

**COVID-19 Tribal Leadership Session Minutes
January 27, 2021**

Angie Gorn, NSHC	Reba Lean, NSHC	Mark Peterson, MD, Medical Director, NSHC
Kelly Bogart, NSHC	Megan MacKiernan, NSHC	
	Carol Charles, NSHC	Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle
Bobby Piscoya		

*Over 30 participants attended today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION
Introduction to Meeting – Kelly Bogart, NSHC CEO	<p>Today's Reminder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please keep phone muted unless speaking or asking a question <p>Note- Any questions may be sent to Public Relations at pr@nshcorp.org anytime or text to 907-434-1927 and they will be answered during the 11:00 am call.</p>
Updates	<p>Kelly Bogart gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board meeting week, hosting the call for Angie Gorn - 1 update: 1 positive case identified in Nome, travel related. Press release went out this morning - Total active cases to 8 Nome, 2 in the villages, 10 active cases <p>Guests on the line for Broadband update after Dr. Peterson's MedStaff Briefing</p>
Medical Staff Briefing – Dr. Mark Peterson, Medical Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 170 cases for the state. We had lower cases (86 cases) the last couple of days, but we're sitting at a lower number overall which is good. A little sudden of a drop. Majority of cases are in the 20-29 age group, most cases in 10-60 age range. 53 cases in Anchorage, Bethel Census Area: 36 cases. 1 additional death from Bethel region. - Giving 2nd dose vaccinations. People are showing up for the second doses, which is good. We have been given the green light for new supply coming next week, once the state gets their. A full box of Pfizer (900 doses), 400 doses Moderna. We will be doing a breakdown for where that will go. Little less than half will stay in Nome, the rest going to villages. Village vaccination planning & scheduling will be going out shortly. We want to put out a big push for next run of vaccines and to get people getting their shots. We will be updating the communities so that people can be ready & prepared. - Met with Shishmaref & Tri-Org for updating their travel mandate. We hope to get that soon to our PR team to update the public on travel mandates.
Question and Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Amos: Do you have an idea on how the vaccine is given in the region is lowering our COVID cases? MP: It could be having an effect already. Probably not a huge effect yet. Many people still need to get their second dose. We hope to start seeing that effect in the state pretty soon. We're ahead of the state on getting vaccines to people. We're seeing 50-60 cases in Anchorage/day. We expect that to drop as people get the vaccine. o Annie, SHH: Are clinics closing when there's days that there's vaccinations in the villages? MP: I think it's possible that some clinics might be open to just emergencies only to administer vaccines. It's typically 1-2 days that the clinic is closed to administer 100 doses in some communities. Annie: Even some elders are struggling to get into appointments. If clinics are closed, why have full staff if they're not providing medical care. MP: that decision is made locally and not by NSHC in Nome. If a clinic is administering vaccine and have limited staffing, they may close to just emergencies. It should be just a few days (second dose vaccinations) that they may be closed. We'll be talking to VHS to get an idea of how that works and messaging that needs to go out. Annie: Can you also make sure that the phone doesn't ring and ring. MP: talked to Dolly about phones and they'll be addressing that. MP: applicant to work their fulltime mid-level. Doing a site visit soon. o Lucy, GAM: A couples of cases in Alaska of the UK Variant. MP: It's really important for everyone to get vaccinated to protect against the predominant COVID strain & the UK variant. The first 2 cases of the UK strain had a positive test in Anchorage, and they isolated together. 1 person who tested positive & their close contact tested positive. We expect to be seeing it and to spread. Please get your vaccinations as soon as possible to give your body

time to develop an effective immune response. It means more of the same: masking, distancing, washing your hands, limit your bubble, don't travel unless absolutely necessary.

- **Debra, WAA:** Any new percentages after people got their second shot? MP: We're giving 2nd doses this week and should have a better percentage on how many people got theirs. The following week, we should have
- **Laverne, UNK:** IS there a reason why it took so long to get the data on the new variant? MP: Yes, they had received their positive Dec 22nd. We weren't sequencing every test. We haven't been analyzing each and every strain. The state of Alaska has gone back to test older samples to test to see if new variants have shown up since more discussion has started more sequencing to see which places tested. The variant has been here for a month, but it doesn't seem to be spread more and more. But we'll have to watch & see if it continues to spread or has spread. People that are symptomatic that are ending up in the hospital will be tested to see which variant they have. Caller: Will there be a regional localized testing that is different than normal COVID swabs? Peterson: If someone is positive, they will sequence that particular virus to see which variant it is. Get the message out to get vaccinated.
- **Jolene:** What are the possible side effects to the second vaccine? MP: common symptoms pain at injection site, fever, body aches, chills, belly aches, cramps, abdominal pain (mild), fatigue that typically last just a day or two. Most often second dose has more side effects because there's a larger antibody response. Those symptoms mean that your body is working, and your immune system is producing antibodies to better be able to respond to COVID.

Bobby Piscoya & guest for today:

Michael *Mac* McHale & Cheri McConnell from Quintillion regarding WMO connectivity:

- **Mac:** Teamed up with BSNC to examine. Rural utility service & Community Connect Grant from USDA. It is up to 3 million dollar grant for capital expenses. We looked at expanding services, especially essential functions. Turned in grant, Dec. 23rd. Build infrastructure to Solomon and to WMO area. Worked with WMO native corporation, tribe, city, office & school etc. Looked at improving library in WMO. Pricing on the service would be exactly the same as services in Nome. Would be delivered via TelAlaska. Expect a final answer in March and construction if approved would go from there.
- Quintillion did a wholesale purchase with GCI to offer broadband more accessible. Allows extra competition and hopefully to make it more affordable for Nome citizens.
- **Question:** What would your operation maintenance costs be? Just wanted to ask what the hidden fees would be?
Mac: Won't be making any money on this, but offer as a community service.
- **Question, GLV:** Golovin is just 13 miles away, is there any plans to expand out? **Mac:** The whole objective is to get more and more infrastructure built to be able to further expand services in the future.
- Caller: Is there any plans to get Quintillion to Gambell, Savoonga, & Diomedea? Is that a possibility? Mac: It is a possibility. There is a lot of interest in the area. Looking at people with SpaceX to discuss options going forward. Looking at more options for possibility going forward with other satellite services. We will be examining CARES act or other funds to see how to go forward. They're very expensive programs due to the remoteness, but we're working on it. Currently looking at 1 bite at a time. Not specifically targeted for those communities just yet.
- **Roy:** Had the privilege of working with WMO to get broadband. Needed to work with all major stakeholders to see if there's enough business to utilize this service & going forward. Can you explain 25Mgs process? Please explain the difference between broadband and current services available? **Mac :** 25Mgs to a home can be provided to a home means plenty of devices/streaming/surfing the web. We'll be providing training to people at the library. We would want to offer training to people to use the community library and to get further access. **John, SVA:** Thanks for explaining what needs to be. Basic programming & services are incredibly horrendous and difficult to access. Is there any possibility for other communities to follow WMO's lead to get broadband? How do we go about securing funds for this? How do we latch on? What sources & resources need to happen for some place like SVA to get access to this technology? **Mac:** GCI deal just happened about 2 weeks ago. GCI will have access to Quintillion broadband

service. Press release went out on Monday. We will continue to look at various programs. We identified USDA grant back in October 2020. Partnered with BSNC to identify a community. The community Connect program has existed for about 16 years. We expect another one this upcoming fall for other communities. It requires a need and a buy in for everyone (all organizations/stake holders) to be on the same page to see if this provider is able to make broadband possible. We are monitoring COVID relief bills to see if a program like this can be possible and managed. There's no magic wand for it to appear, it takes a lot of hard work to do that.

- **Toby, GLV:** You can't do anything very well with current connectivity such as current GCI services in GLV. Up until current deal was announced. Transferring internet from Anchorage, Fairbanks via microwave towers. Quintillion is right there in Nome. It's a full tank of broadband that doesn't need to get distributed over hundreds of miles. This has allowed a significant improvement to Nome services. It will take time to update GCI's services to utilize Quintillion broadband.
- **Lucy, GAM:** Thank you John to hear what you're doing and hopefully that someday we can have the same access on SLI as the rest of the mainland.
- **Barb, OME:** Curious to whether there are grants available for cities, tribes, etc. to access. Housing costs more than the people actually purchase because programs subsidize that cost. Are there grants for programs to start subsidizing the cost of providing essential broadband? **Matt:** There are several areas that offer subsidies to address access to connectivity in rural areas. **Barb:** Looking beyond COVID beyond this point and looking at beyond COVID relief funds and CARES act funds. Glad that GCI purchased bandwidth and to help make it affordable. **Matt:** Competition is good for the consumer to drive prices down and allow GCI to provide innovative services.
- **Annie, SHH:** Not only internet services or phone services. Here in SHH, many communities rely on GCI. What if there's an emergency? Something to think about to get reliable phone service, and not just internet.
- **Mac:** would like to visit Nome & Bering Strait region again. We want to continue examining new opportunities.
- **Barb:** For Bobby Piscocoya, the tribes throughout the region put applications in to the FCC (regulatory body) that regulates bandwidth? **Bobby:** The application submitted was for point to point internet of 2.4Gz for beefed up Wifi. FCC has allowed for tribes are able to sublet wifi and provide wifi. Will the tribes be able to lease out wifi and will those companies come to us to negotiate on how to go forward and provide these services? How does that relate to quintillion offering these services. **Roy:** explaining broadband and how grant application formed with Quintillion & Kawerak/tribes with BSNC. Needed to explain village & community leadership. Grant required public service.
- **Toby:** This would allow Zoom and other video conferencing. **Roy:** Zoom isn't available, but needed teleconference due to limited connectivity in WMO.
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