

**Durham Recovery & Renewal Task Force
Task Force Virtual Meeting via Zoom
August 7, 2020, 8:00am - 10:00am**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:00am.

Task Force Members:

Steve Schewel, Mayor City of Durham
Wendy Jacobs, Durham County Board of Commissioners
Katie Galbraith, Task Force Co-Chair, President, Duke Regional Hospital
Maticia Sims, Task Force Co-Chair, Vice President and Corporate Controller, Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC
Ibukun Akinboyo, M.D., Assistant Professor, Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Duke Health
Susan Amey, CEO, Discover Durham
Geoff Durham, Durham Chamber of Commerce
Philip Harewood, CEO, Lincoln Community Health Center
Rodney Jenkins, Health Director, Durham County Department of Public Health
Jodi Miller, Deputy County Manager, Durham County Government, representing the Emergency Operations Center
Pilar Rocha-Goldberg, President and CEO, El Centro Hispano
Lois DeLoatch
Nicole Thompson
Anthony Nelson
Mariel Beasley
Ryan Smith
Bryan Fox

Public Comment

Public comments and questions: RRTF@durhamnc.gov

Updates

County Commission Chair Jacobs provided a number of updates and stated the following: there was an average of 51 positive cases of COVID-19 over the latest 7-day average in Durham, which was the lowest since June 1, 2020; highlighted the work that was being done at Holton Recreation Center for their ongoing COVID-19 testing as a resource for the latinx community and for the county as a whole; expressed concern for establishing a location for members of the most vulnerable populations and where they could be housed if they tested positive for COVID-19; and advised that Durham Public Schools had spent 10.6 million dollars for laptops and mobile hot spots for students, however they still needed an additional 1.25 million dollars.

Mayor Schewel announced that Duke University and NCCU would be instituting in person classes and encouraged the support of the universities in the city. He also noted that all students and staff were

required to be tested for COVID before entering the Duke campus and stated that talks were ongoing with how things would be handled at NCCU.

Co-Chairs Sims and Galbraith gave an update on the budget proposals that were presented to the Durham City Council and the Durham County Board of Commissioners. They said that the presentations were well received and asked both entities to split the costs evenly of the proposals. While they were encouraged by their responses, they would be providing additional information to the Durham City Council within 2 weeks.

Mayor Schewel stated that the City Council would be addressing some of the monetary items at the next Council Meeting that would significantly help the community and small businesses.

Chair Jacobs stated that the County Board of Commissioners would be addressing the monetary items on August 10th and August 24th.

Taskforce Members Jenkins and Akinboyo gave a report on the public health perspective on how Durham County was battling the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted the following:

- Unemployment was an ongoing issue and 59.4% of the unemployed people in the county were Hispanic
- 7-day average of cases was down
- 79 total deaths
- Great results at Holton site for testing
- Decline in individuals who were needing testing as a whole
- North Carolina infections had grown to 10%
- Schools were an area of concern
- NCCU and Duke had remained in communication with Durham County since March 2020

Mayor Schewel asked for additional context around the decline in testing and the status of contact tracing.

Taskforce Member Jenkins responded that contact tracing had been going well and attributed the collaboration of community partners for its success and advised that there was no concrete answer as to why the testing was declining.

Taskforce Member Dr. Akiboyo advised that some testing centers had closed in preparation for a potential hurricane and that could have had some influence on the numbers.

Roundtables

Taskforce Members DeLoatch and Rocha- Goldberg addressed community resources and events that had taken place to keep the public engaged on the COVID-19 pandemic. They also mentioned that both the African American communities and Latinx communities felt as though they had to compete with one another in order to gain access to resources.

Co- Chair Sims expressed gratitude for all members of the Taskforce agreeing to stay on until May 2021.

Taskforce Member Durham reported on the efforts to bring additional stakeholders into the conversations around economic recovery and what that would look like. He also stated that data was being evaluated on wage increases in the community, unemployment, foot traffic among businesses, and other consumer activity performance indicators geared towards recovery.

Taskforce Member Amey encouraged conversations around messaging in regards to the economic recovery and suggested that by fall the message could change from “stay at home” to “come out and support businesses safely”. She also advised that additional COVID related signage was being developed to make sure that all opportunities to pull messaging together could be utilized.

Taskforce Member Beasley advised that 300 businesses had completed the business checklist, however 99% were completed in English and a minimal amount in Spanish. She recommended focusing in on that group to obtain more engagement.

Commission Chair Jacobs asked about the status of the distribution of the back on the bull signs.

Taskforce Member Smith responded that about half of the signs had been distributed to various businesses and residents in the community.

Open Discussion

COVID-19 risk mitigation fund: how to improve upon the initial idea?

Taskforce Member Fox stated thanked the City, County, and Corporate partners that had already allocated funding to the COVID-19 risk mitigation fund.

Taskforce Member Thompson advised that certain barriers for businesses such as time constraints and getting back on their feet had limited their ability to tap into available resources such as the risk mitigation fund.

Taskforce Member Amey stated that additional thought was needed to determine which businesses would be eligible to receive the funding.

Mayor Schewel stated that the taskforce should consider who would be distributing the funds to businesses and another process could be developed for businesses that just needed basic supplies such as hand sanitizer and face masks.

Co-Chair Sims asked for volunteers to explore including non-profits and places of worship to also receive funding.

Taskforce Members Durham, Fox, Thompson, and Smith volunteered to research including non-profits and places of worship to receive funding.

Co- Chair Galbraith also posed the question as to how to get engagement from college students.

Mayor Schewel volunteered to start talks with leadership of the higher education institutions in the city.

Commission Chair Jacobs suggested that a joint roundtable between leadership and students of those institutions would be beneficial to gather perspectives from both sides.

Next Steps

Enforcement: what are the City/County's current plans around enforcement of local orders?

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:55a.m.