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APRIL 10, 2020

CIRCULATION 16,000

COVID-19 UPDATE

Baker and Walsh announce stricter measures

BY LAUREN BENNETT

As the COVID-19 crisis continues and begins to approach the predicted surge in cases, Governor Charlie Baker and Mayor Marty Walsh continue to provide updates to residents and have implemented new measures to prevent further spread of the virus.

As of Wednesday, April 8, the City of Boston had 2,502 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

In Massachusetts, there were 16,790 cases and 433 deaths.

An N95 mask decontamination facility is set up in the former K-Mart at Assembly Row in Somerville. Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders said this is the fourth location in the United States where this technology will be used, and each N95 mask can be decontaminated between five and 10 times before it has to be disposed of, which will extend the

life of these masks that are so vital for healthcare workers who are on the frontlines.

Baker announced on April 7 that a new rapid testing site will open in conjunction with CVS in Lowell in and will use the new Abbott ID NOW™ COVID-19 test. CVS has created rapid testing sites in only two other states, Georgia and Rhode Island, so Massachusetts will be the third

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Crime and coronavirus: Police protect, predators pounce

BY LAURA PLUMMER

The day-to-day reality of police officers in Jamaica Plain has been dramatically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“[Our department] has been directly impacted,” Sgt. John Dougherty told the Gazette in an email. “Many of the 911 calls and assignments that we respond

to now have some relation to the emergency.”

Since mid-March, District E-13 officers have been urging residents to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Nevertheless, large groups continue to gather at locations like the Arnold Arboretum and other public spaces. On April 7, Mayor Marty Walsh enacted even stricter measures—

an overnight curfew, the closure of all city parks, and the recommendation to wear a face covering in public.

Littering has become an ongoing concern. Street cleaning crews report an increase in masks, latex gloves and other protective items discarded in

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La delincuencia en los tiempos del coronavirus

BY LAURA PLUMMER

La realidad cotidiana de los oficiales de policía en Jamaica Plain se ha visto muy afectada por la pandemia.

“Nuestro departamento ha sido directamente impactado”,

dijo el Sargento John Dougherty a Gazette. “Muchas de las llamadas a las que respondemos ahora tienen algo que ver con la emergencia”.

Desde mediados de marzo, los empleados de la estación del Distrito E-13 han recibido informes

sobre residentes que no cumplen con las reglas del distanciamiento social. Sin embargo, grupos de personas continúan reuniéndose en lugares como el Arboreto Arnold y otros espacios públicos. El

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Host of Jeopardy! Alex Tribek with Jamaica Plain resident and recent Jeopardy! contestant JR Manna.

JP’s JR Manna tests his trivia skills on Jeopardy!

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Jamaica Plain resident JR Manna grew up playing trivia around the Greater Boston area, but this year he got to play in the big leagues—he made it onto an episode of Jeopardy! that aired in March.

The Boston native was born in

Dorchester and attended Wesleyan University before moving to Jamaica Plain in 2014, where he is the Dean of Students at Match Community Day School.

The beloved trivia show has been a favorite of Manna’s since he was in high school, and

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City Feed and Supply takes proactive steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Though City Feed and Supply has closed its Boylston St. store, the Centre St. store remains open and running save for the cafe portion.

City Feed President and Co-Founder David Warner told the Gazette that he has been taking safety precautions even

before Governor Baker declared a state of emergency and restrictions were placed on restaurants.

He said even with the option to provide takeout, he still decided to eliminate all food service. “I just didn’t feel like it was worth the risk to have additional customers coming in,” he said.

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Marriage certificate applications drop significantly in March

Those filing for marriage move online, then have to find a justice of the peace

BY SETH DANIEL

The numbers of persons filing for intentions to be married has dropped dramatically in the last month, and especially compared to last year, but for those who persist, they are moving rapidly to online requests.

The number of people filing for intent to be married is down significantly every week since the COVID-19 response, and was down by nearly 300 requests in the last week of March compared to last year.

During the week of March 20-26, there were 67 requests to be married, compared to a total of 343 requests at the same time last year. In the week of Feb. 7-13 this year, there were 225 requests.

City officials indicated that to get a marriage certificate, residents can either go online to file,

or they can make an appointment to go into City Hall on the prescribed days. After the state mandated wait period of three days, the City then mails the certificate to them.

Since there are no large church or venue weddings permitted by order of the state right now, City officials said it was up to the couple, once they had the license in hand, to find an eligible Justice of the Peace or member of the Clergy to perform the wedding in a small way.

Interestingly, of those that have pushed on with getting married during the COVID-19 shut-down, most have dramatically moved towards online filings. Some 75 percent of the intentions filed in the last week of March were done online. That is compared to none at the same time last year when there were more than 300 requests.

That has actually been the standard across the board at City Hall for vital statistics, which also include death certificates and birth certificates (some of the requests may not reflect current births or deaths, but rather people making the request who have more time to tie up such loose ends).

In the last week of March, there were 675 death certificates issued, and 78 percent of them were issued online. Only 144 made an appointment to come in, and only three did it by mail. Last year at the same time, of the 985 death certificates, just 45 percent performed the service online. In the Feb. 7-13 week of this year, that number was just 41 percent.

It is the same story for birth certificates as well.

Some 72 percent of the 447 requests for a birth certificate

came online, with just one person requesting one by mail.

One year ago, of the 1,870 birth certificates issued, only 34 percent were requested online, and that was also the case early in February too, with 35 percent of the 1,584 requests being made online.

It is also fair to note that the overall numbers of birth and death certificates in the last week of March was way down, with birth certificates down by more than 75 percent over last year and death certificates down 33 percent over last year.

Week of Mar 20 - March 26, 2020					
The Counter requests include Fri 3/20					
Now Marriage Intention by Appt.					
Requests	Counter	Mail	Online	Totals	Online Percentage
Birth	122	1	324	447	72.48%
Death	144	3	528	675	78.22%
Marriage	17	0	50	67	74.63%

Marriage Intentions filed 84 (most of these on Friday 3/20)

A graphic here shows the numbers of requests for vital statistics in the last week of March, including marriages. Those pushing ahead to get married are filing much more frequently online, something that could continue when times normalize.

City Feed

Continued from page 1

Additionally, having the cafe would mean having more people working at the same time which makes it hard to maintain space between employees.

Now that they're grocery only, Warner has time to focus on extra cleaning and sanitizing using a quaternary ammonia solution to spray down all high contact areas, including shopping carts. He said they are running all

shopping baskets through their warewashing machine to sanitize them after each customer. Additionally, City Feed has installed visual cues for customers to distance themselves from one another, as well as plexiglass shields at the checkout counter to limit customer and staff exposure to airborne particles. He said they are also trying to prop the store door open as much as possible on warmer days to avoid having people constantly touch the door handle.

"We were able to secure one

small case of disposable masks that we've been able to provide to our employees," he said. "We've got plenty of gloves and sanitizer." There are also sanitizer stations at the exits and at one other location in the store for customer use.

City Feed has also launched online ordering for pickup or delivery. Warner said he currently makes all the deliveries himself and though the service was offered seven days a week, starting this past week deliveries will not be made on Tuesdays or Fridays. He said the most orders he's done in a day was around 40, but he averages about 25 to 30 a day. Orders can be placed on the City Feed and Supply website, or for folks who do not have computer access or may not be comfortable with computers, orders can be placed over the phone as well. The deliveries are being made in a refrigerated van which is also being constantly sprayed down with the sanitizing spray. While a lot of larger stores are very backed up with orders and people are waiting two weeks or even longer for their deliveries, Warner said "we're mostly just one or two days out from when you schedule a delivery." Warner also said that some of

the items that are usually the slowest sellers at City Feed, such as rice, flour, and beans, are now flying off the shelves. He said that they've been able to do a "pretty good job" of keeping these items in stock by purchasing them wholesale and repacking them for retail sale.

"We see that the grocery store supply channels are having logistical challenges," he said, but he has been able to get some items for retail such as beef and chicken through restaurant suppliers.

Some things are easier for him to keep in stock, though. "Eggs we've been pretty good on," he said. "I don't think there's been a day where we've run out of eggs." An orchard in western Massachusetts that's typically a vendor for City Feed has started selling wholesale again, Warner added. "Now we've got a ton of local apples."

He said that the stock of produce has been "pretty good" since much of it comes from local and regional growers. But things like frozen vegetables have been pretty much wiped from the freezers. "Suppliers haven't really had fresh re-supply on that yet," he said. "We have a ton of fresh fruits and vegetables

available every day."

The Boylston St. location has been temporarily completely shut down in an effort to "focus on getting down to what we needed," Warner said. He added that since the Boylston St. location is smaller, it's harder to maintain distance and they would have had to limit the number of shoppers to around two at a time.

"A lot of the Boylston St. regulars have been ordering online or coming to the Centre St. location," Warner said, so those customers are still being serviced. The number of shoppers allowed in the store are limited at the Centre St. location to 15, but Warner said it only happened once where people had to wait outside for someone else to finish. Senior shopping hours are from 7am to 8am on Monday through Saturday and 9am to 10am, where "priority service" will be given to those ages 60 and over.

"I'm encouraging everyone to be kind and patient with each other and work harder to maintain distance," Warner said, "as everybody is doing, reiterating and encouraging."

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COVID-19 safety measures in place for Rogerson House residents

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The health and well-being of seniors is on the forefront of the minds of many as the COVID-19 outbreak continues to keep loved ones separated from their families.

Rogerson House, an assisted living community on the Jamaicaway in Jamaica Plain that serves people with issues of memory loss, provided information to the Gazette about how it is keeping its residents safe during the crisis. Rogerson House is managed by Rogerson Communities, which manages 22 affordable residences for low-income elders in Greater Boston.

Right now, 62 people live in Rogerson House, and there are

85 staff members. "Given the nature of memory loss, residents at Rogerson House safely reside in their distinct and secure 'neighborhoods,' each located on a separate floor," according to a report from Rogerson House.

Rogerson House said that not all residents need to be tested for the virus, and sending them to a hospital without signs of infection would put them at greater risk. "At this time all our residents are in isolation and meals are brought to them," the report said. "Even if a resident tested positive, the hospital would return them to Rogerson House where they would be isolated."

Additionally, Rogerson House said they are following Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) guidelines which include

not bringing residents to the hospital for testing if they do not require medical care, keeping all residents isolated, including doing the best they can to isolate those who may wander.

Rogerson House is taking other steps to ensure the safety and happiness of its residents, as there are unique issues that arise for those with memory loss. Rogerson House said that staff is helping residents practice social distancing, organizing "virtual visits" with their families through FaceTime and Skype, and posting more on social media so families can still see their loved ones even though it can't be in person.

Families are also receiving regular email updates and phone calls from Rogerson House's Ex-

ecutive Director.

"Programmed activities will be open only to residents who are unable to remain in their room due to their dementia," the report states. "Some residents are unable to remain in their room as they require increased supervision due to poor safety awareness."

As of March 14, visitors are no longer allowed at Rogerson House, including family members and non-essential care providers. Additionally, Rogerson House said it is checking residents' temperatures several times a day, and they are also regularly monitored for symptoms of COVID-19. Staff also have their temperatures checked twice a day, and there is continuous cleaning and sanitizing of

the building, including an additional staff person to sanitize high touch surfaces.

Should any resident show symptoms of coronavirus or be tested, there is one private room at Rogerson House for that resident to be isolated.

A spokesperson from Rogerson House said: "This is a difficult time for all of us, but especially challenging for the staff and health care providers on the front line, working with a frail population struggling with dementia, memory loss and Alzheimer's." Rogerson House said that it will make adjustments to the protocols as the situation continues to unfold and more is learned.

Ethos receives \$560,000 grant from The Boston Resiliency Fund for Meals On Wheels and COVID-19 response

STAFF REPORT

Ethos announced on April 3 it has been awarded a \$560,000 grant from the Boston Resiliency Fund to temporarily expand, on an emergency basis, its city-wide Meals on Wheels program and serve an additional 2,000 meals per day, enabling older adults to remain in their homes, limit their exposure to COVID-19 and

other people, and have healthy, nutritious meals.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented increase in the numbers older Bostonians seeking nutrition services. The Ethos Meals on Wheels program, which typically delivers 8,000 meals daily, is receiving more than 100 new requests for services each day, and anticipates scaling up to 10,000 to 12,000 meals per a day to meet

the increasing demand.

"For many of Boston's seniors, the coronavirus outbreak, and subsequent business closures and social distancing and self-isolation advisories, are severely disrupting their lives and they are turning to Ethos and its Meals on Wheels program, as a vital lifeline during this crisis," said Valerie Frias, CEO of Ethos. "The grant from the Boston Resiliency Fund will help

us to deliver healthy meals to additional seniors who are increasingly food insecure in this time of crisis."

Even before the pandemic, one in four older Bostonians live in poverty and facing food insecurity. Nearly two out of three older adults live with four or more chronic conditions, making them even more susceptible to the COVID-19. And long before this pandemic started, the Bos-

ton Globe declared elder isolation a "crisis" and cited half of older adults sometimes or always feel alone.

The Boston Resiliency Fund is the City of Boston's effort to help coordinate fundraising and philanthropic efforts to provide essential services to Boston residents whose health and well-being are most immediately impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.



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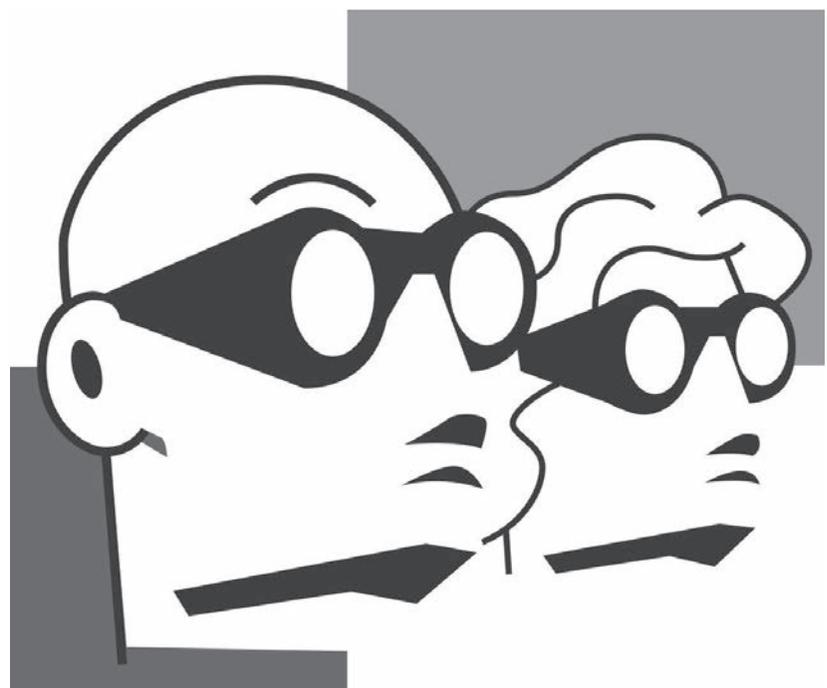
For us at St. John's, like for you, these are extraordinary and challenging times. While our health care providers exercise care for the ill at great risk to themselves, we practice social distancing and isolation from one another to protect them, and to protect the vulnerable and at risk in our community. For many of us, this time of social isolation places us at emotional and financial risk. Our city is rallying in many ways to face these challenges, and we are in this together.

In the life of church, we come now into our most holy time culminating in our most joyful celebration, Easter Sunday. And for us in the northern hemisphere moving through this time of world-wide pandemic, the new life of spring is manifesting all around us.

Our Christian story, at its core, affirms that out of loss, suffering and death comes new life, and we participate in this new life when we keep the faith. Let us keep faith with one another as friends and neighbors, continuing to act to protect the most vulnerable, honoring those standing in harm's way to care for the sick, and remembering those in need in this time of challenge, all the while keeping to the hope of new life.

With blessings and peace,
The Rev. Dr. Ted Cole, Jr.,
Rector, St. John's Church, Jamaica Plain

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JP musician with unique songwriting experiences to release album April 25

BY LAUREN BENNETT

With all of the uncertainty and worry filling the world right now, JP resident Alex Alvanos is attempting to make it a lighter with the power of music.

Alvanos, who is the leader of band Alex and the People, will be releasing his debut album, titled 'Boys Will Be Boys,' on April 25, when it will appear on all major music streaming sites. A limited number of cassette tapes will be available as well.

The western Mass. native moved to Boston in 2004, and has always appreciated making music. Alvanos said his musical influences include Neil Young, the Strokes, Joni Mitchell, the Rolling Stones, and Green Day.

Although he had a band in high school, he didn't start giving serious thought to making music until a few years ago. He is also completely self-taught on the guitar. When he's not making music, he's working at a local nonprofit foundation.

"I've been playing music since 2013; mostly just around Boston and in friends' living rooms, jam sessions and that kind of stuff,"

he said. "A few years ago, I started to get a theme for a record and talked to some friends about it. A bunch of people pitched in to bring it to life."

The "people" in Alex and the People are a collection of Alvanos' friends who have joined him in jam sessions and performances in local bars, but for this record, co-producers Terrance Reeves and Justin Bergeron as well as several other JP and Boston residents played instruments on the different tracks.

Alvanos said he started working on the album a little over three and a half years ago, and the recording process has taken place over the last year and a half. All ten songs on the album were written by Alvanos himself, after whittling down 500 songs that he tested at open mics around Boston. "The album is about boyhood and the parts of you that die too early or live on too long," Alvanos said.

Recording the album came with its own challenges. "We blew out the electricity twice of a rental house on Cape Cod where Alex, and co-producers Terrance Reeves, and Justin Bergeron

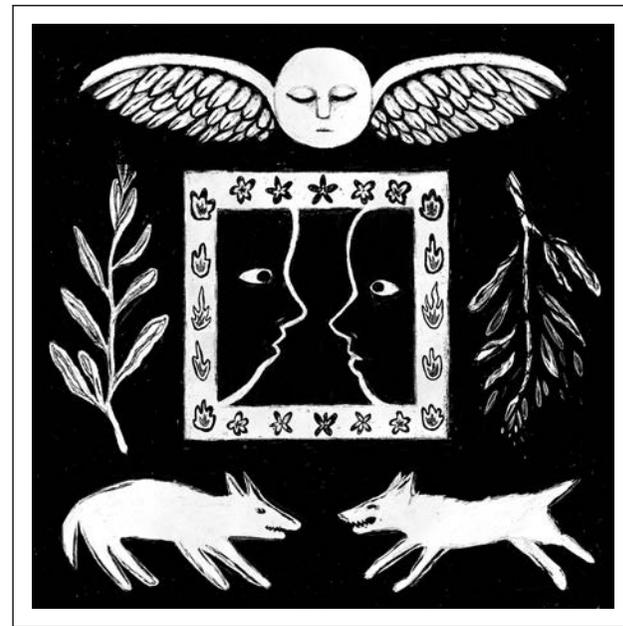
were attempting to get away and finish the album; we eventually had to climb between boogie boards in the basement and run an extension cord up to the living room to finish," Alvanos said.

Much of the album was recorded at a music school for kids in Newton that was available late at night after all the lessons were over. "We found out pretty quickly that there was construction going on next door," he said. "Quite a few times we had to scratch stuff and record it over to get it done."

Alvanos said he has different favorite songs from the album depending on the day, but he said that recently he's been resonating with "Bomb Shelter Blues," as the world continues to battle the COVID-19 virus.

Many of the songs were written on Alvanos' commutes on the MBTA, "humming melodies into his phone and scribbling down lyrics; his pen died on multiple occasions mid-song, only to be saved by a gracious passenger lending a new pen," according to notes about the album.

Alvanos said his "weirdest" songwriting memory was writing



'Hell's Hotel' while standing in line at the Roslindale Post Office after hearing an ambulance drive by. Though the song is not about the post office, he penned it as people moved up in line.

Other songs have unique backstories, too

'Waiting for My Train to Come' was written while waiting on an orange line platform on a zero-degree January night, Alvanos said, and on a more somber note, "Redcoats" was written in an airport after Alvanos learned of another school shooting. He was on his way back from visiting some friends when he heard about it. "I was angry," he said.

"Gonna Try to Love You"

was written in a fever dream last year," the album notes state. "Alex didn't even remember writing it until a few days later when he found a voice memo on his phone of him whispering, half-asleep with the flu."

Naming the album was another hurdle for Alvanos. "The phrase 'Boys Will Be Boys' feels like such an innocent phrase," Alvanos said. "I've been thinking a lot about that phrase and what it means. It has so many perverse implication for boys in men in society and what kind of responsibility" they have. "I've been thinking about what that means for me and how I've held onto parts of that; what are the patterns of things I can do and rethink that for boys and men in society," he said.

Two singles from the album, 'Broken Elevator' and 'Waitin' for My Train to Come,' are available now, and Alvanos is planning a virtual album release party as well. To listen to the singles and RSVP for the album release party, visit <http://alexandthepeople.com/albumdrop>.

Alvanos said he hopes to do some mini-tours around New England once the virus passes, but for now he's looking into virtual in-home shows to celebrate the release of the album.

As a son of immigrants from Greece and Czechoslovakia, some of whom were gypsy violinists, Alvanos thanked his grandparents for helping him realize "the power of music and how it can really bring communities together."

"Jamaica Plain is a beautiful arts community and it's just awesome seeing different artists going online," Alvanos said. "We're still doing it and not just going into the shadows."

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Coronavirus

Continued from page 1

public areas. Because these items can spread the virus, the Boston Police Department (BPD) is urging residents to properly dispose of all personal protective equipment. Those who don't do so could face a fine.

"Officers will use discretion and common sense to investigate any situation case by case," said the sergeant.

To ensure the safety of both its staff and citizens, District E-13 officers are following suggestions presented by BPD, the Boston Public Health Commission and other agencies. These include wearing personal protective equipment and modifying

the ways they interact with each other and with the public. As of March 30, 22 BPD employees had tested positive for the virus, according to a report by the Globe.

But while officers on the frontlines of the epidemic fight to keep the community safe, predators are using the crisis to their advantage. The BPD wants to help residents protect themselves against opportunistic criminals.

-Scams

The BPD is warning residents that scammers of all kinds are poised to prey upon the collective fear. Scams can take the form of educational emails purporting to be from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other professional organizations. Clicking links in those emails can compromise

a computer's security and can relay sensitive information to scammers.

Other emails attempt to obtain the recipient's credit card number by pretending to offer a legitimate service, such as financial assistance, COVID-19 treatments, or at-home COVID-19 testing kits. Some claim to be soliciting charitable donations for pandemic relief. These are known as phishing scams.

Potential phone or internet scams should be reported to the District E-13 police station at (617) 343-5630. However, if a resident receives a visit from someone asking to enter their home or take their personal information, they should call 911 immediately, as this could pose a more urgent threat.

-Package theft

Due to social distancing and stores being closed, an increasing number of residents are getting items delivered to their homes from online stores. The BPD wants to remind people that leaving parcels unattended on a front stoop or inside a storm door can create the opportunity for a thief to make off with groceries and other essentials. Residents are urged to have packages delivered to a side door, back porch or other location not visible from the street.

-Domestic violence

Abusers use social isolation to control their victims and to keep them from the people and resources that could help them. District E-13 recognizes this and knows that state-recommended

social isolation can put victims of domestic violence at greater risk. They encourage residents who may be in danger to call their Domestic Violence Unit at (617) 343-4959.

-Commercial vandalism/burglary

With fewer people on the streets, robberies will be less prevalent. But Northeastern law professor Daniel Medwed believes that a decrease in foot traffic in commercial areas may lead to an uptick in vandalism and break-ins to shuttered businesses. The installation of security cameras and security placards can deter would-be criminals. In addition, anyone who witnesses suspicious activity outside of a shuttered storefront should notify the police.

Delinquencia

Continued from page 1

alcalde Marty Walsh presentó el 7 de abril un conjunto de medidas aún más estrictas que incluyen un toque de queda nocturno, el cierre de todos los parques de la ciudad y la recomendación de andar con el rostro cubierto.

La basura se ha convertido en una preocupación cotidiana. Equipos de limpieza de calles reportan un aumento de máscaras, guantes de látex y otros elementos de protección descartados en áreas públicas. Ya que estos pueden transmitir el virus, el Departamento de Policía de Boston (BPD) insta a los residentes a deshacerse de todos los artículos de protección personal en un contenedor de basura so pena de multa.

"Los oficiales usarán discreción y sentido común para investigar cada situación caso por caso," dijo el sargento.

Para asegurar la seguridad de sus empleados tanto como los ciudadanos, los oficiales del Distrito E-13 siguen las sugerencias establecidas por el BPD, la Comisión de Salud Pública de Boston y otras agencias. Incluyen

en el uso de protección personal y la modificación de las interacciones públicas. Al 30 de marzo, 22 empleados de BPD habían dado positivo por el virus.

Pero mientras los oficiales en primera línea frente a la epidemia luchan por mantener la seguridad pública, los delincuentes están utilizando la crisis en su beneficio. El BPD quiere ayudar a los residentes a protegerse contra los criminales oportunistas.

-Las estafas

El BPD advierte a los residentes que los estafadores están listos para aprovecharse del miedo colectivo. Las estafas pueden tomar la forma de correos electrónicos educativos que pretenden ser del Centro del Control y Prevención de Enfermedades y otras organizaciones profesio-

nales. Hacer clic en los enlaces de esos correos electrónicos puede comprometer la seguridad de una computadora y puede transmitir información confidencial a los estafadores.

Otros correos electrónicos intentan obtener el número de la tarjeta de crédito del destinatario. Estos correos pueden ofrecer alivio financiero, tratamientos o kits de prueba. Algunos pretenden solicitar donaciones para el alivio de la pandemia. Los estafadores incluso venden equipo falso de desinfección y protección.

Las posibles estafas se deben informar a la estación de policía del Distrito E-13 al (617) 343-5630. Además, si un residente recibe una visita de alguien que le pide ingresar a su hogar o tomar su información personal, debe llamar al 911 de inmediato.

-El robo de paquetes

Debido al distanciamiento social y al cierre de las tiendas, una cantidad más alta de residentes recibe artículos entregados de las tiendas en línea. El BPD quiere que las personas sepan que dejar las parcelas sin vigilancia puede crear la oportunidad para que un ladrón se vaya con sus comestibles y otros artículos esenciales. Se insta a los residentes a que envíen los paquetes a una puerta lateral, un patio trasero u otro lugar que no sea visible desde la calle.

-La violencia doméstica

Los abusadores usan el aislamiento social para controlar a sus víctimas y mantenerlas alejadas de las personas y los recursos que podrían ayudarlas. El Distrito E-13 sabe que el aislamiento social recomendado

por el estado puede poner a las víctimas de violencia doméstica a un mayor riesgo. Puede comunicarse con la unidad de violencia doméstica al (617) 343-4959.

-Vandalismo y robos comerciales

Con menos personas en las calles, los atracos serán menos frecuentes. Pero un profesor de derecho de Northeastern, Daniel Medwed, dijo que la disminución de tráfico peatonal en las áreas comerciales puede resultar en un aumento del vandalismo y robos de tiendas cerradas. Cámaras de seguridad puede disuadir a un criminal. Además, cualquier persona que ve actividades sospechosas fuera de un negocio cerrado debe notificar a la policía.

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City of Boston updates parking policies as COVID-19 spreads

BY JOHN LYNDIS

The majority of Jamaica Plain residents are staying home to do their part to help bend the curve and stop the spread of COVID-19 in the city many are still worried about parking their cars during the street sweeping season that began this month.

While most of us are stuck inside and only venture out maybe once or twice a week to stock the fridge, pick up medications or take a solidarity walk the last thing we want to think about is moving our car and trying to find an alternative parking spot during street sweeping.

Mayor Martin Walsh an-

nounced that the city has updated the city's parking policies to reflect the tough times all residents are going through amid the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

Walsh said the Boston Transportation Department will not be ticketing and towing for street cleaning, given challenges to finding alternative places to park in neighborhoods.

Walsh also announced that residents with a valid resident permit sticker will be allowed to park in a metered or two-hour parking space, without having to adhere to the time limit or pay a meter fee, within their specific neighborhood. However, cars without the relevant resident

permit parking sticker, standard time limit and meter requirements remain in place.

BTD will not issue tickets for expired inspection stickers or registrations, given potential challenges for people to renew inspections and registrations at this time.

To help small businesses that have been impacted by COVID-19, BTD has created temporary pick up zones in front of Jamaica Plain restaurants that

have transitioned to takeout and delivery only. Takeout food pickup zones restrict parking to five minutes to increase convenience for the quick pickup and delivery of takeout food from restaurants, and provide adequate room for social distancing of six feet or more. Restaurants that would like to request a temporary pickup zone can do so on boston.gov. Requests will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

The City of Boston and its municipal partners of Brookline,

Cambridge, Everett, and Somerville are also offering all hospital staff a free 30-day pass for our public bike share, Bluebikes. To learn more about how to sign up for the program hospital staff should visit boston.gov.

With the exception of those changes noted above, BTD will continue to enforce parking violations, with a focus on public safety violations, such as blocking a hydrant, sidewalk or hand-icap ramp.

Jeopardy!

Continued from page 1

he watched it with his friends and roommates throughout college. He decided to take the free online test a few times as he said it is "pretty low stakes" to apply to be on the show. "I thought nothing of it," he said. After a few tries, he moved onto the next level.

"I got an email from Jeopardy!," he said, which instructed him to go to New York for an

in-person audition. "My understanding is that the online test screens to see if you have the knowledge," he said, and the in-person interview tests whether "you are personable enough to be on TV." He said he tried to speak loudly and quickly at the audition to prove he was able to hold his own during the taping.

"Anyone who does an audition is placed in the contestant pool," Mannetta said. "From there, there's an 18 month window from when you audition to when they call you."

Mannetta said his process took 15 months. He auditioned in September 2018, and got a call from producers that he had made it onto the show in December 2019. His show taped on January 29 of this year and aired on March 31. He said he had to field a lot of calls from unknown numbers for nearly a year just in case one was from Jeopardy! producers.

"I get a lot of calls from telemarketers and enthusiastically answered them all because I really wanted to be on Jeopardy!," he said.

Once he found out he would be on the show, he said he spent a lot of time prepping and sharpening his trivia skills. "That was pretty intense and nerve-wracking," he said.

"I did some passive studying and some targeted studying," Mannetta explained. He said he got a subscription to the New York Times and "every day I would just read a ton of articles," he said.

"Geography was my weakest thing," he said, adding that he would read as many stories involving geography around the world so he could learn about different countries and systems of government. He also watched "a ton" of episodes of Jeopardy, as some are available on Netflix, and bought a book of trivia facts

for science and geography.

"The thing I did the most while watching episodes was practicing buzzing in," he said. He received a special practice pen at the audition that he used to practice being quick at buzzing in.

When it finally came time to tape the episode, he headed to California and had to show up three hours before the show taped. But he didn't get to meet the show's famous host, Alex Trebek, during this time.

"The first time I spoke with Alex Trebek was when they interviewed me," he said. He also said that he did not know which anecdote he would be asked about until the cameras were rolling.

"I submitted five stories," he said, and the producers whittled it down to three, but Trebek luckily chose the one he was the most prepared to talk about—doing karaoke at a local Jamaica Plain bar.

He spoke highly of Trebek, saying he was friendly and does a Q&A with the audience in between rounds.

Mannetta said the whole taping experience was "such a whirlwind. I probably felt internally stressed and pretty on-edge." He said his family and friends who were in the audience said he seemed like the most calm of the three contestants, "but I was totally freaking out on the inside," he said.

Mannetta came in second place, so he did not move onto another taping. He is also not allowed to reapply to be on again. You probably won't see him on any other game show in the future, either.

He said that none of the other game show appeal to him in the same way that Jeopardy! does, as "Jeopardy! is a show that is very personal to me."



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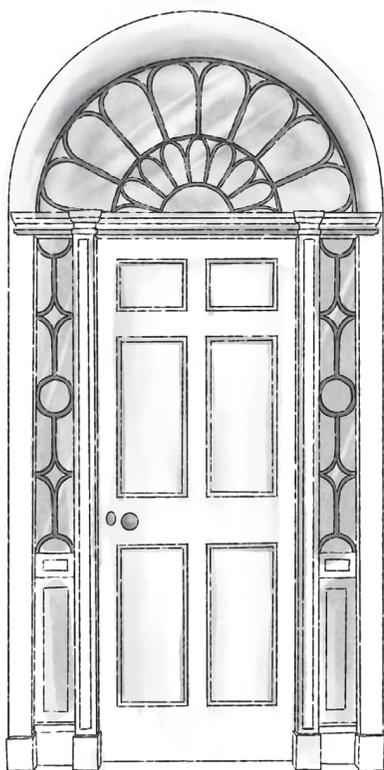
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COVID-19

Continued from page 1

state to use these rapid testing sites.

Additionally, the New England Patriots plane also brought in over 1 million masks last week from China “in a humanitarian mission,” Sudders said.

Baker has implemented stricter measures for grocery stores as well. Grocery stores must limit people, including employees, to no more than 40 percent of the store’s total capacity. Stores are exempt if they have a maximum occupancy of 25. “The Commonwealth’s grocery store workers are doing a terrific job,” Baker said.

MAYOR WALSH UPDATES

On April 5, Mayor Walsh implemented stricter measures to help protect the residents of Boston. Starting on Monday, April 6, the Boston Public Health Commission issued a Public Health Advisory that establishes a curfew in the City of Boston. Everyone except essential workers should stay inside between 9pm and 6am, the Mayor said. As of right now, this will be in effect until May 4. He said this was a necessary choice to make because there have been reports of people not social distancing especially in the evenings, as people are visiting friends’ houses and gathering while waiting for food takeout, which the Mayor said is unacceptable.

The Boston Pride Parade scheduled for June 13 has been postponed until next year, the Mayor said. New parking rules are in effect for healthcare workers as well. If a healthcare worker gets a parking ticket, the city will waive the ticket if they email a photo of the ticket and their hospital ID to parking@boston.gov. Walsh said this policy also applies retroactively if healthcare workers have received any tickets in the past few weeks.

The property tax deadline has also been extended from May 1 to June 1, and interest on late property tax and motor vehicle excise tax payments is extended until June 30 if the bill was due after March 10.

Additionally, the Mayor asked “anyone and everyone to wear a mask outside your home,” following the new Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendation to US citizens to do so. “Up to

25 percent of people are out and about because they don’t feel sick,” Mayor Walsh said. He said things like scarves and bandannas will work to cover the nose and face. “We can all help slow the spread by covering our faces,” he said.

He said that covering faces is not a replacement for physical distancing of at least six feet from others, which is still “100 percent necessary.”

City parks with recreational sports areas are also closed as of April 6. “People are continuing to gather and we simply have to take that option away,” he said. “No group activities should be taking place anywhere.” Mayor Walsh said that police are empowered to break up groups, and although he doesn’t want to have to fine people for disobeying the rules, but he is not taking it off the table.

There are also new steps taken at City Hall. Beginning Tuesday, April 7, City Hall is only open to the public on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9am to 5pm, and everyone entering the building, including employees, will be required to have their temperature taken, the Mayor said. He stressed that people should only come to City Hall for services that are not available by phone or online.

The Mayor also announced new measures for those at higher risk—people over the age of 65 and those with underlying health conditions. Walsh is advising these residents to “only go out when you absolutely need to.” Additionally, he recommended that they exercise inside their homes if they are able.

“You need to realize how many people are vulnerable and they’re all around you,” Walsh said. He said there are many residents of the City of Boston who have asthma, diabetes, cancer, and other lung conditions—all of which put these people at risk for having complications should they contract COVID-19.

Additionally, he said that nearly 45 percent of positive tests are in people under the age of 40. “You have to follow these guidelines,” he said. “We’re doing everything it takes to be ready for the surge.”

Over the weekend, Walsh also announced that the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center would be converted into a 1000 bed hospital, with 500 beds for homeless COVID patients and 500 for hospital capacity, including six acute care suites. Chief

of Health and Human Services Marty Martinez said on Tuesday afternoon that there are close to 200 cases in the homeless community.

The Boston Pride Parade scheduled for June 13 has been postponed until next year, the Mayor said.

“This was done in four days,” the Mayor said. “I want to thank everyone who has made this happen. We are preparing for whatever comes our way.” He said these beds are not in use as there is no current need, but they are ready as the City approaches the surge, which is predicted for mid-April.

“Don’t just focus on the numbers going up,” Walsh said. “Think about the cases you individually have stopped and the lives you have saved by doing the right thing.”

GOVERNOR BAKER’S COVID-19 COMMUNITY TRACING COLLABORATIVE

Governor Baker announced on April 3 the creation of the COVID-19 Community Tracing Collaborative (CTC) which will help mitigate the spread of the virus in the Commonwealth.

“This initiative is a collaboration between the administration and Partners In Health, and is the first of its kind in the nation, according to a release from the state. “The initiative will focus on tracing the contacts of confirmed positive COVID-19 patients, and supporting individuals in quarantine, and builds

on the efforts already underway from the Command Center to leverage public health college students to augment the contact tracing being done by local boards of health.”

“Enhanced contact tracing capability is another powerful tool for public health officials and health care providers in the battle against COVID-19,” Baker said. “Massachusetts is the only state in the nation implementing this type of programming, and this collaborative tracing initiative will break new ground as we work together to slow the spread of COVID-19.”

Partners In Health will be working with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, and the contact tracing will be combined with increased testing efforts in the state.

Nearly 1,000 contact tracers will be reaching out to COVID-19 patients and those who they have been in contact with in an effort to contain the virus.

MASSACHUSETTS COVID-19 RELIEF FUND

Governor Baker and First Lady Lauren Baker on April 6 announced the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund, which will support frontline workers and other communities who face issues like housing insecurity.

He said that the fund, which is administered by Eastern

Bank, was launched with a \$1.8 million anchor fund, and is now up to \$13 million as a starting point.

First Lady Lauren Baker said that the fund will also “partner with a network of excellent community foundations and local nonprofits who have deep roots in their communities.”

She thanked the “generous donors” to the fund, and as the need will continue to raise throughout the Commonwealth, “the sky is the limit for how much money we can raise,” she said.

Governor Baker said that as of Monday, about 76,500 people have been tested in the Commonwealth. He also said Massachusetts received 100 additional ventilators from the federal government, and he has a commitment to increase that number over the next few days and weeks.

“This public health crisis continues to be one of the most challenging events the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has ever faced,” Baker said.

“The goal here is simple,” he said, referring to the fund, “to help those who are going to have the hardest time working through and dealing with” this crisis.

To read more about the fund and to make a donation, visit masscovid19relieffund.org.

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Boston EMS seeing dip in calls, but exposure risks very high

BY SETH DANIEL

When Boston EMS crews respond to the various neighborhoods for an emergency, the response is just as fast as normal, but the procedures are more deliberate and more carefully conducted.

EMS Chief James Hooley told the newspaper this week that while overall calls are down, the risks for EMTs to be exposed to COVID-19 during calls is increasingly high – and they've taken careful measures to protect those front-line workers so they can continue to address the emergency and not fall to the sidelines with the sickness or for quarantine.

"There are definitely less calls coming in," he said on Tuesday. "However, we started seeing a steady increase in the numbers of calls where we were treating full isolation patients. There was that change where total calls went down, but the degree of difficulty and how we're approaching every single call is challenging. You are being a little more deliberate and looking for more information from the time they call into 9-1-1... Now, every complaint of fever, aches, shortness of breath and cough, we would identify that as suspicious and to use caution.

"With more testing now, we would know some people who are home taking care of their

symptoms (for COVID-19)," he continued. "We are also getting calls from people that say they have COVID, and their doctor said to call if they feel their condition was worsening. As a consequence, we would show up at folks homes, and before we come in, we would don the complete PPE gear."

Chief Hooley said they have had eight EMTs test positive for COVID-19, though none were hospitalized, and they have worked hard to keep those numbers down by exercising extreme caution. One has returned to work, and two more are scheduled to return in the coming week.

When EMTs showed up previously in neighborhoods, they always had gloves and the sirens and lights attracted attention to be certain. Now, however, when EMTs show up, it resembles a type of extreme movie scene as EMTs move to protect themselves and those in the homes they go into.

EMTs now wear gloves, face-masks, face shields, full gowns, head coverings and shoe coverings. EMTs also now provide a mask to the patient as soon as they arrive, which is a protection to themselves and to those in the home.

"It's for their protection, but also if the patient has no symptoms and is a carrier or maybe they are downplaying what they

are feeling," he said. "Now EMTs and patients all have masks immediately. It's a good barrier for all of us. We would take these precautions and notify the hospital... The big thing is trying to prevent people from getting sick. We want to keep those numbers (among the EMTs) down and need to keep the disruptions to patient care to a minimum."

Certainly the numbers of calls are down, as EMTs aren't dealing as much with routine medical calls, violence, overdose or the normal things they might do. While there is some of that, it's not at all what it was prior to four weeks ago. He said on a typical weekday, they might get around 355 calls for service, and transport between 230 to 250 people over a 24 hour period. Three weeks ago, the transport number was down to 160, and two weeks ago it was around 170.

Last week it also went up, and the numbers of those with COVID-19 symptoms were a vast majority of the calls.

"It takes a little more preparation on every call," he said. "As it plays out now, last week we did 192 transports. The numbers are starting to creep up – even though they aren't what they were – but 116 of those transports were calls where somebody probably had isolated."

EMTs are called to be aware, he said, to use their PPE on every call, to have their trucks well stocked with PPE, to wipe down their truck with disinfectant after every call and to be careful when they get off of work as they go home.

"There is a lot of disease within the community," he said. "We could take great protections at work and five minutes after work we run and errand and bump into somebody without taking the right precautions and all the protections are for naught."

At EMS headquarters, all the call-takers wear masks and practice social distancing, and even Chief Hooley had a mask on for a portion of the phone interview with the paper. Despite the extreme environment and the risky nature of responding to calls at homes where patients are recovering, Hooley said it hasn't affected morale. In general, he said, EMTs are the kind that would run towards danger to help, when others might be running away from it. That said, there is worry about how long this might last, and no one has that answer.

"No one is afraid of a chal-

lenge or scared to step up," he said. "They've always stepped up for a difficult extraction of an individual in a car (crash) or using a sled to get somebody up a street that is snowed in. People here are amazingly resilient at adjusting and dealing with circumstances. What's affected morale a lot now is just knowing this is going to be a long-term event. Typically if we're working during the worst heatwave in the summer, eventually the heat will snap. It's the same when he had that horrible winter in 2015 with so much snow and every call was so much more difficult. You knew it would melt eventually."

With this event, there is just no idea when it might end, or if there could be a second round this fall, and perhaps a third next winter. All of it is unknown, and Hooley said that has worn on the EMTs in the field a bit. They have a standing peer support group that was already in place, and now it has moved to an online platform and is being used, he said. Those on the front lines in the ambulances are being brave, he said, and they are also human.

"When I talk to the EMTs, their concern is mostly about timeline and how long we have to sustain this pace," he said. "They are stepping up. Our attendance is good. We've had some people cancel vacations. They wanted to make sure they were available and doing their part. We have people who are very dedicated here."

•If you call 9-1-1 for ambulance service, make sure it is an absolute emergency.

Dispatchers may ask more questions than usual, but officials said to bear with them. You will likely be asked to put on a mask, or they will give you one to put on. Callers are asked to report every symptom they have, including coughs, low fevers or general body aches. They may ask callers to put on a fresh shirt before the ambulance arrives as well. All of it is out of an abundance of caution.

They may also ask those who are able to meet them on a porch or front stoop to prevent having to go into a home if unnecessary – thus limiting exposure for the EMTs and for those in the home. They may also want patients to get on a stretcher and they will wrap patients up for safety.

All of these things will help make calls safer and quicker.



Boston EMS workers are taking extra precautions when they respond to calls now. While calls are down, more calls involve people who have or probably have COVID-19 infections.

Gazette Pet of the Week

by Sarah Carroll



JOEY

Handsome Joey is looking for a companion! This 8-year-old shy guy was brought in with his sister from another mister, Sasha, but they feel pretty ambivalent about each other so they're looking to go home separately! Though his history is



pretty outgoing, he's taken the shelter life a little hard and will need a patient family to bring him out of his shell. How can you resist that crinkly ear? Call the shelter to learn more about Joey and set up an appointment to meet him!

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"Gazette Pet of the Week" is a biweekly submission sponsored by Sarah Carroll, Sales Associate of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage 1375 Beacon St., Brookline, MA 02446 • 617-731-2447

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JPHS postpones events slated for spring

The Jamaica Plain Historical Society has postponed all our April and May events. The plan is to reschedule them to the fall.

The start date for our annual walking tours is being moved from mid-May to mid-June. Since we can't offer in-person options,

we hope that you will take advantage of all our online resources during these extraordinary times; visit jphs.org.



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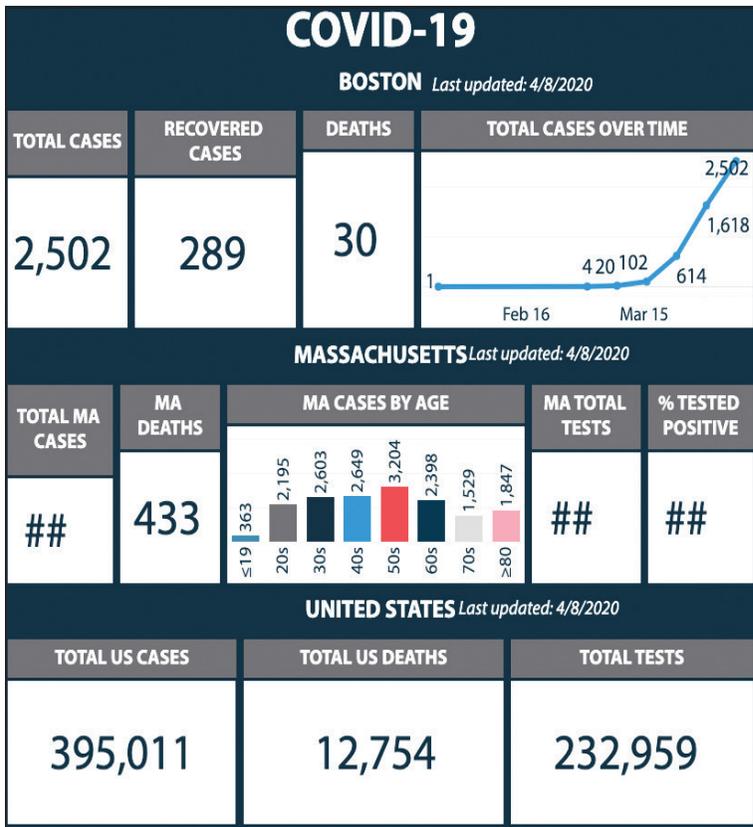
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A screenshot of the city's new COVID-19 dashboards that gives up to date info on the pandemic here, in the state and across the nation.

Walsh launches COVID-19 dashboards

BY JOHN LYNDS

In order to keep the public abreast of the rapidly changing situation involving the COVID-19 pandemic here, in the state and nationwide, Mayor Martin Walsh announced the launch of two data analytic dashboards that allow Boston residents to easily track the number of cases in Boston and throughout the state.

Walsh said the dashboards are part of a suite of digital tools available to residents, which include a texting service available in six languages, online City services, and frequently updated resources and factsheets available on www.boston.gov/coronavirus.

According to the city's COVID webpage the first dashboard includes a day-by-day breakdown graph of the spread of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, and tracks daily updates from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for the number of COVID-19 cases.

The second COVID-19 dashboard includes information specific to the City of Boston, including total daily cases, recovered cases, and total cases over time. The dashboard also tracks the levels of testing done throughout the United States.

Walsh said that together

these dashboards reflect up-to-date information about the status of coronavirus in Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the United States as a whole.

"Ensuring residents have accurate, up to date information about the coronavirus is critical during this challenging time," said Walsh. "These dashboards are another resource for residents to gather information and stay informed as we follow public health guidelines to keep ourselves and each other safe."

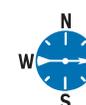
This data is updated when public data is released by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). The CDC updates their numbers each afternoon, Monday-Friday, and the MDPH updates their numbers each afternoon. The dashboards were created by the Department of Innovation and Technology's Citywide Analytics Team.

Additional resources and information about COVID-19 is available at www.boston.gov/coronavirus.

For additional questions or programs, please visit boston.gov/coronavirus or call 3-1-1, Boston's 24-hour constituent hotline. Text BOSCOVID to 99411 to receive text alerts on a regular basis, available in six languages.



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Walsh proposes fiscally responsible operating budget and capital plan to meet the needs of Boston residents

STAFF REPORT

Mayor Martin J. Walsh today proposed his Administration's recommended \$3.65 billion Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) operating budget and \$3 billion Fiscal Year 2021-2025 (FY21-FY25) Capital Plan, building on years of record investments in high-quality and equitable services and programs for Boston residents. The proposed investments take into account the short and long-term fiscal impact of the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and are made possible due to six consecutive years of proactive fiscal management that has well-positioned the City of Boston to continue investing in core city services and resident needs at a time of global economic uncertainty.

The budget proposal doubles down on Mayor Walsh's commitment to continue serving the people of Boston, no matter what challenges we face as a City. As laid out in his State of the City address earlier this year, the City of Boston is on track to make historic investments in education and housing over the course of the next year, both priority areas of the Walsh Administration.

"Through these unprecedented times, the work we do every day in serving our residents has never been more important," said Mayor Walsh. "In the proposed budget and capital plan, we are putting forth smart and strategic investments in the areas that we know will have the most impact for our residents. I want the people of Boston to know that during this time of such uncertainty,

they can count on their city government to help get through this difficult time. I believe that with responsible fiscal planning, with investments in the equity, health and wellbeing of our residents, and with our spirit of courage and collaboration, we will emerge together from this crisis stronger and more resilient than before."

"Every year, the City is responsible for planning a balanced budget," said Emme Handy, Chief of Administration and Finance. "The rapidly changing economic reality brought on by the coronavirus pandemic presents new challenges in striking that balance. Rising to that challenge, the Mayor's FY21 budget makes necessary revenue revisions recognizing our new reality, while continuing to fund the Mayor's

commitments to Boston today and into the future."

"In times of crisis, the programs and services provided by the City to its residents are more vital than ever," said Justin Sterritt, Budget Director. "The FY21 Budget acknowledges the new fiscal landscape the City faces but ensures those important City programs have the resources they need."

While the City has a growing tax revenue base, the City also continues to find efficiencies and prioritizes investing in innovative solutions to provide world-class City services. The FY21 budget includes over \$13 million in identified savings from areas such as health insurance, energy efficiencies and other operational savings. In addition, for the sixth consecutive year,

the City of Boston has received a AAA bond rating, reflecting the city's strong fiscal management and stable financial position. The City of Boston recently was named by Moody's as one of the best prepared cities to handle a national recession.

The recommended FY21 operating budget proposes an increase of \$154 million (or 4.4 percent) over FY20, and makes strategic investments in improving city services and the quality of life for residents of Boston. The proposed FY21-FY25 Capital Plan will reach \$3 billion for the first time in its history and will make strategic and meaningful investments in projects throughout the City. For more information on the budget proposal, visit budget.boston.gov.

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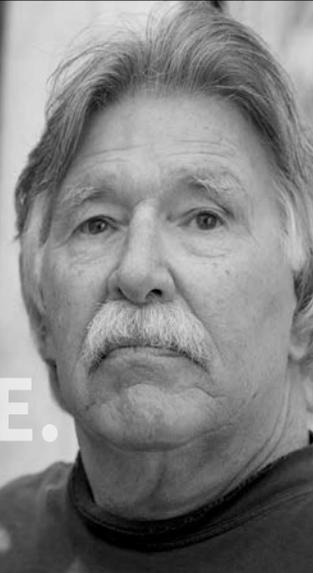


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BPHC releases Jamaica Plain's COVID-19 infection rate

By JOHN LYNDS

The numbers by the Boston Public Health Commission that were released over the weekend were sobering.

While some Boston neighborhoods have outpaced the city's average of COVID-19 infection rates Jamaica Plain seems to be below average.

The stats released by the BPHC that breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood, Jamaica Plain reported an infection rate of 12.7 COVID-19 cases per 10,000 residents with 52 confirmed cases.

The city average so far as COVID-19 rapidly spreads across the city and state is 18.1 cases per 10,000 residents overall.

Jamaica Plain reported some of the lowest infection rates of the disease and was lower than Roslindale, West Roxbury, South Boston, Charlestown, Back, and Bay/Beacon Hill/North End/West End. The neighborhood reporting the lowest infection rate so far was Fenway with an infection rate of COVID-19 of 8.2 cases per 10,000 residents and only 46 confirmed cases.

The neighborhood posting the highest rate of infection was East Boston with an infection rate of 27.7 cases per 10,000 residents. Eastie was eclipsed only by Hyde Park that reported an infection rate of 30.4 cases per 10,000 residents. While Eastie and Hyde Park were in the top two, the two neighborhoods were followed by Mattapan that had an infection rate of 24.3 cases per 10,000 residents while Dorchester has an infection rate of 21.6 cases per 10,000 residents.

With the deadly virus spreading more quickly in thickly settled neighborhoods and communities of color than in some other neighborhoods in Boston may have a lot to do with the fact many residents in the communities of color are still working blue collared jobs at local stores, restaurants, grocery stores, as delivery services drivers, cleaning service workers to make ends meet. These jobs bring these residents into close contact with the general public according to experts while others are hunkered down at home.

Also, over the weekend, many in the neighborhood still did not heed Mayor Martin Walsh's calls a week ago to stop playing organized sports like soccer and bas-

ketball at local city parks. Again city parks were filled with teens and adults playing soccer, basketball and other games while not practicing social distancing.

The reports of these ongoing activities has frustrated Mayor Martin Walsh who decided to impose even stricter restrictions in Jamaica Plain and across the city on Sunday to help curb the spread of COVID-10 that has already infected 2,502 residents and killed 30 Bostonians as of Thursday..

The new measures align with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and local public health officials, and if followed by all residents, are expected to reduce the impact and spread of COVID-19.

Mayor Walsh said public health modeling indicates that Boston is only 11 days away from peak demand for hospital resources, an estimate that emphasizes the critical need to flatten the curve immediately.

"I cannot stress enough that the actions we take now through the next several weeks will help curb the spread of this virus, and save lives," said Mayor Walsh. "There is nothing that I won't do as Mayor of the City of Boston to protect our residents, and at this very critical time, we must do everything we can as Bostonians to protect one another. This is bigger than any one person - this is about the greater good of our people. Stay safe, stay inside, and let's get through this together.

Walsh said social and physical distancing remain the primary strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The new measures that Mayor Walsh is putting into place strengthen the guidance previously issued around social and physical distancing, which include staying home as much as possible and maintaining a distance of 6 feet or more from others. These new measures went into effect Monday and will last through Monday, May 4, 2020. The measures include:

- Encouraging everyone to wear a face covering over their mouth and nose when in public;
- In addition to social distancing when going out in public for an essential trip, wearing face covers will help to reduce the risk of a person spreading the virus, especially if they do not

know they are sick. Face coverings should be worn anytime someone is outside the home, including on walks or other passive recreational activities..

- Face coverings should not be placed on children under 2 years of age, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance.

- Face coverings can include a cloth, scarf, bandana, etc. that cover a person's mouth and nose. Homemade face coverings should be made of intact, close-weave cloth and allow comfortable breathing. Visit CDC guidelines on face coverings for more information and guidance.

- Face coverings should be frequently washed using a washing

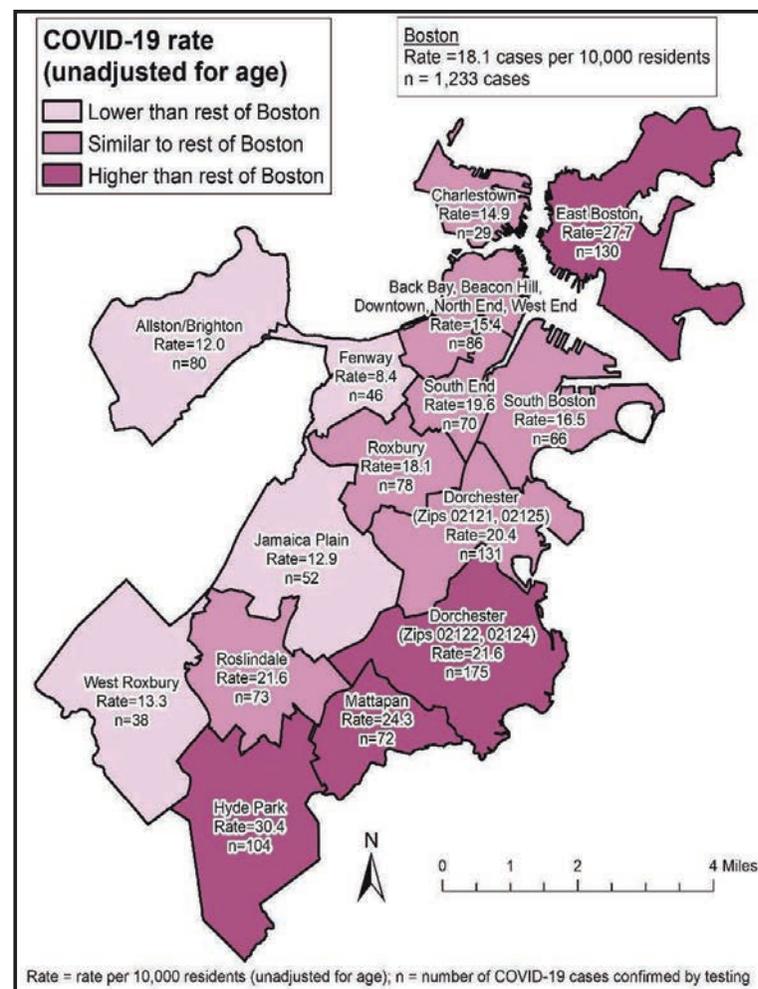
machine with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. They can also be hand washed with soap and warm water and left to dry.

- It is advised that residents use a face covering, as opposed to a medical grade face masks, in order to preserve protective equipment for health workers and those serving on the front lines in response to COVID-19.

The Boston Public Health Commission is issuing a Public Health Advisory for everyone in Boston except essential workers to stay at home from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily:

- This advisory will address unnecessary trips to businesses,

Continued on page 14



A neighborhood by neighborhood breakdown of the COVID-19 infection rate in the City of Boston released by the BPHC.

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4/10/20
JP

EDITORIAL

One day at a time: It's "Groundhog Day" for everybody

Here's one way to view the current situation in which we all find ourselves:

Prior to the pandemic sweeping the nation and the world, our lives were such that each day truly was a new day, filled with new challenges and the possibility of new excitement, albeit to varying degrees.

Today however, with most of us locked down in our homes, our daily routines have taken on a stunning sameness that is bereft of any sense of the usual moments of joy that form the essence of our humanity.

Similar to the classic Bill Murray movie "Groundhog Day" from 1993 (wow, has it really been 27 years?), each day seems to be a repeat of the day before.

The daily news in particular has a feeling of being in "Groundhog Day" mode. The headlines, politicians, and talking heads basically tell us the same thing, day after day after day, to the point where most of us now are tuning it out.

And yet, unlike the movie, there is nothing humorous about the real-life Groundhog Day in which we find ourselves.

The COVID-19 pandemic by far is the most tragic, far-reaching, and life-changing event that every American has faced since the end of World War II 75 years ago.

The phrase, "One day at a time," which is meant both as an inspiration and an admonition to those among us who struggle with substance abuse and other issues, now applies to every person, in every corner of the globe, regardless of fame, wealth, power, or any other status that differentiates us from anyone else.

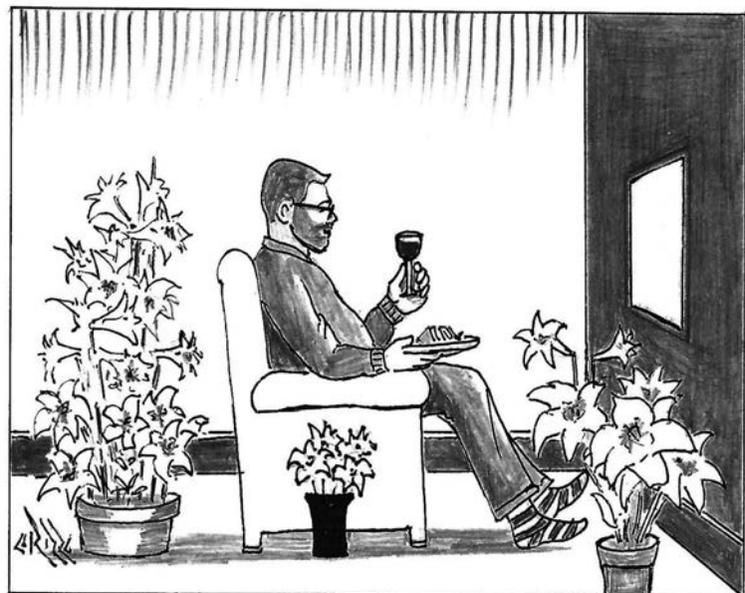
The news that public figures as disparate as the actor Tom Hanks, Boris Johnson (the Prime Minister of England), and James Dolan (the billionaire owner of the New York Knicks and Comcast) have contracted COVID-19 -- on three different continents -- makes it clear that the coronavirus does not discriminate and is world-wide in scope.

In short, there is no escape -- no way out -- for every human being on the planet.

Moreover, with public health authorities informing us that the ongoing lack of testing in the United States continues to leave our nation flying blind in the face of the pandemic, we truly will have reason to fear every interaction with another human being (even if we and they are fully-masked and we space ourselves six feet apart) for the foreseeable future.

Without any understanding of the true extent of the spread of the disease in the United States, no one can predict when we will begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

"One day at a time" will be our mantra for many days to come.



CELEBRATE EASTER - APRIL 12TH

OP-ED

No Easter for America?

BY DR. GLENN MOLLETTE

Because of Covid-19 many churches will not be in their sanctuaries for Easter, April 12, 2020.

Easter Sunday can fall on any date between March 22nd and April 25th. The dates change because Easter happens on the Sunday following the Paschal Full Moon. The word Paschal means "Passover" in Greek which is a transliteration of the Hebrew word pesach. The Paschal Full Moon is the first full moon after the Spring Equinox. This is sometimes referred to as the Egg Moon. This moon sometimes occurs in March and sometimes in April. So, April 12 is not locked in for Easter every year, but it is the date for 2020.

Easter 2020 will be remembered for a very long time as the Sunday America had no Easter. Or, the Easter where churches did not gather in small and large buildings. This is disappointing to multitudes. It is the "one" Sunday that many Americans attend church. Globally, churches pull out all the stops for presenting their best music. Ministers have

been working the last several weeks polishing up their sermons. But it's the same story, the old story that, once a year, people come to hear.

Some people still buy new clothes for Easter. Americans are more casual than ever but retailers still make out good for Easter, but not this year. Macy's and other retailers just furloughed hundreds of thousands of workers. For these retailers Easter has been cancelled and they are feeling it in their pocketbooks.

The first Easter didn't have a date of April 12. We don't know the date. We do know that the followers of Jesus were terrified. They had just watched him crucified on a cross and they feared they were next. Financially they were struggling because they had left everything to follow Jesus. They had "sheltered" themselves in fear of the religious opposition.

That first Sunday morning Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. In the middle of her sorrow Jesus appeared, spoke her name and Mary realizing it was Jesus called him "Teacher". She must have put her arms around Jesus

because he said, "Don't hold onto me, I have not ascended to my father." John 20:17 Essentially, he said, "Don't touch me!" This story is more relevant all the time. The saddest weekend of Mary's life turned into the greatest day of her life as she became the first witness of the risen Jesus, later exclaiming to the disciples, "I have seen The Lord!" Wouldn't you like to have that kind of Easter? We will miss gathering in church this Easter but experiencing Easter and the risen Christ can happen even if you are alone.

There will be Easter on April 12. There will be Easter for every person on the planet who will take the time to celebrate the old story, the good news of Easter wherever you are and whatever your situation, this Easter 2020.

Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist - American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.

Infection rate

Continued from page 13

restaurants, and other locations, and is intended to encourage people to stay inside their homes at night.

- Residents are encouraged to utilize delivery services as much as possible after 9 p.m.

- As a reminder, residents are encouraged to remain in their homes as much as possible throughout the day and only leave for essential needs, including trips to the grocery store, pharmacy, emergency meal sites and other essential services. Residents are discouraged from visiting essential businesses only to browse and should be mindful of only visiting essential businesses to pick-up essential items.

Closing City parks with recreational sports areas:

- Recreational sports areas in City parks, such as courts and fields, will be closed to limit exposure and contact between people. As a reminder, all playgrounds

in Boston have been closed since March 20, 2020 and will remain closed. Areas for passive recreation, like walking and jogging, will remain open.

- Additional signage will be posted on all recreational sports areas and outside of parks that will be closed.

- If needed, Boston Police are empowered to disperse gatherings and they can order people to vacate closed sections of parks.

Recommendations for people who are at higher risk:

- For people over 65 and those with underlying health conditions, the City of Boston encourages taking extra precautions. Trips outside the house should only be made when absolutely necessary, for either food or medications. Those experiencing difficulty with access to food, please call 311.

- In addition, taking walks or spending time outside is discouraged for the next few weeks, and exercising inside the home instead is encouraged as an alternative.
- The underlying health con-

ditions that can put someone more at risk are very common and include asthma, diabetes, heart conditions, kidney or liver disease or conditions that can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment and smoking.

- In Boston, over 11 percent of adults have asthma, and the rate is higher in black (15 percent) and Latino (12 percent) residents, as well as in Dorchester and Roxbury (15 percent each). One in four Boston public high school students have asthma, according to the Boston Public Health Commission.

To date, nearly 45 percent of positive tests in Boston are in people under the age of 40 and more cases of severe illness are now being seen in young people. Further, nearly 80 percent of positive tests are in people under the age of 60. The CDC estimates that nationally 25 percent of people infected with COVID-19 are asymptomatic, and may not know they are a carrier of the virus, or that they could be infecting others.

LETTERS

A message from AARP

The following letter was sent April 7 from AARP Massachusetts to Governor Baker regarding nursing home and long-term care regulations during COVID-19:

Dear Governor Baker,

On behalf of 775,000 AARP members in Massachusetts, we are writing regarding the Massachusetts Department of Public Health order dated March 10, 2020 providing guidance on MassHealth regulations for transfers and discharge of long-term care facility residents, 130 CMR 456.701 through 456.704. In addition, we are writing regarding 610.028 through 610.032, for the limited purpose of safely transferring and discharging all residents living in a long-term care facility that is intended to be used as a designated COVID-19 facility.

We deeply appreciate the state's focus on protecting the health and safety of our state's older population, nursing home residents and LTSS recipients, which is paramount. We are, however, very concerned that current state guidance does not adequately protect nursing home residents during this public health emergency.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION ON FACILITIES WITH COVID-19 POSITIVE CASES

We urge Massachusetts' Department of Public Health to release publicly the names of nursing facilities with confirmed COVID-19 cases. Contrary to concerns that such disclosures would violate a patient's health privacy, we do not believe HIPAA precludes a state health agency from releasing the names of facilities because a facility is not a covered entity as defined by federal law. We believe transparency and notice to the public is critical for public health. Moreover, caregivers and family members need and deserve to have this information for their own health decisions and as they consider possible next steps and interventions for their loved ones.

To be clear, we are not advo-

cating for the disclosure of any HIPAA protected patient information. However, we do believe that disclosure of the names of nursing facilities with confirmed COVID-19 cases would benefit the health of Massachusetts residents by allowing people to make informed choices.

TRANSFER OF RESIDENTS

Nursing home residents are some of the most vulnerable members of our society. Many residents need assistance with activities of daily living due to physical and/or cognitive limitations. Moving these residents from their nursing homes can be unsafe and/or traumatic for them and their families, particularly when a move is involuntary and sudden.

Transfer from a facility can have both immediate and longer term negative impacts on a resident's health. Many nursing home residents, especially those who are cognitively impaired, develop a physical, psychological and emotional dependence upon their surroundings and any disruption to this environment can cause serious emotional and psychological damage and physical stress.

Moreover, transfer without offering appropriate and effective counseling and planning can lead to isolation and despair and the lack of predictability maximizes fear and anxiety.

PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH CAREGIVERS

During these times of great uncertainty, when families are prevented from visiting their loved ones in a facility, we believe nursing homes should be required to provide proactive communications to the primary caregiver(s) of nursing home residents regarding their physical and emotional health and more general updates with information for families. We urge the state to modify its guidance to reflect that nursing homes must also create additional or increase listserv communications; assign staff as primary contact for families; offer a phone ho-

tline for family members to get information about their loved one's care, and establish other opportunities to maintain communication between residents and their families.

We urge the state to adopt similarly strong language with regards to residents and their family members and family caregivers residing in other long term supportive service settings and residential settings, such as assisted living facilities and rest homes.

VIRTUAL VISITATION

In addition, we are concerned that nursing home residents going weeks or even months without any visits from loved ones is extremely serious, and the state directives should reflect this by requiring nursing homes to prioritize virtual visits and caregiver communications.

The Department of Public Health ordered that skilled nursing facilities should "restrict all non-essential visitors", but didn't make an allowance for virtual visitation. CMS guidance also contains a restriction on visitation, but only advises that facilities "should consider" offering "alternative means of communication for people who would otherwise visit, such as virtual communications (phone, video-communication, etc.)."

During this stressful and difficult time when in-person visitation is very restricted, we strongly recommend that Massachusetts immediately modify its guidance to require nursing homes to offer and facilitate reasonable and practicable alternative means of communication for individuals who would otherwise visit, such as virtual communications. Such virtual visits can be essential to the emotional, mental, physical, and social well-being of nursing home residents. For some residents, these virtual visits may be the difference between life and death.

Given the widespread adoption of video-chat options (from FaceTime to Skype to Zoom and so on), AARP Massachusetts believes these virtual visitations must include the ability to com-

municate on video, not only for the emotional well-being of the resident, but also so family caregivers can ensure their loved ones are being well cared for. If funding is needed to ensure video-chat options, we encourage the provision of such funding and consideration of how such communications could be part of telehealth.

CONCLUSION

We appreciate the efforts of you and your Administration to ensure the health and safety of older Massachusetts residents living in the community and in residential settings such as nursing homes, rest homes and assisted living facilities. We urge you to address the above-listed concerns immediately.

AARP MASSACHUSETTS

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Rep. Nika Elugardo works to aid people in her district

BY LAUREN BENNETT

State Rep. Nika Elugardo, like others who work at the State House, has had her normal workload and schedule turned upside down over the past few weeks.

“More than 90 percent” of what she works on is related to the COVID-19 response, she told the Gazette. She has been working on several things within her district and legislatively to try and help folks out during this crisis.

“In the district, I try to support the existing work of my colleagues and fill in gaps so I’m not duplicating responses,” Elugardo said. She has sent volunteers the way of City Councilors Matt O’Malley and Julia Mejia, who have organized phone banks to call and check up on seniors. She also said she has offered to share phone lists from the Council on Aging with the City Councilors if they are interested.

“I’m trying to make sure that we support the calls that are happening in the different ways we can,” she said, “making sure there is a clear line to resources.”

She said an area within the district where help is already

being given but needs double the attention is making sure food distribution is free and safe for people who are unable to get food themselves for a variety of reasons.

She thanked City Councilor Kenzie Bok for her work to distribute fresh produce to residents across Boston, and Elugardo’s office has helped provide Stop and Shop gift cards to seniors.

“There are lots of options for families with school-aged children as well as college students,” Elugardo said. “We want to make sure our seniors are getting what they need.”

She said that they were able to distributed over 300 cards to seniors in places like Mildred C. Hailey, the Tobin Community Center and other places around Mission Hill.

“My supporters, as always, really showed up,” she said. “Someone put a Venmo together” to raise funds to buy more gift cards for seniors.

Elugardo said that a population she is particularly concerned about is the people who are not already part of some senior program or someone who isn’t a family with children. She urges

people who know of someone who may be in their 30s or 40s with a disability, are at high risk, or otherwise unable to buy food for themselves, to reach out to her office. She wants to help out these people who do not fall into one of the “programatic categories” that exist already, such as seniors or those with young children

“I did go grocery shopping for one of the younger women in our district who has serious respiratory illnesses and it is not safe for her to leave the house,” she said. She also said that tenants who live in the district’s public housing units and have volunteered to help others also received grocery store gift cards, as “we want to make sure they, too have what they need,” Elugardo said. “We’re trying to cover the bases and the gaps.”

Elugardo commended Mayor Walsh and the City Councilors for “doing such a great job.” She also expressed gratitude to Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz and her colleagues in the Boston delegation, especially the Boston Electeds of Color.

She also said she has been trying to gather an understanding of what the needs of small businesses in the district are.

She has spoken with JP Centre/South Main Streets to make sure they understand the resources available for businesses and “where I need to press for legislation at the state level,” she said, as well as making sure they are connected to the federal paycheck protection program.

Elugardo also said that “every small business under 500 folks” should apply for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan. “The money may run out on that, so we’re supporting our congressional delegation, she said.

Additionally, the Rep. has co-sponsored over 40 housing bills as well as filed a bill that makes sure that elders who have pre-existing conditions who “had the wisdom to stop working even more the state of emergency,” even if they’re gig economy workers, will not face issues getting unemployment insurance.

She also said she wants to make sure that no low and mid-income property owners lose their home or their commercial space as a result of the virus. “Some people will be able to bounce back and others won’t, and where they can’t, we want to help them bounce back,” she said.

“We’re trying to think ahead but it’s quick and easy to file this type of legislation,” she said. “People can let us know what’s missing.”

She also said that “we are keeping our eyes on the incarcerated community and immigrant community,” and urging the release of people who are in detention and incarcerated for nonviolent offenses, as “there are so many types of people who shouldn’t be incarcerated.” She said that jails and prisons should not be putting people at risk of catching this virus.

It’s been a challenge for legislators to be able to communicate with one another during this crisis, as “the technology is way behind the times in the legislature,” she said. But, she added, “I feel really blessed. There’s very strong leadership at the City and at the state [levels] and I think we’re going to take care of each other and I hope that can be true for every district in Massachusetts,” she said.

With the holidays coming up, “folks should just tap into technology and really work hard to connect with each other,” she said. “Remember that there are some people who are quietly suffering. Keep taking care of each other.”

HEY BOSTON, STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY

Message from Mayor Martin J. Walsh

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- Fever (100.4F / 38C or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Call ahead before going to your doctor's office or the ER. Call 311 for the Mayor's Health Line.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Stay at least six feet away from others
- Do not socialize in person
- Wear a face covering when you are in public
- Wash your hands, use hand sanitizer, cover your cough and sneezes, and avoid others when sick

There is a Public Health Advisory for everyone in Boston except essential workers to stay home from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily. As a reminder, please stay home when you can during the day.

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- Visit boston.gov/coronavirus or call 311 for guidance and information from the City of Boston

By doing the right thing, we can slow the spread of coronavirus in Boston and save lives. Thank you for all you have done already: for staying safe, staying inside your home, and staying Boston Strong.

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