

Moscow City Council



Special Meeting ~Minutes~

www.ci.moscow.id.us

Laurie M. Hopkins
City Clerk

208.883.7015

Monday, November 9, 2020

6:00 PM

**Council Chambers
206 E. Third St.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Lambert led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Bill Lambert, Art Bettge, Sandra Kelly, Maureen Laflin (Virtual), Brandy Sullivan (Virtual), Gina Taruscio (Virtual), Anne Zabala (Virtual)

OTHERS: Kara Besst (Virtual), Connie Osborne (Virtual), Dr. Nicolas Garrett (Virtual), Kathie LaFortune (Virtual), Carol Moehrle (Virtual), Greg Bailey (Virtual), Dr. John Brown (Virtual)

STAFF: Gary J. Riedner (Virtual), Mia Bautista (Virtual), Bill Belknap (Virtual), Deb Carscallen (Virtual), Brian Nickerson (Virtual), Laurie M. Hopkins (Virtual), Tyler Palmer (Virtual)

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Consideration of Metrics to Evaluate Continuation Extension or Termination of Public Health Emergency Order 20-03 (ACTION ITEM) – Gary J. Riedner

The City Council has requested information and a recommendation relating to potential metrics which may be considered by the Council in evaluating the decision to continue, extend or terminate the application of Amended Public Health Emergency Order 20-03 (APHEO 20-03), which requires social distancing and facial coverings when social distancing cannot be maintained in public places.

The attached memo from the City Supervisor includes recommendations for development of a protocol for evaluating APHEO 20-03 in light of then-current COVID-19 conditions as they exist in the community.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: After consideration of the information contained in the memo from the City Supervisor, approve a protocol for evaluation of the continuation, extension and/or termination of APHEO 20-03, or take such other action deemed appropriate.

Riedner presented statistics on confirmed cases in Latah County, information risk levels and the Public Health Idaho North Central District (PH-INCD) metrics and risk assessment tool. See attached presentation. The PH-INCD requires the following to be placed in the minimal risk category: based on a 7-day moving average, new daily cases must be less than 1 case per 10,000 population (for Latah County that would be 4 or fewer new daily cases); based on a 7-day moving average, the number of confirmed COVID-19 hospital admissions district-wide must be within the range of 0-5; test results must be reported in 1-4 days.

Moehrle agreed the numbers are rising in all five PH-INCD counties as a total. The Board of Health

meets regularly and is willing to present the data in a different way if it can provide more relevant information. Latah County has been at 11-15 cases a week and is higher than normal, but other counties have jumped into the red category based on their respective population. A week ago, Latah and Nez Perce counties were moved to the moderate category. PH-INCD is working on strategy to report cases by zip code without revealing confidential information. Of the 1109 cases reported in the county, 910 of those were in the 83843 zip code. Most of the smaller counties in the north central district are in the green category but are now showing larger case increases. The levels are based on the number of cases per 10,000 population.

Dr. John Brown, Chief Medical Officer at Gritman stated that data shows masks are helping. The New England Journal of Medicine reported a decreased fatality rate is due in part to using masks, even though they are not a 100% solution. The amount of virus a person is inoculated with seems to correlate with how severe a case the person has. He urges the Council to continue the mandate and feels the proposed measures to discontinue the mask mandate seem rational and he supports them.

Dr. Nick Garrett, Moscow Emergency Physicians Group (MEPG) agrees with Dr. Brown. Masks are the easiest and cheapest way to prevent exposure and spreading of the virus. At a risk level of high, the State will recommend potentially considering face covering and masks. He feels masks are the last thing we should remove. Kootenai, Sacred Heart and St. Joseph hospitals have been at or near capacity for several weeks. When it takes more time to transfer a patient because that hospital doesn't have space, the morbidity rate goes up. The MEPG supports continuing the face covering mandate for as long as necessary and the metrics that are being built are reasonable and prudent.

Toni Broyles, University of Idaho (UI) reported that the UI lab assists with testing and is part of the reason the one to four day responsive testing is met. UI is in favor of metrics but feel it should be based on the number of cases compared to the amount of testing. The daily case rate will drop when students leave town as UI won't be actively testing. A full retest is anticipated for January which will be three full tests of the campus community within a six-month timeframe. The UI is in favor of the mask mandate and have no intention to remove their mask mandate. Would like the mask mandate to be the last protocol eliminated when the time comes.

Greg Bailey, MSD Superintendent thanked all of the organizations for their support of the school district. The hybrid schedule is working and he feels the mask wearing is the biggest thing that is helping keep the cases low. With 2,400 students and 300 employees, they have only had 13-14 cases. He appreciates the City mask mandate as it has helped their requirement of masks and feels the masks will be the last thing to go away from.

Kathie LaFortune, Latah County Commission reported the County appreciates the mask mandate and were able to have a successful election because of that mandate. They feel the proposed metrics align with Public Health and support them.

Kelly Zakariasen (Moscow) asked what percentage of cases in Latah County are symptomatic when tested and what follow up testing there is. Moehrle said there is anecdotal information that most people have had symptoms at some point. CDC recommendations are not for retesting those that have had a positive test as the positivity stays in your system for at least three months. Dr. Garrett agrees that retests do not provide useful information. People shed the virus from a testing perspective beyond

three months but may not be able to spread the virus past the 10-14 days. Retesting would be a waste of resources. Connie Osborne of Gritman said that other than the UI mandated student tests, most tests were administered because the patients were symptomatic. The symptoms are similar to the flu, so we can anticipate more symptomatic testing due to flu-like symptoms.

Shyla Paradis (Moscow) states that she feels people will get sick anyway; masks are not doing any good and wearing a mask should be a choice; this is not healthy for the community because even the flu can put people at risk; understand at-risk people need to take the precautions but healthy people should not be required to.

Mayor Lambert commented that these are not normal times and that masks are for prevention and the greater good of the community.

Bettge said if we are looking at positive cases per capita and only testing those people whom are symptomatic, it would bias the number of people who may be positive yet asymptomatic. Osborne replied that at the UI all people were tested and were typically asymptomatic. Broyles added that Gritman and UI lab are a partnership. The UI lab will not close when students are gone and will remain open until deemed unnecessary. There are no capacity issues and have been doing 100's of swabbing a day. Dr. Brown commented that if someone is tested positive who is not having symptoms, it could mean they had COVID-19 three months ago. There is a higher expectation that if someone that tests positive when having symptoms, that it is a true positive.

Taruscio believes the number of COVID cases are low because the community has worked together and she likes the proposed metrics as a framework.

Sullivan asked if there a way to determine the same three metrics for Whitman County. Moehrle said the numbers would need to be received and that she would work with Riedner and run the numbers. Osborn said one aspect of exposure is how long the person has been with the person that tested positive. Dr. Brown added that it seems to matter which person was masked, what the distance of exposure was, and the length of time exposed. There is controversy over the recent study done in the jails regarding 15 minutes of exposure.

Zabala is interested to see what information will result by breaking cases out by zip code. She likes the proposed metrics and getting input from our partners.

Laflin likes the partners being involved and the quality of experts and team. The City has heard support for the mask mandate for months, even when Latah was in the green zone. Wants to find a way to work with the population that doesn't think masks work.

Sandra asked what we should say when asked why people should wear a mask. Dr. Brown said there is some acceptance of minimal risk in life but COVID is 4-6 times more lethal than the flu. Numerous studies show that mask use decreases fatal cases. Hospital capacity isn't only the number of beds, it is also the number of staff available to provide care. Besst agreed with Dr. Brown regarding staffing. There can also be a staffing challenge with new COVID cases and exposing staff and/or having to isolate. Dr. Garrett said the regional perspective as a whole will need to be looked at regularly as patients are sent to area hospitals and some may not be available due to capacity level. Moehrle added

that mask wearing is keeping people out of the hospital and saving those resources for those general health issues. They are watching behavioral health issues which are climbing and the number of calls to the suicide and crisis center has increased. Broyles said UI has 200 beds for active cases and only have 13 being used at this time. She noted that asymptomatic testing saves hospital overflow.

Bettge moved and Taruscio seconded to approve the concept of proposed metrics, the timeframe of three weeks in the green zone, and if possible incorporation of similar metrics of Whitman County, with reference to the Governors' designation of Stage of Idaho Rebounds Plan including getting the point of view of our institutional partners and medical experts. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

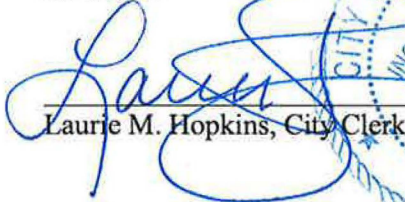
ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

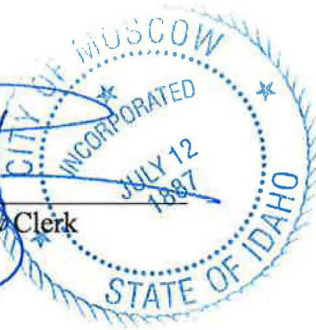


Bill Lambert, Mayor

ATTEST:



Laurie M. Hopkins, City Clerk



Mayor Bill Lambert
Moscow City Council
206 E Third St.
Moscow, ID 83843

November 9, 2020

Dear Mayor Lambert and Members of the Moscow City Council:

I am writing this letter as the Chief Medical Officer for Gritman Medical Center on behalf of the hospital's leadership team. We strongly support the continuation of the city's emergency pandemic response measures including enforcement of the mask mandate. These measures should be continued indefinitely until such time that our local and state public health officials, in close coordination with local health care leaders, have determined these measures as no longer necessary to protect public health.

As a community of health professionals, we always look to the best-available science from our professional associations—such as the American Medical Association—and the most reputable, peer-reviewed sources—such as the New England Journal of Medicine—to guide our decisions. Trusted sources such as these have consistently agreed on the effectiveness of face masks, among other measures, in slowing the transmission of the disease.

In fact, there is universal consensus among all major medical associations on the effectiveness of—and the urgent continued need for—these simple but effective measures:

- Wearing cloth face coverings in public;
- Keeping at least 6 feet of social distance;
- Frequent washing and sanitizing of hands and shared surfaces;
- Limiting gatherings with individuals from outside your immediate household when appropriate safety precautions cannot be maintained;
- Self-isolating and contacting a doctor's office if you become ill;
- Getting a COVID-19 test if ordered by a physician; and
- Assisting public health authorities with contact tracing if you receive a positive COVID-19 test result.

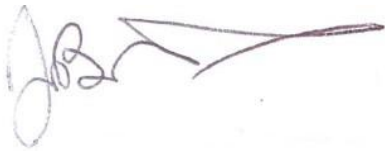
These simple and low-cost measures are absolutely proven to slow and prevent the spread of the disease. This is critically important now that we have entered the cold and flu season of colder weather which naturally brings people together indoors, increasing the rate of

transmission. These measures protect the vulnerable and help to keep our society as open as possible.

Unfortunately, there is a large amount of disinformation and harmful politicization circulating regarding the pandemic. We strongly encourage the public to look to the best-available science and to trust information from the most reputable sources such as their local hospital, medical community and public health officials. Visit gritman.org/coronavirus for more information.

Gritman Medical Center strongly supports the continuation of the pandemic emergency measures as put in place by the City of Moscow. Our community is safer for having taken these actions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be 'JB' followed by a stylized, elongated flourish.

Dr. John Brown
Chief Medical Officer

CONSIDERATION OF METRICS TO EVALUATE CONTINUATION, EXTENSION OR TERMINATION OF AMENDED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER 20-03

THE CITY OF MOSCOW

AMENDED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER No. 20-03

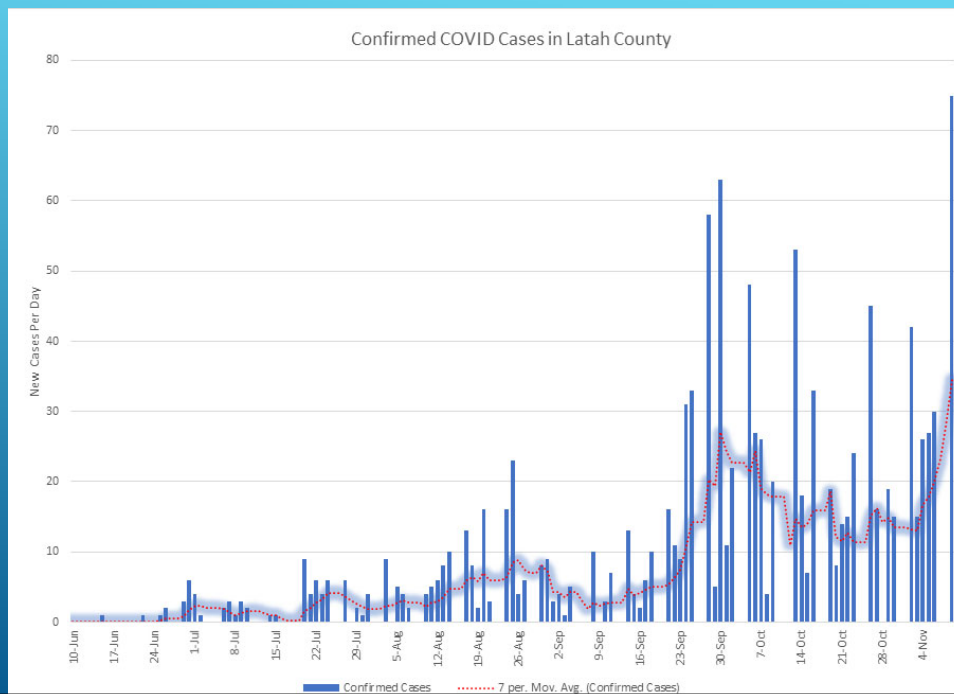
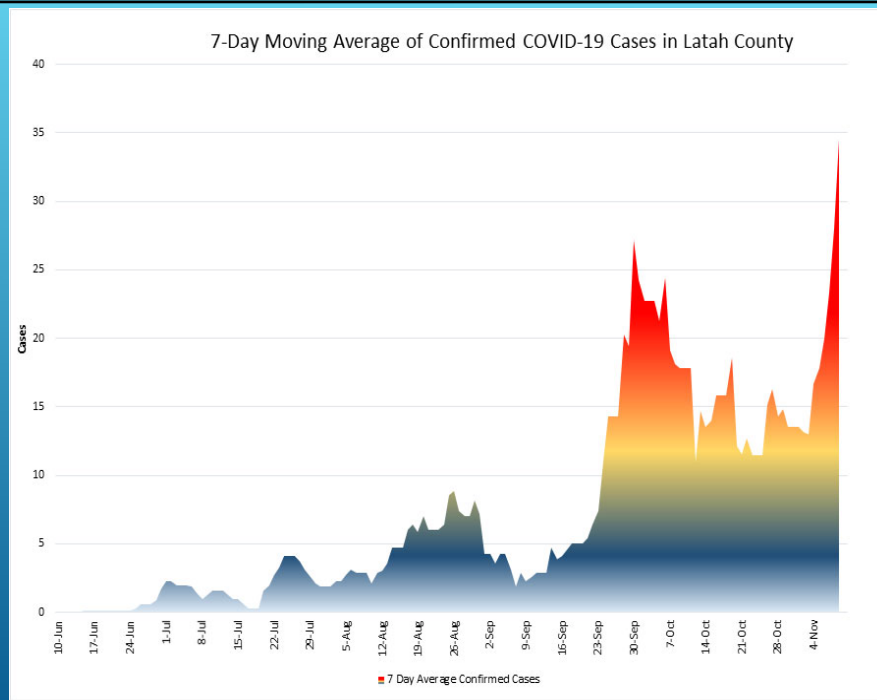
FACE COVERINGS AND 6 FOOT SOCIAL/PHYSICAL DISTANCING

July 1, 2020

WHEREAS, the health and safety of all citizens of the city of Moscow is the greatest priority and is of the utmost importance of the Mayor and City Council; and

WHEREAS, the coronavirus (hereinafter, COVID-19), is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person, which can result in serious illness or death thereby threatening widespread and/or severe damage to life or property thereby creating an "emergency" as defined by Idaho Code § 46-1002; and

NO. 606727
AT THE REQUEST OF
CITY OF MOSCOW
DATE & HOUR
7.1.2020 2:45
HENRIANNE R. WESTFALL
LATAH COUNTY RECORDER
FEE \$ 0 BY E. Chapman



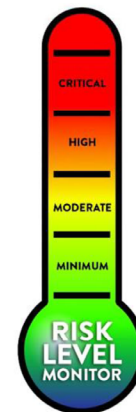
Facts:

- ▶ November 6, 2020 – 3000 cases confirmed in PH-INCD's five county district;
- ▶ It took 17 days to increase from 2000 cases to 3000 cases
- ▶ November 9, 2020 – 61 new cases confirmed in Latah County, bringing the total number to 1184

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT PH-INCD's COVID-19 RISK LEVELS:

The risk levels may be applied at the town, city, county, geographic, or regional level.

- Different areas of PH-INCD's region may be at different risk levels. Risk levels can increase or decrease. Metrics will be evaluated and reviewed every 14 days to determine the ability to move to a lower risk level or advance to the next.
- In ALL risk levels, the preventive measures outlined in the Minimal Risk Level should be followed. Precautions associated with each lower risk level continue to apply to higher risk levels. Always prepare for the next risk level.
- In addition to metrics determining exposure risk, public health officials will closely monitor and may take into consideration for movement to a different risk level the following:
 - Input from hospital partners
 - Trends in COVID-19 testing, including positivity rate and turn-around time of test results
 - Supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare providers/first responders
 - Epidemiological investigation capacity
 - COVID-related hospitalizations and deaths
 - Syndromic surveillance of emergency department visits with COVID-like symptoms





REGIONAL DATA TOOL FOR DETERMINING HEALTH ALERT LEVELS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/20/2020

RISK LEVEL	METRICS MONITORED	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
MINIMAL RISK	NEW DAILY CASES < 1 PER 10,000 POPULATION (7 DAY AVERAGE) Lewis1 Clearwater1 Idaho2 Latah4 Nez Perce4 AND NUMBER OF CONFIRMED COVID-19 HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS, DAILY FOR 7 DAYS Daily hospitalizations District-Wide 0 to 5 AND TEST RESULTS REPORTING IN 1-4 DAYS	At the GREEN level, communities are on track for containment as long as they maintain routine levels of viral testing (i.e., this is not a reference to antibody testing) and contact tracing sufficient to control spikes and outbreaks. PH-INCD will educate, inform, and share messages with stakeholders and the public throughout all levels. REGARDLESS OF THE RISK LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE REMAINDER OF THE PANDEMIC, EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO DO THE FOLLOWING: - Stay home if you are sick - Maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from others (outside of immediate family) whenever possible - Wear face coverings in public that fully cover the nose and mouth when physical distancing is not possible or is difficult to maintain, including when outdoors at social events or gatherings - Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer - Vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) take extra precautions - Carefully monitor your health



REGIONAL DATA TOOL FOR DETERMINING HEALTH ALERT LEVELS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/20/2020

RISK LEVEL	METRICS MONITORED	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
MODERATE RISK	NEW DAILY CONFIRMED CASES BETWEEN 1.0 TO 2.5/10,000 POPULATION (7 DAY AVERAGE) <i>New cases by county to reach above rates:</i> Lewis County.....1 - 2 Clearwater County.....1 - 2 Idaho County.....2 - 4 Latah County.....4 - 10 Nez Perce County.....4 - 10 AND NUMBER OF CONFIRMED COVID-19 HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS, DAILY FOR 7 DAYS Daily hospitalizations District-Wide 5 to 10 AND TEST RESULTS REPORTING IN 5-9 DAYS	IN ADDITION TO CONTINUATION OF ALL EVERYDAY PREVENTATIVE MEASURES, THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE MADE: - Support municipality efforts to require the wearing of face coverings while in public - Encourage event coordinators to limit events and social gatherings to no more than 50 people - Encourage vulnerable populations (older adults, individuals with underlying health conditions) to take extra precautions - Congregate living facilities (long term care, nursing homes, correctional facilities, etc.) to implement strict health policies for staff and visitors to avoid potential outbreaks - Schools should implement YELLOW phase of Return to School Plan

The PH-INCD assessment tool states that in order for the District to be placed in the “minimal risk” category it must meet the following criteria:

- ▶ Based on a 7-day moving average, new daily cases must be less than 1 case per 10,000 population (for Latah County that would be 4 or fewer new daily cases);
- ▶ Based on a 7-day moving average, the number of confirmed COVID-19 hospital admissions district-wide must be within the range of 0-5;
- ▶ Test results must be reported in 1-4 days.

Proposal:

- ▶ Use of the current Regional Data Tool for Determining Health Alert Levels adopted by PH-INCD by the City Council in evaluating the continuation, extension or termination of APHEO 20-03.
- ▶ If all three of the factors listed above are determined to be in the “minimal risk” category for a period of three consecutive weeks, the Council could use this as a metric to trigger a reconsideration of APHEO 20-03.
- ▶ Three consecutive weeks is recommended because of the accepted two-week incubation period of the COVID-19 virus.

Additional Factors to be Considered:

The Governor's determination that Idaho is in Stage 4 (the least restrictive stage) of the Idaho Rebounds Plan at the time that the evaluation is made;

- ▶ Currently the State of Idaho is in Stage 3

Additional Factors to be Considered:

Review of recommendations of the City's institutional partners:

- ▶ Latah County;
- ▶ Gritman Medical Center;
- ▶ The University of Idaho;
- ▶ Moscow School District.

Additional Factors to be Considered:

COVID-19 Conditions in Whitman County

- ▶ Although a different assessment tool is utilized by the State of Washington, the data could be standardized with Idaho's metrics by applying the PH-INCD assessment tool to Whitman County's numbers.

Positivity rate

- ▶ Positivity rate is the percentage of positive COVID-19 tests compared to tests administered. According to Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, on May 12, 2020, the World Health Organization advised governments that before reopening, a five percent (5%) or lower positivity rate should be maintained for at least fourteen (14) days. According to the John's Hopkins Resource Center, Idaho's positivity rating as of October 31, 2020 (utilizing a seven (7) day moving average), was 34.1%. According to PH-INCD positivity information developed by the State of Idaho, as of October 31, 2020, the positivity rate was reported to be 44.44%.

We have representatives from the following institutional partners with us tonight:

- ▶ Carol Moehrle, Director PH-INCD;
- ▶ Gritman Medical Center;
- ▶ University of Idaho;
- ▶ Moscow School District.

Moscow Emergency Physicians, PLLC

700 S. Main Street
Moscow, ID 83843
(208) 882-4511

November 6, 2020

Dear Moscow City Council,

We are writing this letter to you as front line medical providers as well as deeply invested community members. As we enter the ninth month of the COVID-19 pandemic and the hospitalization rate on the Palouse continues to climb, we must not let down our guard. As a community, we have to remain diligent, listen to science, and continue to take the public health measures necessary to maintain our healthcare system.

We are seeing in our surrounding communities the effects of relaxed precautions, and we are seeing the effects of “pandemic fatigue” in our own community. Our ability to transfer non-COVID patients for specialized treatment (heart attacks, stroke, trauma etc.) is dwindling, and at times impossible. As COVID-19 cases rise in our town, Gritman and EMS staff are put at higher risk and actually are becoming infected which not only threatens the health of them and their families, but prevents them from caring for patients, further straining our system.

There is consensus among the international medical community that social distancing and universal masking is the easiest, cheapest, and most effective way of preventing the spread of COVID-19. The lag in our number of cases in Moscow is a direct result of Moscow’s protocols that were implemented

early and aggressively. There is a growing body of research both at the local and state levels across the United States to show a significant reduction (sometimes as high as 75%) in COVID-19 cases after mask mandates and social gathering restrictions were implemented. Moscow, in many ways, was ahead of these other communities and we are in a much better position now because of it.

We urge the Moscow City Council to listen to science and maintain the mask ordinance for as long as it takes to maintain the operability, safety, and health of our community. At this time we cannot let personal beliefs or agenda shape public policy. The stakes are too high.

Sincerely,

Moscow Emergency Physicians, PLLC