



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Town Clerk's Office

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

1 I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL

2
3 The Public Safety Committee meeting was called to order on Monday, March 9, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. in
4 the Town Council Chambers. On roll call, Committee Chair Zeidman and Committee Member
5 Araskog were both found present.
6

7 II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

8
9 Committee Chair Zeidman led the Pledge of Allegiance.
10

11 III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

12
13 The agenda was approved as presented.
14

15 IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS – None.

16
17
18 V. WELCOME/ INTRODUCTIONS

19 *Margaret A. Zeidman, Committee Chair*
20

21 Committee Chair Zeidman announced that the first part of the Public Safety Committee meeting will
22 be dedicated to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Outbreak. She introduced the panel that would be speaking
23 on the topic which included, Town Manager Kirk Blouin, Chief of Fire Rescue Darrell Donatto,
24 Division Chief of Emergency Medical Services Sean Baker, Good Samaritan Medical Center Dr.
25 George Gurdock, and Chief of Police Nicholas Caristo.
26

27 Town Manager Blouin provided a brief overview of how the Town is preparing and responding to the
28 spread of Covid-19.
29

30 Committee Chair Zeidman offered a thank you to Mr. Bill Metzger, the Palm Beach Civic Association
31 and Andrea Delgado of the Palm Beach Daily News for their support and helping to spread the word.
32 She also offered words of clarity and comfort with regards to what is happening in the news.
33

34 Committee Chair Zeidman presented a PowerPoint regarding an overview of what the public can do to
35 stay healthy by providing examples of how to self-isolate, how to clean-up after being sick, washing
36 your hands properly and whether it is safe to travel. She defined what qualifies as a pandemic, the
37 numbers of cases around the world and included an example of a case study.
38

39 VI. PRESENTATION

40 *Dr. George Gurdock, Good Samaritan Medical Center*
41

42 A. “How do I know this is not just the flu or a cold?”
43

44 Dr. George Gurdock, Good Samaritan Medical Center, presented insight on “How do I know this is

1 not just the flu or a cold?” He spoke regarding the differences between a cold, the flu, or Covid-19,
2 noting the symptoms of Covid-19 and some of the developments since the outbreak started.

3
4 B. Emergency Room Protocols for Covid-19

5
6 Dr. Gudock provided an overview of the procedures used by the hospital and by the Palm Beach Fire
7 Rescue during a practice drill. Additionally, commenting on healthcare provider’s protective gear and
8 why it is necessary. Dr. Gudock spoke regarding how screen procedures have changed for anyone
9 entering the hospital whether the person is a visitor or a potential Covid-19 case.

10
11 C. Criteria for Isolation, Diagnosis & Admission

12
13 Committee Chair Zeidman asked Dr. Gudock to explain what “shortness of breath” really means. In
14 response to her question, Dr. Gudock provided an explanation of the Covid-19 symptoms and how a
15 patient would feel if they experienced “shortness of breath.”

16
17 Committee Chair Zeidman asked Dr. Gudock to provided additional information on how to test for
18 Covid-19. In response, Dr. Gudock expressed currently testing is limited but, most people will be able
19 to be treated at home and will be fine. The test is a nasal swab, the swab is sent off to the hospital lab,
20 if it is suspected to be Covid-19 the sample will be sent to the Department of Health and a confirmation
21 from the Center for Disease Control. 36:35

22
23 Committee Member Araskog inquired about symptoms related to Covid-19 cases in California, what
24 to do if you have mild, moderate and severe symptoms, and how long the incubation period is for
25 Covid-19. Dr. Gurdock provided a detailed response to each question stressing each person is affected
26 slightly different but, if symptoms are severe call 911 allowing emergency services to provide
27 supportive care.

28
29 VII. FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

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31 A. The Fire Department’s Role Regarding Covid-19

32 *Darrel Donatto, Fire Rescue Chief*

33
34 Darrel Donatto, Fire Rescue Chief, provided an overview of the Palm Beach Fire Department’s Role
35 regarding the response to Covid-19 emphasizing the role of educating the public on the science of the
36 virus, staff preparation for higher emergency services and personal responsibilities to protect yourself.
37 He explained Palm Beach Fire Rescue is committed to the residents, visitors and its employees’ overall
38 well-being and safety by having a great emergency plan in place to ensure all departments are prepared
39 and ready to respond.

40
41 B. Covid-19 Case Study and Protocols

42 *Sean Baker, Fire Rescue Division Chief*

43
44 Sean Baker, Fire Rescue Division Chief of Health Services, provided a detailed presentation of
45 operational tasks, protocols regarding communication in both Fire Rescue and Police Departments,
46 paramedic response including what to expect when services come to your home, hospital notification
47 regarding strict respiratory precautions, process of transitioning a possible Covid-19 patient from
48 ambulance to hospital and the disinfectant procedure for equipment, crew and truck. He concluded
49 that a successful trial drill was executed with the staff of Good Samaritan Hospital to identify any
50 issues or changes that needed to be implemented before an actual incident happened.

51
52 Fire Chief Donatto commented that every emergency service department in Palm Beach County is
53 communicating closely with each other and reinforced that everyone has planned and remains

1 prepared.

2
3 VIII. POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

4 *Nicholas Caristo, Chief of Police*

5
6 A. Police Response to Covid-19

7
8 Nicholas Caristo, Chief of Police, briefly reviewed the Police Department's Response to Covid-19
9 including safety protocols in police patrol cars, inside the department's building and close
10 communication with the Fire Department as the issue develops.

11
12 ***Clerk's Note: Committee Chair Zeidman called for questions from the citizens before the Covid-19 part of the***
13 ***agenda was completed.***

14
15 Communications/Questions from Citizens for the Panel:

- 16
17 1. Lew Crampton, Town Council Member, thanked the Public Safety Committee for having the
18 Covid-19 forum at the meeting, inquired if enough testing kits are available for our area and where
19 they are coming from and if there any cases of Covid-19 in Palm Beach County.

20
21 Dr. Gurdock explained the answer is still unknown as to if our area has enough kits available, the
22 kits that are available are coming from Miami, Tampa and Jacksonville and only one case of
23 Covid-19 has been confirmed near our area.

24
25 Fire Chief Donatto commented that testing kits are a means of offering statistical information and
26 regardless of a positive test for Covid-19 or not, the person will be treated the same as someone
27 with a severe respiratory illness.

- 28
29 2. Mary Robosson, Palm Beach Civic Association, asked for guidance regarding cancelling or
30 postponing large benefits and luncheons that are coming in the next few weeks.

31
32 Dr. Gurdock, Committee Chair Zeidman and Committee Member Araskog explained the Town
33 can only suggest that everyone practice social distancing, look at how the spread of the virus
34 develops, take steps to postpone or cancel large conferences and only attend events that are
35 absolutely necessary.

- 36
37 3. Catherine Lily, condominium resident in Palm Beach, asked for guidance regarding people who
38 have travelled to restricted places, are sick and choose not to follow protocols.

39
40 Fire Chief Donatto provided the contact information for the Palm Beach County Health
41 Epidemiology Department and explained an investigation will be completed regarding the issue.

42
43 Discussion ensued regarding how local government does not dictate how the public should
44 respond to such an issue at this time, personal responsibility is important to contain the spread of
45 the virus, explanation of what the Town is doing such as education, planning and preparing for
46 next steps in dealing with Covid-19 and the guidelines that emergency management policies
47 follow.

- 48
49 4. Donald Singer, Co-Chair of the Citizens Association, requested that the Town provide any
50 additional information to share with the residents and the Citizens Association will assist with
51 distribution.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

50 IX. CANE "BUFO" TOAD UPDATE
51 *Julie Araskog, Committee Member*
52

1 Committee Member Araskog provided a short story of a personal experience of her pet having an
2 encounter with a Cane “Bufo” Toad and commented on two families that have lost their pets in a similar
3 situation. She continued with an informational Power Point presentation regarding Cane “Bufo” Toads
4 and suggested looking at the Town’s page regarding this topic. The presentation included a description
5 of the toad, how the toxins affect animals and humans, how to care for your pet once encountering or
6 biting this species of toad, deterring Cane Toads from private property, recommendations of eradicating
7 this amphibian from the Florida Wildlife Commission, and a brief look at the Town’s website in this
8 regard.
9

10 Jennifer, Queens Lane, provided her story of her dog that passed away due to an encounter with a Cane
11 Toad to bring awareness to this topic and suggested collecting data to help protect residents and their
12 pets.
13

14 Discussion ensued on techniques to eliminate tadpoles in fresh bodies of water and providing resources
15 for people to use privately.
16

17 X. ANY OTHER MATTERS- None
18

19 XI. ADJOURNMENT
20

21 There being no further business to discuss, the Public Safety Committee adjourned at 4:20 pm on
22 March 9, 2020.
23
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25 APPROVED:
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28 _____
29 Margaret A. Zeidman, Committee Chair
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31 PREPARED BY:
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33 _____
34 Antonette Fabrizi, Board Secretary
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38 ATTEST:
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40 _____
41 Patricia Gayle-Gordon, Acting Town Clerk
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44

45 _____
Date