

Daily Coronavirus Response Update Call

National Update-Ben Moser

Ben began by stating that this is Day 6 of the National Emergency. Yesterday the White House updated the Coronavirus guidelines. They have recommended schooling from home and avoiding gatherings of 10 people or more. They also recommend avoiding discretionary travel, bars, restaurants and public food courts. They have put out a one-page flyer that can be printed and hung in your place of business or sent out in communications to the public. Ben encouraged everyone to download the flyer. The Center of Disease Control updates their website regularly and is a great source of information. Worldwide global institutions are following suit. The UN, EEU, NATO and the World Health Organization have put plans in place to try and stop the spread of the virus. Also, an enormous stimulus package has been announced to try to stem the economic fallout in economies around the world.

Home for Good Update-Pat Frey

Pat began by stating that yesterday afternoon she had the opportunity to join a call with the subcommittee on Housing and Transportation. The one thing that stood out to her on the call was that other communities were expressing that they were having problems with lack of communication and collaboration. She stated that once again she was impressed that we don't have that problem in our community and that we are able to come together and make things happen. Pat gave kudos to everyone on the call for pitching in and doing their job to make our community safe. She continued by stating that they are in the process statewide and locally of assessing the sheltering needs of our most vulnerable populations, specifically, those who are experiencing homelessness and may test positive. They are trying to come up with best practices. They are having conversations with public health, state agencies, partners and providers on how and what that would look like as there are many ideas, and this is a community wide effort. The other concern is screening for the homeless population as testing is not widely available at this point even if you meet the protocol. The concern is prolonging the time that people are infectious and many of them being asymptomatic. Outreach teams are prepared to go out this afternoon to distribute information to the unsheltered homeless population. We will need to obtain permission from the city to post flyers on light poles. The question was asked yesterday about funding for this outreach. Pat and her team are looking at what federal and state funding is available for outreach.

Muscogee County School District Update-Dr. David Lewis

Dr. Lewis began by stating that the feeding went great yesterday. He thanked everyone in the community again. He personally visited several of the sites. The police department as well as great volunteers assisted with food distribution. They will be assessing the need to adjust and add sites if needed. As a result, they will be adding a site to the Hannan Elementary area. They are also in the process of preparing to have

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lesson plans beyond April 6, 2020, which was the planned return date, if needed. They are in the process of working with teachers to be able to provide instruction via telecommuting and virtually or hard copy. They are also continuing to downsize current essential staff.

Ben asked about volunteers for the food distribution.

Dr. Lewis answered that anyone interested in volunteering can contact the school nutritionist.

No one was on the call from Columbus Consolidated Government today. Ben stated that they gave a great press conference yesterday afternoon and encouraged everyone to go online and watch it.

Crisis Fund Update-Betsy Covington

Betsy began by stating that our two organizations have rolled out the Coronavirus Response Fund to give people, businesses and other foundations in our community a way to positively respond to the crisis. To learn more about the guidelines and how to give go to CFCV.com/coronavirus. She stated that information will be added to the website today about how organizations can apply for grants. People are being generous and giving to the fund. She added that she and Ben are learning from other communities around the country that have these funds set up and are making grants. She stated that everyone is being flexible and learning together at the Community Foundation and United Way. Please email Betsy or Ben with any questions.

Open Forum Updates

The Family Center of Columbus-Todd Bennett

Todd stated that The Family Counseling Center is providing crisis mental health and asked if anyone knew of a Spanish speaking hotline.

Mary Mayrose of the Phenix City Housing Authority states that there are Centers of Disease Control resources in Spanish and the Department of Housing and Urban Development should also have housing information in Spanish.

Laura Creel of the Pastoral Institute suggested SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services). They have a disaster distress hotline for crisis counseling in Spanish

United Way-John Greenhaw

John stated that he received communications today from the Georgia Department of Labor concerning an Emergency Rule that requires mandatory filing by employers who lay off workers as a result of the coronavirus. There is help available for workers who are not getting paid.

211-Candace Poole

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Calls are coming in to the 211 line mainly for rent assistance, food and transportation. One of the questions that was asked in an earlier meeting was about Metra bus services and the coronavirus. Are they practicing social distancing on the bus? Any changes in hours or routes? Will they be providing transportation to testing sites? No one from Metra was on the call. Betsy suggested we reach out and get them on the agenda for tomorrow.

Columbus Health Department-Jack Lockwood

Jack stated that he did not have any updates but can answer questions.

Mary Mayrose of the Phenix City Housing Authority asked if the Russell County Health Department is providing testing.

Jack answered that he did not know but could ask. He added that health care providers can get test from Quest or LabCorp. The Health Department is testing those most at risk that meet the criteria. He stated that the Russell County Health Department is probably doing the same but not sure.

Mary Mayrose stated that she would send the Alabama Department of Health hotline number concerning testing to Chandra Wright (United Way) to share. She stated that they have also shared this information with housing residents.

River Valley Regional Commission-Jim Livingston

Jim began by stating that the Area Agency on Aging has closed all senior centers in this region. However, they are continuing food delivery system to seniors. There is also an Aging and Disability Resource Connection Hotline. The number is 800-615-4379 or 706-256-2900. The hotline is also available in Spanish.

Jack Lockwood added that Columbus Health Department also has a phone information line that has basically the same information as the Centers for Disease Control. People can call in and leave a message and someone from the health department will call them back. The number is 855-962-0955. The line is in English and Spanish.

United Way- Jennifer St John

Jennifer began by stating that Candace is creating an update form for service providers and will be sending them out later today. The form will allow Candace to keep 211 updated with the most accurate information. Jennifer added that 211 also has language translation for several different languages.

Betsy thanked everyone for calling in and added that there were 60 people on the call today. She concluded by saying that she respects the hard work that everyone is doing. Call adjourned at 10:38 am