



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 11, 2020

City of Gloucester's Reopening Task Force Held Kick-Off Meeting

--Several Subcommittees Formed

--Public Input Needed

GLOUCESTER, MA – Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken today announced the City of Gloucester's Reopening Task Force held its kick-off meeting. This group, which is chaired by Public Health Director Karin Carroll, is charged with advising City Administration on strategies to slowly reopen the Gloucester economy in phases based on health and safety metrics.

Carroll said, "The City of Gloucester has taken significant unprecedented precautionary measures to limit person-to-person contact and to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The formation of this Task Force is an extension of those plans as we develop a framework to slowly reopen and recover from this pandemic."

Members of the Task Force bring a range of perspectives to the table, such as an understanding of Gloucester specific workplaces and workforces and insights into key areas like business, tourism, arts & culture, and open spaces. The Task Force will look to pool ideas and coordinate a reopening strategy that will provide consistent and uniform guidelines to the City's residents, Gloucester employers/employees and seasonal visitors.

Task Force Members:

- Karin Carroll, Public Health Director, City of Gloucester
- James Destino, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Gloucester
- Jill Cahill, Community Development Director, City of Gloucester
- Sal DiStefano, Economic Development Director, City of Gloucester
- Carol McMahan, Assistant Emergency Management Director, City of Gloucester
- Ken Riehl, Chief Executive Officer, Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce
- Barbara McCarthy, RN, NHC Enterprise Risk Officer, Addison Gilbert Hospital
- Robert J. Gillis, Jr., President, Cape Ann Savings Bank
- Elizabeth Carey, Executive Director, Discover Gloucester
- Taylor Hedges, EDIC Member, The Event Company

- Edward Ackerly, Senior Manager, Environmental Health & Safety, Applied Materials
- Matt Beach, Market Analyst, Applied Materials
- Laurie Labrie, President, Integrated Human Resources

The Task Force will evaluate Governor Charlie Baker’s Reopening Advisory Board’s plan, expected on May 18, to plan and strategize how best and safely to reopen the local economy based on Gloucester’s unique needs.

Carroll said, “We’ve assembled an impressive Task Force that has already hit the ground running. This group has a depth of knowledge and breadth of local experience. Together they have identified key areas that will affect a successful reopening of Gloucester, and Cape Ann. We are working in earnest to bring forward issues and workable solutions that will allow for a safe community reopening.”

The main priority of last weeks’ kick-off meeting was to identify subcommittees. Subcommittees will play an important role in obtaining local input from residents, businesses, and stakeholders. They will also research and identify best practices and recommend reopening strategies to the Task Force for their respective areas.

Subcommittees Created:

- Business Groups (Retail/Manufacturing/Office/Fishing/Harbor)
- Tourism (Lodging/Arts/Theatre/Water Recreational Activities)
- Food Establishments & Bars
- Recreation & Open Spaces
- Special Populations (Homeless/Substance Use/Group Homes)
- Youth (Sports/Camps/Recreation/Summer School/Internships/Daycare)
- Religion/Cultural/Private Social Events

Each subcommittee will have access to an Infection Control Specialist, HR Representative, and a Procurement Specialist to help with their relevant planning efforts. Critical planning for our seniors and other vulnerable populations will overlap with the recently established subcommittee groups.

Mayor Romeo Theken said, “Public feedback will be a critical component to this Task Force’s final report. Nobody knows Gloucester better than its residents and businesses. Send in your comments for consideration. We’re all in this together. We can’t plan to reopen without hearing from you.”

The Reopening Task Force is seeking public input to ensure local ideas, concerns and questions are considered as they work to develop a Gloucester reopening strategy. Comments can be submitted to reopening@gloucester-ma.gov and will then be forwarded to the appropriate subcommittee chair for review.

The Task Force and its subcommittees will meet regularly over the next several weeks. The Task Force will provide preliminary recommendations to City Administration soon after it reviews the report from the Reopening Advisory Board. Ongoing updates and recommendations are expected in staggered phases for as long as a public health emergency exists.

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