

Provincetown Call In Question and Answer: April 15, 2020

The Town of Provincetown hosted a call-in question and answer session. Select Board Chair David Abramson, Board of Health Chair Steven Kasturinis, Board of Health Vice-Chair Susan Troyan, Town Manager Robin Craver were joined and Seamen's Bank President and CEO Lori Meads in answering residents' questions regarding COVID-19 pandemic. Many important questions were not answered, as only one hour was planned. Staff compiled the written answers below and, where deemed appropriate, expanded some answers to provide additional information. Since the public is eager to receive the call-in's written answers and some answers require additional research, we are releasing the main questions and will continue to compile answers to additional questions. Thank you for your patience.

Board of Health Chair Steve Kasturinis

We continue to see amazing cooperation from town residence and because of that; we have seen a flattening of our numbers. We ask that when you go out of your home, be aware of social distancing. Try to be aware and understanding of each other. If everyone could be empathetic as you may not always know his or her story. In tight spaces, the CDC and the town are encouraging you to wear a mask. If you need help in getting a mask, please reach out, we are here to help.

Dr. Susan Troyan and Board of Health Vice Chair

Remember frequent hand washing. Whenever you come back into the house or touching other areas, please remember to wear great hygiene. One comment on mask, please clean them every evening. When removing them, try to remove them by your ears and not let the outside part of the mask touch the outside of your face.

Lori Meads, Seamen's Bank

Paycheck protection program, we have been busy processing these applications. My fear is this is not going to be enough and I am hoping the additional stimulus will be approved. The current paycheck protection program will cover your payroll for 8 weeks, and your loan will be deferred for 6 month and is forgivable if used for its intended use. The other program is the Emergency Relief Loan that is directly through the SBA website. We are currently working with our customers to defer your loan for 3-6 months. Fanny Mae loans are being deferred for 6 months. We are working together with the community and we are hear to any and all questions.

Q: PPC loans that are available, if you are approved, they start right away, if I cannot open until June, those funds will be gone before I can even open.

A: When you apply, you have to use the information from 2019, and if you did not run a payroll in Feb and March, you do not qualify. The SBA is doing an express loan, but Seamen's bank is not set up to do those, but other banks are. That is movement at the state level to try to address these concerns, as many of the businesses here are in similar situations.

Q: Can we put up signage around town asking people to wear masks?

A: We feel the CDC guidelines that are currently in place are sufficient. We are promoting mask use if you are going to be in an environment where you may not be able to be more than 6 feet apart. By placing signs around town asking people to wear masks, it may give off the impression we are mandating mask wearing.

Q: What is the update on the opening of Cabarets and Theaters this season?

A: At this time, we do not have this information.

Q: What is the update on the guidelines for restaurants once they are allowed to open?

A: Right now, restaurants are allowed to open for take-out. We have not received direction from the Governor's office yet, but we know that information is forthcoming. The town manager is currently putting together a COVID Recovery Coalition to look at how the community would handle the reopening.

Q: Does the town manager Robin have contact with the governor of Massachusetts?

A: We have been working with our state reps, Sarah Peake and Julian Cyr. I have spoken with some of the state agencies as needed. That information has been getting to the Governor's office.

Q: Does Provincetown have the authority to mandate mask wearing in the Town?

A: The Board of Health has the authority to enacting any reasonable order that is for the Health of the town. We are currently following the guidance of the CDC.

Q: Utilizing what you are seeing what is happening in the Berkshire, they have cancelled all of their events. What time line are you giving this summer to give clarity on what will happen?

A: We are watching the recommendations from the CDC. Our first priority is public safety. We just started on a review and looking at the data. Please stay tuned.

Q: Do you have ways for second homeowners to get involved?

A: There are many nonprofits in town that you can reach out to or you can contact our Emergency Coordinator Eric Sussman.

Q: Many businesses have signed leases for the season who may not end up opening up for the season. What is the legal recourse we can use if we cannot pay our lease if we do not open up?

A: We are unable to give legal advice; you should talk to your attorney, and your landlord.