

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno's City of Springfield COVID-19 Situational Update

Thursday, April 23, 2020

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno, in the best interests of our residents and business community, continues his daily morning meetings with his cabinet heads as they work 24/7 to facilitate and coordinate with all of our local, state, federal, and public and private partners in response to the COVID-19 situation.

Below are the most recent updates as reported from each City Departments.

Mayor's Office

- Continues to coordinate the city's efforts with all stakeholders (state, federal, hospital and medical facilities, public and private partners, etc.) in response of services and relief and recovery measures.
- Continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely so that we do not reopen and ease our prudent measures too early, which could potentially expose our residents to a second wave of the virus.
- Continues to stress the need for additional target testing before any talk about reopening can be considered, in order to build strong public, business, consumer, and hospital confidences to identify, isolate, contact trace, mitigate and heal potential hot spot areas.
- Mayor Sarno spoke to Lt. Governor Polito about establishing state testing sites here in Springfield through our community neighborhood health centers
- City Hall utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce
- Mayor Sarno and HHS Commissioner Caulton-Harris issued new Public Health Advisory to Essential Retail Establishments asking those stores to partner with the city and require their patrons to wear
- Heartfelt thank you to our Springfield Community for stepping up with PPE donations, allowing the city to outfit our dedicated police, fire and frontline workers with the appropriate safety equipment
 - Senator Eric Lesser connected the city with Pia Kumar, owner of Universal Plastics who donated 100 face shields

Health

- Announced 104 new cases of Springfield residents testing positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus).
- Total positive cases now at 967
 - City continues to see a rise in cases. As more target testing becomes available these numbers will most likely continue to increase - we must remain vigilant

- Continues to monitor potential COVID-19 cluster locations across the city, especially at our long-term care facilities.
 - National Guard Med Tech through state Department of Public Health and City Health Department continue to provide assistance with our long-term care facilities with testing aspects
- Continues to work with local hospitals and healthcare facilities with community health outreach aspects
- School nurses continue to help with contact tracing
- Reviewing plans to potentially expand city contact tracing abilities through Governor Baker's continued initiative efforts
- Announced the continued need and importance of adhering to all public health, personal hygiene and social distancing procedures. Still very important, even though hospital numbers are stable, public health is population based and our numbers are still rising
- Homeless tenting full facilities and operations up and running
 - Count currently at 10 individuals at facility, but potentially will rise as testing results come back and more testing takes place
- City of Springfield COVID-19 hotline - (413) 750-3250 – staffed 7 days a week. 8:30am – 7pm.

Elder Affairs

- Continues to do wellness checks on a daily basis with people in senior housing complexes and associated with senior centers.
- Continues to deliver meals to seniors in need, including over the weekend.

DPW

- Trash and recycling continue to be picked up
- Streets and Engineering continue to provide services
- Yard waste collection continues
- Weekly construction update for the week of April 20, 2020
 - Utility work – Magazine Street
 - Milling work – Mill Street

Eco Dev

- Continues to review and secure additional funding for restaurant and small business assistance grants.
- Continuing to review applications for second round of the restaurant and small business “Prime the Pump” grant program - \$500,000 funding available – over 110 applications submitted
 - Announcement to be made tomorrow
- Continues to review and identify Federal stimulus funding to focus on local efforts for relief and recovery for our residents and small businesses
- Continues to work with HUD for spending of CDBG funds through the C.A.R.E. Act
- Funding for the first round of Prime the Pump grant program is being distributed and contracted. Checks started going out last week.
- Continues to review costs associated with COVID-19 response for relief and recovery reimbursements.

Finance

- Provided an update to Mayor and cabinet heads on the projected revenue shortfalls by the federal, state and municipal levels. Reviewed the expected budgetary constraints for the city's FY 20 and FY21 budgets

- Continues to explore all public and private means in which to secure additional PPE's for our Police and Fire Departments and our first responders and frontline personnel
- Continues to monitor all federal and state relief and recovery funding and reimbursement mechanisms
- Continues to review costs associated with COVID-19 response for relief and recovery reimbursements.
- Implementing strategic spending measures to identify areas of need, relief and recovery while also trying to maintain city services for residents and business community.
- Continues to monitor lost revenue – city and state
 - \$2.3 million in lost revenue – city
 - \$1.34 million in deficit spending - city
- Continues proactive meetings with Josh Norman of GP Strategies to track, identify, and implement relief and recovery reimbursement aspects.
- Joined in on a conference call with Secretary of A&F Michael Heffernan and Senior Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Local Services Sean Cronin to discuss state and municipal budgeting aspects
- City of Springfield's Finance Department has been awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the current fiscal period. This marks the 12th year in a row the city's finance team led by CAFO TJ Plante has received this award.

Libraries

- Beginning printing of PPE masks on 3D printers
- Continuing to answer reference questions by phone and email
- Continuing to offer story times on social media sites
- Continuing to help residents access e-books and streaming movies and music on their devices
- Continuing to help residents learn, research, and explore, using our digital subscriptions and apps (language learning, grant searches, business research, children's homework help, etc.)

Parks and Facilities

- Consulting with Bob Kirchherr, CSP, Principal and Indoor Air Quality and Industrial Hygienist for O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun Engineering Associate to review the city's air systems at all municipal buildings – police and fire HQ, City Hall, Schools, etc.
- Continuing the deep cleaning of all city buildings and facilities
- Continuing to monitor our parks on social distancing aspects
- Installing signs at city parks recommending residents wear face coverings
- Reviewing potential alternate site locations for homeless triage facility and population surge facility for short-term and long-term aspects pending the duration of pandemic if needed
- Reviewing all protocols and procedures for short and long term reopening aspects
- Utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce

Public Safety

Fire

- Down 5
- Announced Food Drive to help residents in need. Non-perishable food items can be donated and dropped off at city fire stations. Residents are encouraged to call ahead or ring the doorbell and to leave items at the door for social distancing aspects.

- Continues with proactive sanitizing and disinfecting measures
- Utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce

Police

- Down 11
- Continue to provide anti-crime activity
 - Increase traffic enforcement
 - Increase attention on breaking and entering crimes – residential and commercial properties
 - Increase in domestic and restraining orders
 - Increase in mental health related calls for service – more Behavioral Health Network (BHN) staff added
- Commissioner Clapprood announced that training will soon begin for officers with the body worn camera program
- Police Academy graduation TBA shortly
- The National Guard and State Police continue to work alongside SPD
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Schools

- To date, Sodexo has served 315,157 meals to Springfield Public Schools students since the program began on March 12th (meals included breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks)
 - 17 school sites
- Continues to distribute laptops to students for remote learning – over 10,000 are currently being given out, including to our homeless students, on top of the 7,000 our students had already been using prior to pandemic
- Governor Baker and the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced yesterday the decision that all schools will remain closed for the remainder of the academic year
 - Springfield Public Schools will continue to implement remote learning aspects for the remainder of the academic year and will review potential summer learning program options

Law/HR/Labor

- Continues to assist and advise all departments on pertinent city business
- Continues to review and monitor all federal and state legislation
- Utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce

Misc.

Food Bank

- Continue Oasis Food Bank operations on Friday's 10-2pm through Mr. John Foley, Mayor's Office, DPW, SPD and Food Bank of Western Mass – serving over 1,700 families with food distribution at Central High School and Smead Arena parking lot