

Saratoga County Reopening Advisory Group Minutes  
September 3, 2020 – 3 p.m.

Chairman Lawler called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance in person and on the phone.

Mr. Hellwig gave a Control Room update. The news was just received that the Governor announced today that Casinos can reopen as of September 9<sup>th</sup> at 25% occupancy. There are some restrictions in terms of how the Casino will operate. 6ft of distance between the machines, no table games will be allowed unless the Casinos have Gaming Commission approved physical barriers between players, no food or beverage will be allowed on the gaming floor, and the State Gaming Commission will be monitoring the Casinos to ensure compliance. Also, since the last reopening meeting, food courts in malls were approved to reopen on August 21<sup>st</sup>, as long as all relevant health and safety measures were in place. On August 7<sup>th</sup> a Federal Judge had granted a preliminary injunction of the Governor's Executive order which allowed for wedding receptions to be held at 50% of the venue's capacity. That order has since been changed by a Federal Appeals Court to stay the lower Court's order which essentially means that weddings are again blocked from having more than 50 guests. For Gyms and Fitness Centers, some concerns were raised by Public Health Staff, as part of the inspection process, relative to ancillary businesses such as food service, child care, pools and retail stores within the facility. This issue has been brought to the Control Room and the State indicated that Public Health Staff will not be expected to deal with those operations, they will be dealt with by the various State agencies that typically do the inspections for those operations. Restaurants are still at 50% capacity for inside dining. The Control Room has raised the issue regarding as the weather gets colder, if there will be consideration in allowing that number to be increased. The response up to this point is that they hope, prior to the beginning of the Fall, to have revised guidance conditioned upon the metrics warranting such a change. The final item, Saratoga Motor Car auctions has been approved to take place on Saturday September 19<sup>th</sup> at the Saratoga Auto Museum. A procedural plan was submitted to the State, that plan was approved using guidance for businesses possessing a dealer's license.

Mr. Hellwig said that he reached out to management at the Saratoga Casino hotel regarding the reopening announcement, and they wanted to express their gratitude to this Reopening Group and its members for supporting the effort. Mr. Hellwig said that they have had plans in place and ready to go, they were just waiting for the approval. Mr. Hellwig said that as with all of the announcements, the guidance itself lags behind the actual announcement. He expects that the documents will be available later this afternoon.

Ms. Duncan gave a Public Health update. The number of positives is currently 894 with 32 active, 255 quarantined. They are being inundated with college students. There were 17 college students transferred today, mostly from Oneonta College, and students in regular schools who will not be going back to school next week because they are in quarantine. Most of the college students from Oneonta were given the opportunity to decide if they wanted to quarantine on campus or go back home and quarantine. Several chose to come back home. These 17 college students are students that were exposed to positives and need to be in quarantine for 14 days. Two Skidmore College students tested positive and contact tracing had to be done. Those individuals are in isolation and

the contacts are in quarantine. There are 2 people in the hospital, yesterday there were none. Regarding gyms, they have 28 requests for inspections, 12 have been assigned out, 5 completed and 11 under review for their plans. They got a lot of nice help from Wilton, Clifton Park, Saratoga Springs, to assist, and they are training more people for inspections. There were thoughts about changing the HVAC system attestation for the gyms because right now, as it stands, it only states that you have read the guideline that you will abide by it, but it does not specifically state that you will have the appropriate HVAC System in place. They have looked at what Warren County developed regarding absolutely attesting to the fact that they have the proper HVAC system in place, and won't run into a problem down the road.

They are currently helping the Schools, they have participated in a few Zoom meetings with School Nurses and Administration. They have chosen COVID liaisons for each and every School District including private and public schools. With this contact information, they will have the ability to contact people quickly if and when any test results associated with the School come in. The NYS DOH is setting up an online dashboard for teachers and parents to view testing results, and the State will be sending a letter to the School Districts today. The schools must send testing results daily to the State, this information will be posted on the dashboard. Mr. Lawler commended Ms. Duncan for setting up the liaison system for the School Districts, that level of communication will mean a lot to the parents in terms of being assured that information will move quickly to and from the School Districts.

Mr. Zurlo gave a brief enforcement/complaints update. The numbers are improving. From August 20<sup>th</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup> there were a total of 43 complaints. 32 of the 43 complaints were for people not wearing masks. The remaining were for social distancing at restaurants, tables not being 6ft apart, and large gatherings. Mr. Wait complemented Skidmore College, as he exercises on the campus almost every day. Everyone he observes there is wearing a mask, whether they are runners, bikers. Whatever they are doing to enforce that at Skidmore, it is working.

Mr. Rose gave a brief update on the website. Additions include information regarding Agri-Tourism such as corn mazes, hay rides, Fall activities; updated school guidance, college guidance, low risk sports. The Casino guidance will be uploaded as soon as it is released. Total views on the website are at 42,655 with 66 views today. The DOH school online dashboard will also be added to the website once it's live.

Mr. Hellwig said that the Control Room calls have been reduced from every day to now on Mondays and Fridays only. It was decided that the next meeting of the Reopening Advisory Group would be scheduled based on need. Mr. Lawler said that the group would not be disbanded at this point, but just disband the meeting schedule for now. If the group needs to get together again in the future, a meeting can be scheduled at that time.

Mr. Lawler thanked everyone and believes that the group made a real difference in getting information out to businesses in the County and feels that this group played a good role, and a material role, in helping the County's economy relaunch itself.

Mr. Richardson said that he would especially like to thank Todd Shimkus and the Chamber for the job that they did with the buckets for small businesses. He delivered approximately 40 of these buckets in Mechanicville and businesses were very appreciative. Mr. Lawler said that he also

delivered some in his Town and it expressed the fact that someone cared, and recognized the challenges that small businesses have.

Mr. Kinowski said that he has found in his research that PPE is readily available from a company in Schenectady and can pass this information on if needed. They are currently servicing a lot of schools in the area with masks, hand sanitizers, thermometers etc.

Mr. Lawler acknowledged the hard of work of Mr. Mauro and Mr. Rose for developing the website.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Therese Connolly  
Deputy Clerk of the Board