

VOV Volunteer Coordinator Andy Fogarasi

Below is a copy of what I posted on Nextdoor in my efforts to communicate to the Village our efforts to prepare in advance of this threat, and to start conversation of issues and possible actions we can plan and document now.

PLEASE share this with everyone you know in the Village. I only have a limited and outdated set of emails for people in the community.

### **Village of Volente COVID#19 Volunteer Planning Meeting**

On Monday, March 16 a group of Volente citizens including Mayor Jana Nace, Judy Barrick, Chris Wilder, Debbie Gold, the owners and staff of Beachside Billy's & several other interested and contributing citizens met to discuss and brainstorm on how we help and support the Village of Volente and nearby surrounding area during the COVID- 19 threat.

(This was not an official meeting of the Village, rather, a gathering of volunteers working to figure out how to organize and help.)

I'm sure some may criticize our meeting, as popular opinions range from "silliness and over-reaction to a flu virus" to "why are you meeting to possibly transmit this killer virus". We are aware. We, however, believe this is the time, before the virus is substantially here in Austin, and spreads in our direction, to come up with, and put in place plans to 1) protect our Village and its residents from the Virus and 2) provide localized services and support to Volente citizens and, simultaneously, limit paths for the virus to get into our community. We all hope we are over-reacting, and will joyously throw away these plans if they are not needed. But, we will be prepared as best as we can.

Some basic information was shared and learned, and a little more I have added:

- 1) Mayor Jana Nace - the Emergency Planning documents of the Village have very detailed instructions on how to manage a wildland fire and floods, but nothing on a pandemic. We have to create our own plans.
- 2) Village Location & Neighborhoods - We are in a VERY advantageous location! We are isolated with limited access. We are surrounded by 25 thousand acres of preserve on one side and lake on the other. Further, most of our homes are on 1+ acre lots. We have a nice "social distance" between each other. This advantage only helps us if we utilize it.

3) Village Community - We have a mix of citizens including families with school children and older retirees. Unfortunately, we believe we have a higher percentage of older, more vulnerable, citizens than other areas. For this reason we need stronger measures in place to keep the virus out.

4) Village Access - RR 2769 - This road is the primary (arguably only) way in /out. If the virus makes it into our community, it's likely getting here by way of 2769 with one of our citizens or their friends. This single access point makes voluntary control of access much more simple.

5) Barriers to Exposure - In the 90's and early 2000 years, a store called VJ's existed across from the fire department. The entire Village was able to get bread, milk, eggs, wine, beer, cheese, crackers, you get the idea, without having to leave the village. This was a fantastic virus barrier as it kept citizens in the village. Each person leaving and returning to the village risks bringing the virus back with them. If we can provide similar services again perhaps we can keep the virus out. Beachside Billy's is able to provide a similar set of services very quickly.

6) Food, Medicine & Social Check-ins - During our brainstorming the primary needs that cause people to leave the community are food, medicine, work, school & social activities. With the new work from home rules and cancelation of schools this leaves food, medicine and social activities. If we can bring truckloads of food in with one driver as opposed to one for each of the 500+ households in 2769-Lime Creek Road area we can dramatically REDUCE possible transmission points from 500+ / week down to XXX (significantly less?) dependent on community participation.

7) HEB Delivery - These are also viable methods to reduce exposure, but do they have the capacity to manage if a significant portion of the 4-Points surrounding community chooses to use this service. One citizen stated at the meeting that HEB was currently scheduling for 1-week out as of the meeting date.

8) Prescription Pick-up - Prescription pick up is another point of contact causing citizens to leave the Village and then potentially bring back the virus. We could put one trusted village citizen as an authorized pick-up person that could pick up prescriptions one day each week in-mass. Volunteers in Volente could deliver to homes and leave the prescription with a smile and light spray of Lysol. You may consider that the prescription pick-up at HEB has a drive-through for your safety...then again, how many sick people just minutes before you used the same keypad at the drive through and handled the same cannister...

9) No one goes Hungry - The volunteer group was adamant that no village citizen should go hungry due to ability to go to the store or pay for food due to limited budget, stoppage of income or any other reason! The group is working on anonymous ways food can be made available to anyone in need.

10) Children as Transmitters - (and I will stop and limit this post after this #10 item) - The Village and surrounding area may have +/- 100 school age children that are now home, bored and looking for something to do. They will go outside and play. They must! They will play with neighbor children. It will happen. Any family member that goes out of the Village and comes back home risks sharing the virus with their children. When these children play with other children the virus will transmit to other families and households, and so on, and so forth.

In Summary, the only way to limit this transmission is to keep as many family members in the Village as is possible. We can do this by bringing as many necessary services (food, medicine, other?) directly into Volente by a single, secured and "disinfected" method. This is how we keep the virus out of our Village and keep our neighbors, fathers, mothers & grandparents safe.

These are unofficial, volunteer ideas and discussions on the topics most important to keep COVID#19 out of our Village and keep our residents safe and supported during this challenge.

I encourage you all to post your comments and use this as a starting point for community discussion.