

# Outline of the City's response to our questions

The Bethlehem Gadfly coronavirus April 17, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts on the coronavirus 

## **Bethlehem's Mayor Donchez is joined by Department Heads to answer resident's questions**

30 mins.

### **Mayor Donchez:**

- City Hall open, other places closed
- some extensions on taxes
- parking fees waived
- don't flush wipes, etc.
- water shut-offs suspended
- collections suspended
- unlikely the pool will open this year
- Compost center re-opens next Wednesday for drop-off only,
- Musik-Fest, no decision yet
- street-cleaning continuing but moving cars is suspended
- thanked Wind Creek for making payments and other contributions
- thanked colleges, universities, hospitals

### **Kristen Wenrich, Bethlehem Health Bureau Director (min. 7:15)**

- investigate close contacts
- 325 cases, 2 deaths
- 11% hospitalized
- 20.8% positivity
- 40% non-white, 45% Hispanic, 14% unknown
- 65% white, 13.5% African American, 2% Asian
- providing education for specific populations

- 25-49 age group is highest, over 65 low
- 46 is average age of cases, 55 for hospitalization
- outbreaks in 3 long-term care facilities
- more household related cases
- not recommending that mild cases get tested
- contact health provider or hospital hot lines
- hospital capacity, both have capacity and equipment
- addressing homeless population
- medical reserve corps activated
- mass testing/contact tracing
- shortage of testing kits

**Bob Novatnack, Emergency Management Coordinator (min. 12:25)**

- no tested positives on staff
- all shifts working
- calls are down
- counseling people on distancing
- traffic is light
- food chain strong
- keep 6ft social distancing

**Alicia Karner, Director Community and Economic Development (min. 14:30)**

- continue to issue permits for emergency work
- procedures for certificate of occupancy for sales/rentals
- STR for emergency medical staff: contact hospitals and hotels
- development projects: Martin Tower, etc, halted if non-essential

**Mike Alkhal, Director of Public Works (min. 18:05)**

- adjusted shifts

- insured work places safe
- continue all operations as long as can be done safely
- street sweeping: doing it safely, but no ticketing
- open for business, moving forward

**Eric Evans, Business Administrator (min. 20:55)**

- all depts. fully operational
- City Hall operational
- Human Resources especially important
- in contact with peer cities across state
- number #1 priority for employees is safety
- social distancing and split shifts
- finances: unknown length, what see on other side
- relatively strong position financially
- will be drop in revenue
- Wind Creek payment is good
- need to drop expenses
- part-time staff reduced
- overtime reduced
- hiring freeze
- infrastructure projects extended
- reviewing line items
- reviewing programming, may be tough decisions
- balance sheet is strong and making appropriate adjustments

**Mayor Donchez (min. 27:20):**

- thanks to all