

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes
June 24, 2020**

Angie Gorn, CEO, NSHC	Reba Lean, NSHC	Mark Peterson, MD, Medical Director, NSHC
Kelly Bogart, NSHC	Megan MacKiernan, NSHC	Cameron Piscoya, NSHC
Kristen Timbers, NSHC	Carol Charles, NSHC	Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle
Jason Harrel, NSHC		

*Over 40 participants attended today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
Introduction to Meeting – Angie Gorn, NSHC CEO	<p>Today's Reminder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please keep phone muted unless speaking or asking a question <p>1) Medical Staff Briefing 2) Changes with Governors mandate for travel 3) Comments and Questions</p> <p>Note- Any questions may be sent to Reba Lean at rlean@nshcorp.org anytime or text to 907-434-1927 and they will be answered during the 11:00 am call.</p>
Updates	<p>Angie gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To date we have had 7 confirmed positives cases with the most recent case identified as a Nome resident who is working elsewhere in the state but still recorded in our states - We have robust testing capabilities - To date we have tested 30% of our region - 44% for the community of Nome and all the villages have exceeded our target of 10% - We have made testing available daily at the airport when the plane lands which as of right now is Monday through Friday - We also have a testing tent that is open Monday through Friday outside of the hospital - Testing is also available in each village clinic as well - Here at Norton Sound we have implemented mandatory testing of our employees - Have very strict precautions in place to protect our nursing home residences since early March since the pandemic has started which includes restrictions of visitors and mandatory quarantining of any new or traveling staff for 14 days as well as frequent testing who work on the unit there every seven days - All our community leaders have implemented travel bans which include quarantine requirements - Tomorrow is our subsistence talk so we will be talking about how to safely fish for reds - Seining season is upon us here and we have put together some talking points to have that conversation and hope you will join us for that discussion tomorrow as well
Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Mark Peterson, NSHC Medical Director	<p>Dr. Mark Peterson gave medical staff update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alaska: 729 total case, 14 new case, 7 non-resident cases, 176 non-residents, 507 recovered, 64 hospitalization cumulative total, 12 deaths • ANMC: As of Monday, 0 inpatient, 62 outpatient, 12 employees

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSHC: yesterday testing 8,055 test, 3,321 unique individuals, over 30% tested over region, 7 positives, 5 recovered, 2 actives, 1 out of region and 1 in region <p>Village percentages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brevig: 20% - Elim: 22.5% - Gambell: 15% - Golovin: 28% - Koyuk: 23% - Little Diomedede: 25% - Nome: 43.5% - Saint Michael: 23% - Savoonga: 19% - Shaktoolik: 15% - Shishmaref: 18.5% - Stebbins: 14% - Teller: 50% - Unalakleet: 23% - Wales: 26% - White Mountain: 30% - Average region wide: 30% - That is outstanding and want to commends everyone that has gotten out to get tested - If you haven't please do get out and add to our percentages - Want to thank staff for all the hard work they are doing to make this happen as well
<p>Guest Speaker - Senator Dan Sullivan</p>	<p>Senator Dan Sullivan gave Alaska congressional update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thanks to Angie, and Dr. Peterson for invitation, leadership, and daily calls - Team has been trying to be involved in all the leadership calls throughout the states - Robust testing that you are doing is very impressive and a great example for the state and for the country - What we have been trying to do here is face these unprecedented challenges for our state and our nation - We are getting as many resources as possible through many channels as possible to our state and our fellow Alaskans to get them through these challenging times especially in regards of keeping everyone healthy - Our Alaskan Native Communities, our villages, are particularly vulnerable and unfortunately have had a history being vulnerable to these pandemics - Want you to be assured that Dan Sullivan, Senator Murkowski, Congressmen Young literally have talked to the highest level of federal government, the president, vice president, the secretary of the HSS, everybody, and anybody that will listen, have talked about needing to keep an eye on these vulnerable communities and particular communities that have had a history of being severally and negatively impacted by these kind of pandemics and that don't have robust healthcare systems within their smaller villages - Norton Sound Health Corporation, all the work that you guys do, in the Cares act and some of the other legislation we passed four major pieces of the

	<p>legislation in about 6 weeks to prepare our country and our state for this epidemic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think NSHC has received closed to 12 million dollars - One of those was this IHS funding of about 400 million that the Cares act provided to IHS - I got a call from the chief of staff from the white house saying they looked at the number and they were particularly looking at what Alaska Native Health Care facilities were getting and they thought it needed to be bumped up from 400 to 500 million - We never have enough resources but that is one example where a senior official in the government was reaching out to me and saying they have an eye on what's happening in Alaska and want to try and resource your constituents as much as possible - The other area where we worked hard, senator Murkowski in particular, does not relate to the health care issues but we press our colleagues, democrats, republicans in the white house on the cares acts for that 8 billion tribal set aside fund which if you look at the history of this kind of federal government relief, Alaskan Natives and lower 48 tribes that's a huge number, unfortunately there is litigation going on but think we will get through it - Have a real focus in water and sewer funding and think it is needed now more than ever - We have made some good process lately on bills that are funding more of the water and sewer issues - We need a surge of testing capability for communities that our in the seafood processing industry and that's have it came about Dr. Eastman coming to check on testing capability and water and sewer - I think we have an opportunity now to really close the gap - I have publicity stated that it is outrages that 30 communities in Alaska, some of the most patriotic communities in America by the way given how many veterans served from our native communities, should not have to deal with honey buckets - We are going to continue pressing that - With your help and leaders were going to be able to make good progress on that - On a more personal note, wanted to share that his mother in law Mary Jane Fate, who was an Athabaskan elder, a real trail blazer in terms of Alaskan Native issues, land issues, education issues, civil rights issues, she passed away two months ago which was really difficult just because it's hard to celebrate a life or even having a burial doing the high of this pandemic; Burial was last week in Fairbanks; I mention that because the celebration in life whether it's birthdays, accomplishments, weddings, or births in this case funeral but really a celebration, we can still do it safely with masks and social distancing, but it can work and we continue to work to get through this - We are making progress again after discussing testing with the Vice President, they are expecting the ability to have upward of 50 million test done a month in America which would be more then any other country by far as early as September, and they're still talking about the possibility of vaccine as early as December - I was part of the group of senators who made sure the Cares act had what we
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	<p>were calling Manhattan project, setting aside very significant concerns to focus this issue of the vaccine and that is making progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two issues that are not pandemic related that I would like to highlight on - The security of commerce called and stated that Alaskan numbers of completing the census are the worst in the country; it's hard to do it during the pandemic and we recognize that but please give us ideas on how we can do it better because if we under report our population we are going to be disadvantaging ourselves for an entire decade with regards to federal funding formulas that are based off of the census so I can't emphasize it enough to try and make sure that everybody is counted or it's going short change us for a decade; It takes about 10 minutes to fill out the questions for 10 years of impact that would be positive - Was just in a hearing this morning with the commissioners of the federal communication, the chairman highlighted the rural tribal window, this is the special window to allow tribes to apply for the 2.5 gigahertz spectrum that is available to tribes; If you are not aware of it please let me or my team know and his team know and they will help you do it; It's a great opportunity and would like to thank Kawerak because they wrote the FCC asking for the application deadline to be extended on this spectrum for tribes; We agree and are trying to get this deadline extended <p>https://2020census.gov/</p>
<p>Question and Comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Angie Gorn gave thanks to Senator Dan Sullivan for his support and leadership. Also, that we are so grateful for all the resources that have been dedicated to tribal health and we are fortunate to have all the testing resources and thankful for the funding to help us on expenses. o Dr. Peterson stated that we appreciate all the resources that we have gotten. We have a testing platform from a company called Cethead and we have had the platform for some time. It's a great testing outfit for COVID-19 but we have not been able to use it because there are cartridges that you must get specific to COVID-19 for testing. ANMC has a platform, we have the platform, a few THO's. Cethead company has really limited where they distribute the cartilages. We have good Abbott ID now rapid analyzers and we have been using those and that's how we have been doing all the testing, but we would really like to get our Cethead unit up and running. The administer at ANMC sent out some emails to our contingent's in Washington probably included you, trying to put pressure on Cethead to free up some of the cartridges for our region here. I know they have been sending them sparingly to different area. We know with a little political pressure or pressure we can probably convince that company to give us more. I just want to say that if you hear that or see that it is a real thing for us, and we would like to get higher on the list to get these cartridges if possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DS: My team has been working this. It's an important issue, we have heard it not just from you but from several others if you can imagine. I'm personally coordinating with the leadership with ANTHC and with my staff daily. I believe that we are going to start seeing those cartridges coming soon. A lot of my members of my staff are on this

call right now. We will double down our efforts and see when and if you don't start seeing those within a week please let my team know but we are definitively working it. I can tell you we are working it in all different angles. Very early on in the pandemic, whether it's leaders in the federal government, working with the governor and his team, Dr. Zink, whether it's working with ANTHC, we have been pulling as many lever as possible to get as many resources to be ready so we can take care of the health of our communities. We keep pressing it.

- **When is the Cares funding going to the cities?**
 - **DS:** Early in the Cares act we were negotiating at the original formula for the money for the state was just going to be a per capita formula. Which we of course would not have done well with given that we have a small population. So, Senator Murkowski requested that there be a minimum to each state then we can do the per capita formula. In the negotiation the original minimum was 25 million and we said that's not appropriate. So, we got the minimum payment that you may have seen to be 1.5 billion. That's a lot of money and the appropriate amount of money. So the state of Alaska you may have seen because the governor called the legislator back into session had about 1.3 billion and they were going to divide that up to the local cities, municipality, bureau's, regions, and that's what they did in Juneau. There has been one hiccup that I have been trying to fix which I have a bill that would enable the smaller communities below the state level, like the bureau or Teller, if you had lost revenues due to the pandemic which so many smaller communities do, you can use this 1.3 billion that is allocated from the state to help replace the lost revenue that was a direct lost due to the pandemic. Right now, the Cares money has strings attached to it from the federal government that doesn't clearly allow that, and I am trying to make sure that it's clearly allowed. So I have gone to the white house and had a meeting with the president, the secretary of the treasury, and a couple of other senators that are supportive of my bill, and there is another senator Kennedy from Louisiana that has a similar bill. So, we have not gotten it passed yet, but I think hopefully we are going to soon and we had a meeting with the secretary of the treasury yesterday and an issue came up. The state should be distributing the money to those local communities, small cities, bureaus, municipalities, and then what I am trying to do is make sure that it can be used for just about anything as long as it was related to the pandemic including lost revenue and that's the big one that we are working on. That's the status and that's why some community have the money and don't think they can use it yet. We are trying to make it much more flexible for local communities to be able to use that Cares act money if it is directly related to the pandemic including lost revenues.
- **Concern was brought up of the Census and the low turnout or recording results in our communities. Was told that there was a Census person sent out to the region but really did not spend any time there in terms of getting**

people enrolled. Wondering if it would be possible or feasible to get an extension of the Census deadline?

- DS: It has been extended nationwide. It's now until the end of October. As you know it's a constitutional requirement to do what is constitute is hard to change. The constitution doesn't designate how long it needs to be done for it just states it has to be done every 10 years. We reached out, after the secretary of commerce reached out to me trying to help. We have reached out to several communities' non-profits, AFN, several different groups in our rural communities and asked what would be the best way to help commerce best practice to help have a better turn out? We talked to them about GPS for addresses, we talked to them about PO boxes for address not just street addresses. I do want to encourage everyone to go online, call my office (Anchorage office number is 907-271-5915). We are giving commerce as many ideals to help us do it and help them do it in a way that every Alaskan gets counted. Can make sure that everyone sees that, but we really need everyone that is on the line to please help and spread the word that we got to do this, or we are shortchanging ourselves.

- **Comment was made that here in Nome there was a radio announcement that a few Nome community members did on the Census. Glad to hear there was an extension but in the radio announcement they stated that they had to canvas all of Nome and there was only two of them and they have a deadline of July 7th or 9th. Concern was also brought up on how with only two people having to get everyone's information and confirm household numbers.**

- **Concern was brought up about housing need during this COVID pandemic.**

- DS: You are raising a very important concern and I am somebody who always likes to look at the silver lining even when we are in rough times like now. One silver lining from my perspective is that some of the issues that several us have been advocating for, for a long time, and sometimes we have been making decent progress but not as much as we want. The pandemic has kind of put these stark relief of the real need for American's. What are those? Water and sewer are a classic example. So many of you have been leading on this, I have been beating the drum since I got here aggressively as possible in the senator and I think now we have an opportunity to say wait a minute you can't tell American citizens to wash their hands 5 times a day where they live in a community with no water and sewer. Our argument becomes more powerful. Your point is also a good one as it relates to housing. Another one that is coming up again, we had a hearing with the FCC commission today is broadband. So many parts of America are saying okay we will go home do telehealth, work from home, tele school. Well you can't do it if you are not connected and unfortunately, we have to many communities that are not connected. We have been working very hard on this. After getting out to the region the issue of housing was brought up everywhere. We are

	<p>working it and do think we have an opportunity here to highlight it because you are exactly right. How can we do social distancing if you have 6 people in one room. We will keep working it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concern was brought up about not being able to get a hold of someone with the Census to ask questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DS: Can get a hold of my office in Anchorage at 907-271-5915 can help. The call in for the Census number is 1-844-330-2020. ○ Comment was made about having to go to Anchorage and going back to their village to quarantine and how it is hard to do with overcrowding in homes. ○ Comments were made about water and sewer projects in the village. ○ MAS: I appreciate all your work on water and sewer and just wanted to mention that the three regs that could really better serve our unserved communities are IHS cost caps for sanitation projects, IHS ineligibility issue that requires local matches to secure sanitation project funding, and the certified operator for each tribal funding. Those requirements are prohibitors for serving our unserved communities and any work we can do to eliminate them would be greatly appreciated. Wanted to thank you for your focus and efforts and issues and know that you have many issues on your desk. ○ Issue was brought up about the Real ID. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DS: This is an issue that we are hearing about from everybody. From local representatives from the governor, I have also raised it with the president. We acted in the Cares act and moved the deadline from October of this year to October of 2021, so we pushed the deadline back an entire year. Tribal ID's with photos is still recognized. ○ Comment was made that the Census group do reach out to the villages and do submit maps and number of houses. They do reach out to see who will assist them with the Census in the villages. ○ Comment was made that if you are a Census worker in your community and they give you a schedule of when they are planning on going out to your community please let Kawerak know. They can try to increase the messaging about participation. ○ Discussion was held on Census, Water and Sewer, CARES funding, and Real ID's between the village communities.
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