

Friday, March 20, 2020

UPDATE #2. COVID-19 Protection Island Response Advisory TEam (COVID-19 PIRATEs)

Hello Everyone

Thank you to all who provided ideas to the COVID-19 PIRATEs group. We received many good ideas that we have investigated or will investigate. Robert Burn has joined the group to provide a medical/health perspective to our discussion. We are very grateful that we have such an extraordinary resource on our Island.

We had a brief discussion on the role of this ad-hoc temporary committee. We would like to pass our views onto Island residents so that realistic expectations can be maintained. In summary:

- a) We will act as a facilitator or advocate for Island wide issues to ensure we receive our fair share of resources from outside agencies.
- b) The COVID-19 PIRATEs group will not be delivering services, however, if deemed appropriate we will enlist volunteers on the Island to provide specific services. So be prepared to step-up. Our small group of six can offer coordination and advocacy, but not much more.
- c) We will help find, summarize and disseminate information, but again, we will likely be asking for help with this as well.
- d) If Island residents have an issue specific to themselves, such as with a government department, please contact them directly before asking the COVID-19 PIRATEs group for assistance. However, if your issue cannot be quickly resolved, and you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us. **In any case don't delay asking COVID-19 PIRATEs for assistance, especially if it is urgent.**
- e) We encourage leadership on many fronts and encourage those taking initiatives to connect with our team as a focal point to track all initiatives and avoid duplication of effort.

Here are the updates for current issues:

- 1) As you may have already read, Marty has graciously offered to run a limited ferry service on Saturdays and Sundays. He has posted the current ferry schedule on Proisle. I will not repost it here, as everything is subject to change as conditions evolve. Marty has put himself at risk by continuing to run the ferry. Please respect the personal health and well-being of the ferry skipper and fellow passengers.
- 2) If you feel unwell with cold or flu symptoms, **do not travel** by ferry. You should stay home. If it's a cold or flu it will get better in 5-7 days. If it is Covid-19 you may also

recover, but if you develop **high fever or difficulty breathing you should call 911** and the paramedics will come for you.

- 3) The ferry service has contacted Canada Post, City of Nanaimo and BC Hydro about the new ferry schedule. If you are arranging for any service work by organizations such as Telus or Shaw, you will be responsible to provide them with a current schedule or direct them to check the Dinghy Dock website for the most recent schedule updates.
- 4) We see the need to start organizing a matching service for private boat operators and those without boats who need to cross the harbour or have cargo picked-up. Initially this effort will be focused on times for when the ferry is not running. However, we need to set up the system so it can accommodate a situation in which the ferry is forced to close. **We are asking for several volunteers who feel they have the skill to develop, deliver and maintain such a system. Please respond to Kevin Pistor ASAP, and identify what you are willing to do.** (kpistor@telus.net) In the meantime, please continue to use Proisle to communicate your needs and hopefully connect with a helpful neighbour. The more you can manage on your own, the easier it will be for us to assist who cannot.
- 5) If you are a private boat operator offering rides to residents, or a resident accepting a ride, please follow the following protocol for everyone's safety:
 - a) If you feel unwell with cold or flu symptoms, **do not travel** as a passenger on a private boat. You should stay home. If it's a cold or flu it will get better in 5-7 days. If it is Covid-19 you may also recover, but if you develop **high fever or difficulty breathing you should call 911** and the paramedics will come for you.
 - a. Skipper and passenger health recommendations for private boats:
 - i. **Skippers:**
 - ii. transport only as many passengers as can maintain social distance of at least one metre from each other and yourself on your boat. That would be 3-4 passengers on the larger boats, 1-2 on the smaller.
 - iii. ensure you have pfd's for yourself and all passengers.
 - iv. wash hands before leaving home
 - v. **Passengers:**
 - vi. do not travel if unwell, even if it seems to be just a cold
 - vii. wash hands before travel
 - viii. maintain social distance of at least one metre from skipper and other passengers on the boat.

Mask wearing optional. No benefit for well people.

- 6) We have contacted the Boat Basin and warned that in the event the ferry is closed, there may be the need for more short-term courtesy moorage. Patrick Belanger,

Manager of the Boat Basin has responded positively. Please use the existing short-term moorage, and if there are no vacancies, proceed to the north side of "I" Dock near Penny's Palapa. Patrick has reserved the space from the two car tires, as far west as the yellow markings for courtesy moorage for Protection Island residents. Please don't block access and egress to Anthony's moorage space.

Also, please do not use the courtesy moorage for long term tie-ups. It is meant to be used for quick trips into the downtown, such as appointments or groceries. Anyone using it for long-term use, such as day trips or moorage while at work will be publicly shamed beyond belief.

Patrick warns that the public bathrooms may be closed in the near future, as they follow directions from public health authorities. If at all possible, plan your body breaks accordingly.

Patrick also noted that they will be suspending implementation of the planned annual moorage rate increase indefinitely.

- 7) We have been assured by the Fire Department that 911 service will continue to operate as usual for Islanders. They have taken into account COVID-19 and will act appropriately.
- 8) Please note that the City of Nanaimo has declared a ban on backyard fires, including the April fire program for Protection Island. We are not allowed to burn yard waste on Fridays and Saturdays, during the month of April, as per previous years. Fire Chief, Karen Fry has stated: "COVID-19 is known to affect an individual's respiratory system. As a result, we are taking actions to limit exposure from any potential smoke irritants and to "flatten the curve"."
- 9) Larry, Vicky, Valley and PI Supply are coordinating to ensure grocery delivery, and recycling and solid waste services continue. Contact Larry directly if you have any ideas or questions.
- 10) We are currently exploring options for the continuation of transportation of non-emergency medical/care providers to and from the Island in the event ferry ceases operating. We will keep you posted.
- 11) If you have any ideas on communication techniques, Island initiatives, or how to access resources, please let us know by responding directly to Kevin Pistor (kpistor@telus.net)**
- 12) Finally, none of us have ever been through this situation before. None of us are experts. Please listen to the health experts and take their advice seriously. You are not making

these sacrifices for just your own health; you are doing this for the health of your community.

Stay apart; wash your hands; and don't touch your face
Check on your neighbours, and cultivate a buddy system

We are going to get through this together

Kevin Pistor PINA

David Carter PINA

Gary Weikum PINA

Robert Burn Medical Advisor

Peter Frewin Block Watch, Emergency Preparedness

Jim Menzies Lions Club