

Debra Thompson

From: Mark Tuccillo <drmark@PMC-HEALTH.ORG>
Sent: Friday, November 5, 2021 9:24 AM
To: Stephen Giesbrecht; Chad Wright; Assembly; Sandy Dixon
Cc: Phillip Hofstetter; Stephanie Payne; Julie Anderson; Scott Burt
Subject: RE: Gym closure

To whom:

The decision to close city facilities was not arrived at lately. There is clear historical evidence that allowing unregulated group meetings increases and/or potentiates viral spread during pandemics. With closure of in person learning, people are going to naturally gravitate to recreational areas. Since there has been no true enforcement of mitigating policies, i.e. masking social distancing good hygiene, this has already led to spread to persons with in said facilities. Invariably when an individual was interviewed they will report that they were mildly symptomatic for several days but chose work and/or recreation regardless. We have seen the consequences of this in several large community meetings which can only be termed most appropriately super spreader events. We have elected not to bring outside populations into the community for sporting events and/or community meetings. To the best of my knowledge there is still one large which is scheduled in an indoor venue. I have not yet been able to contact the organizers to see what mitigation policies they are going to attempt to enforce. From a public health perspective closing facilities where there is likely going to be low mitigation and high contact in addition to increased respiratory effort makes sense based on the current level of community spread.

Please be aware of the numbers we are reporting are only the tip of the iceberg. Because of our very limited supply of rapid testing we are only testing sentinel members of any group, family or household that are symptomatic. The rest are being sent out with the expectation that they will practice quarantine or isolation as appropriate based on the premise that they too are likely positive. This means that we may only be identifying between 20 and 30% of the true positives with point of care testing.

All of this is a foreseeable consequences of lacking mitigation measures. Low immunization rates, lack of social distancing, masking, hygiene and the re emergence of large group meetings with the same lack of mitigation is clearly a high risk situation.

We do continue to encourage activities outside where transmission rates are likely much lower. This present situation was a foreseeable consequence of the lack of mitigation measures and the tacit blessing of numerous government level agencies with the remove all of strong recommendations and/or mandates.

To leave unregulated areas open when they are very likely to potentiate ongoing spread would be irresponsible. There are presently covid positive employees in these facilities that may or may not have contracted and/or spread the virus in the course of the normal duties. Separate from the medical aspects, this brings up Workmen's Comp. issues for the Borough.

There can be no expectation of controlling viral spread without mitigation factors. Avoidance or wishing this to go away simply is not an effective means of controlling the ongoing pandemic.

There are clear methods to control the spread of the virus. Until those are endorsed and/or enforce secondary, less effective, measures are needed. We will continue to see a decline in the ability to locally test symptomatic or asymptomatic individuals with point of care testing as our supply swindled. I would strongly encourage mandating proven effective mitigation measures. If you require a list measures please contact me at your convenience and I would be glad to review them with you

From: Stephen Giesbrecht <sgiesbrecht@petersburgak.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 5, 2021 6:43 AM
To: Chad Wright <ccwright77@gmail.com>; Assembly <assembly@petersburgak.gov>; Mark Tuccillo <drmark@PMC-HEALTH.ORG>; Sandy Dixon <sdixon@petersburgak.gov>
Cc: Philip Hofstetter <phofstetter@PMC-HEALTH.ORG>; Stephanie Payne <spayne@petersburgak.gov>; Julie Anderson <janderson@petersburgak.gov>; Scott Burt <sburt@petersburgak.gov>
Subject: RE: Gym closure

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Thanks for your communication Chad.

As you may know, the nature of the current COVID outbreak is disturbing. The number of cases each day, along with the widespread community infections, tell us that there is not necessarily a single source of the outbreak. This makes it harder to approach the problem without across the board remedies. I closed the facility to help give the Borough and the community an opportunity to take a breath and put steps in place to help avoid further issues. The staff at Parks & Rec. will be going through a significant sanitizing process over the next week or so, and I will reevaluate the situation at the end of next week. Hopefully we can reopen the facility the week of November 15th.

Steve

From: Chad Wright <ccwright77@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 4, 2021 5:33 PM
To: Assembly <assembly@petersburgak.gov>; Mark Tuccillo <drmark@PMC-HEALTH.ORG>; Sandy Dixon <sdixon@petersburgak.gov>; Stephen Giesbrecht <sgiesbrecht@petersburgak.gov>
Cc: Phillip Hofstetter <phofstetter@pmc-health.org>; Stephanie Payne <spayne@petersburgak.gov>; Julie Anderson <janderson@petersburgak.gov>; Scott Burt <sburt@petersburgak.gov>
Subject: Gym closure

Dear Assembly Members, Manager Giesbrecht, Dr. Tuccillo and Sandy Dixon;

Good evening. I am trying to understand the reasoning behind the decision to close all Borough buildings, particularly the Community Gym and facilities, that was made on November 3, 2021. According to a Facebook post, "Borough Manager Giesbrecht is responsible for evaluating the risks to the employees and the Community and taking appropriate actions as authorized by the Assembly and Borough Code. In this case the decision was made in consultation with the Borough's Emergency Manager and Health Officer as well." What exactly are the risks? Have there been any clusters associated with the gym?

Masking in the gym (and all Borough buildings) has been required since September 23rd, 2021. Additional mitigation measures have occurred at the gym in the past which avoided a closure. I will be the first to commend Stephanie and her staff for all their efforts to remain open when in fact it would have been much easier to close the facility.

I will forgo listing the numerous benefits of regular exercise and the importance of investing in our health, especially during this stressful period in our community; however, I would like to mention that physical activity improves immunity, decreases inflammation and decreases viral respiratory infections that are apparent in COVID-19 sufferers. It is very unfortunate the decision to close this facility was made so abruptly with no opportunities to provide alternatives to remain open. I would appreciate your consideration in reopening the

gym immediately with additional mitigation measures in place. Let's minimize risks and maximize healthy living!

Sincerely,

Chad Wright

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