater Salisbury Committee, Donna Hamlin Superintendent of Wicomico County Schools, Steve Leonard CEO of Peninsula Regional Health System, Laura Soper Director of Business Development City of Salisbury, Dave Ryan Executive Director of Salisbury Wicomico Economic Development, Wayne Strausburg Director of Administration Wicomico County.
- b. **Online:** Representatives from the other 7 municipalities in Wicomico County, local business leaders, the public

#### III. Brief/Emergency Status Update

- a. **Mayor Jake Day:** City Council work session is not cancelled, but the public is encouraged to watch online. Essential City functions such as police, fire, EMS, waterworks, wastewater treatment, and homeless services continue to be provided. Free parking downtown and all billing and permitting is to be done online. If you are in need of real estate transactions and deed transfers, contact the City of Salisbury via email [klundy@salisbury.md](mailto:klundy@salisbury.md) [ccarpenter@salisbury.md](mailto:ccarpenter@salisbury.md) and drop off your packet in the lobby of the Government Office Building to be processed.
- b. **Wayne Strausburg, Director of Administration, Wicomico County:** Executive Culver released a declaration of emergency earlier today. Wicomico County Health Department is the lead agency for the County in this emergency and is supported by all county departments. All departments are operating with central staff only, all county offices are closed to the public, including the Civic Center and the tourism welcome center. GOB lobby open to accept mail and documents for processing, from 8-4PM daily. The Newland Park Landfill and convenience centers will remain open normal hours to allow for trash removal to continue. The Upper Ferry and Whitehaven Ferry will be closed. Call 410-341-4600 for more information. Postponing the April 28<sup>th</sup> primary election until June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Preakness is

being considered for postponement. They are imposing restrictions on terminal access at BWI, and the MVA will be operating on restricted hours.

- c. **Steve Leonard, CEO of Peninsula Regional Health System:** We have no confirmed cases in PRHS primary service areas. At this stage we are focusing on education and awareness, and working with the health department to put out as much information as we can. More information can be found on the Health Department's website as well as on peninsula.org. The state has asked us to prepare a surge capacity plan should there be more spread, and we have an amazing team with experience preparing for worse situation such as Ebola. We have significantly reduced visitation hours, which is especially important for other entities such as nursing homes. The community will also see us implementing different triage processes on campus, such as the tent outside of the emergency department to screen patients, and if they don't need care, we recommend that they go home.
- d. **Mike Dunn, CEO of Greater Salisbury Committee:** We can report that Pohanka Auto had a great weekend, Chris Eccleston at Delmarva Veteran Builders reports that there are no signs of cancellation of contracts. The Greater Salisbury Committee has been around since 1967 and one of our missions is to help when there are problems and challenges facing our community and today is a great example of that. Bill Chambers and I had a good conversation with Eli Modlin from Salisbury University about their Perdue School of Business possibly seeing what they can do to help out.
- e. **Donna Hanlin, Superintendent of Wicomico County Schools:** We do our very best to put out information on our Facebook page, our website, parent messages and this is just another great opportunity to let people know what's happening in the schools related to COVID-19. Currently our closure is for two weeks- through March 27<sup>th</sup>. I have no update on that, so we are planning for that but we are also planning for the possibility of closure beyond that. We are cleaning and sanitizing every classroom, and we have a limited team of food service workers working to provide three meals, in bundles, for all of the students who need them. Locations are listed on our website and open from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM daily. The student must be present to receive the meals, any student up to the age of 18 can pick up a meal bundle. Those locations are: **East Salisbury Elementary, Fruitland Primary, Pemberton Elementary, Pinehurst Elementary, Prince St. Elementary, Salisbury Middle, Camden Community Garden in Salisbury, Nelsons United Methodist Church/Epoch Dream Center in Hebron, Renovate Church, Delmar, Westside Volunteer Fire Department, and Zion United Methodist Church for Sharptown/San Domingo.** This list changes, and we are adding to it all the time. Our 12 month employees with an exception of a small group, is teleworking. **I do want to ensure everyone that payroll and business procedures will continue uninterrupted.** Contractual and part-time employees will continue to be paid. We've had a lot of questions lately about continuity of instruction, these two weeks are about planning in the event that we are closed for any length of time and making sure our students have what they need to learn from home, which is extremely challenging for our community. About half of our students have access to internet at home, so we are talking about ways and options to get around that. **All athletics have been cancelled through April 6<sup>th</sup> at the earliest** and we are on the phone with the Health Department almost every day to work through this together and make sure our students have what they need.

- f. **Bill Chambers CEO of Chamber of Commerce:** The Chamber of Commerce Offices are closed, and employees are teleworking. The local impact is already being felt by our restaurant and hospitality partners, and we are working with them to gather info about their take-out hours. We will be reaching out to members of the chamber, if you are not a member, please still reach out to us at 410-749-0144. We have still some normalcy in our business climate, but given the long range outlook everyone will see some impact, and businesses should be preparing to do more work remotely and online. I reached out to our federal representatives to as to accelerate a package for businesses who will be incurring layoffs and we've asked again today for the suspension of the payroll tax for the balance of 2020. We are also going to be directing businesses to state and federal resources for business recovery resources and the Chamber locally will be offering business recovery services for all business sectors once we reach the end of this crisis. This is a fluid situation that we will be monitoring.
- g. **Bill McCain Chairman of the :** We are working to provide shelter and care for children of critical workers such as first responders and medical workers and we are happy to assist in any way we can. Here at the Henson YMCA we have the capacity to provide for these needs, our Director there is Deanna Harrel, 410-251-0305. We are also working with other agencies; you can contact the Emergency Services department at 410-548-4809, and we are also working with the Health Department.
- h. **Dave Ryan, Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development: On the home page of our website is a link for resources available for the business community.** That will always be there as we pass through the crisis that we are experiencing right now. We are in close communication with the MD Secretary of Commerce and the MD Secretary of the Department of Labor as we explore what the state's response and recovery resources might look like to the business community and as we explore how we might apply for federal assistance through the Small Business Administration. The state has the necessary paperwork from Wicomico County to apply for assistance, so we are a little ahead of the curve in that way. We have projects going on right now, and don't think that we will fall short on committing to the pipeline of prospects that we have.
- i. **Laura Soper, Director of Business Development, City of Salisbury:** We are starting to track which businesses are remaining open, specifically the ones that rely on foot-traffic. We're getting creative where we can to help promote them, and encouraging our small businesses to get creative as well, either by offering carry-out or delivery through Grubhub or Uber Eats, both companies have suspended their commission fees. We are encouraging retailers to look into online commerce options and we are encouraging gyms and fitness studios to consider online classes, such as the online format Soul Yoga Studio has switched to for their members. We are staying in close contact with our state partners, and encouraging everyone out there to support our small business economy.

#### **IV. Support Available from State, Federal & Utilities**

- a. All branches of the library will be closing until further notice but online resources are still very active and available.
- b. **Utilities:**
  - i. Chesapeake Utility cutoffs are ceased during the State of Emergency. Chesapeakesharing.com for information on \$1,000 need-based grants.

- ii. City of SBY utilities will have no late fees assessed or accrued through the State of Emergency.
- c. **Small Business Association Assistance:**
  - i. State of MD needs to apply to the SBA and they will do so tomorrow. They needed to show economic distress within at least one business within each MD county to apply. Wicomico supplied that information and MD will apply within a day or so. As more information becomes available, we will make it available.
  - ii. All parties agreed to write a letter to comptroller requesting an aid package on the behalf of Wicomico County and Salisbury.
  - iii. Business tax filing deadlines (in March, April & May) have been extended to June 1<sup>st</sup>
  - iv. Senator Van Hollen has a website set up: [vanhollen.senate.gov/coronavirus](http://vanhollen.senate.gov/coronavirus)
  - v. Employer and worker assistance, licensing and permitting and other information can be found at: [Businessexpress.md.gov/coronavirus](http://Businessexpress.md.gov/coronavirus)
- V. **What is your business experiencing and what do you anticipate?**
  - a. **Rob Mulford, Market St. Inn and Mojo's:** The fear in employees faces, how am I going to get paid, where is the next dollar going to come from. We are having a meeting tomorrow for employees to come and get information and see where we can help direct them, help them with food assistance etc. Restaurants and businesses operate on paper thin margins; we just want to make the best decisions for our organization.
    - i. **Mayor:** Tracking those figures, such as payroll hits you take each week, and reporting to Laura Soper, will help us fight for the Federal and State assistance that we need.
    - ii. **Rob Mulford:** We also need to move perishable food so that it doesn't go to waste. Once we can get that out the door, we can adjust ordering levels, number of staff etc.
    - iii. **Goosehead Insurance:** Businesses should track any disruptions in revenue and contact your insurer to better understand your coverage
  - b. **Christie F. via Facebook:** I teach paint parties to groups of people. I can't do that now and am scrambling to figure out the aspects of how virtual parties may work plus having to cancel the currently scheduled ones. Just fear of not being able to pay my studio rent.
    - i. **Mayor:** Its situations like these where we see businesses moving to an online format if possible in order to meet customers' needs. We will keep trying to share ideas for businesses like yours.
- VI. **Follow-up**
  - a. **It has been decided to make this meeting, and the live streams, a standing meeting. We will reconvene next week to answer more questions and share more developments as they become available to us.**

**Resources:**

**Questions/Concerns:** Email [coronarecovery@salisbury.md](mailto:coronarecovery@salisbury.md)

**General Coronavirus Info:** <https://governor.maryland.gov/coronavirus/>, <https://www.wicomicohealth.org/>

**Real Estate Transactions & Deed Transfers within City of Salisbury:** Email [klundy@salisbury.md](mailto:klundy@salisbury.md) or [ccarpenter@salisbury.md](mailto:ccarpenter@salisbury.md)

**Coronavirus Business Resources:** [www.swed.org](http://www.swed.org), <http://salisburyarea.com/>

**School Closure and Student Meal Information:** <https://www.wcboe.org/>

**Utility Information and Services:** <https://chpkgas.com/sharingprogram/>, [www.delmarva.com](http://www.delmarva.com)

**List of Downtown Restaurants' Carry-Out/Delivery Availability:** <http://downtownsby.com/covid-19/>

**J. David Collins & Associates is offering mental health and addictions treatment through telehealth online:** <https://www.jdavidcollins.com/CoronavirusCOVID19.en.html>