



HEARING NOTES

City Council Resolution: 21-0003R

Informational Hearing - Baltimore's COVID-19 Vaccination Plan

Committee: Health, Environment, and Technology
Chaired by: Councilmember Danielle McCray

Hearing Date: January 27, 2021
Time (Beginning): 5:00 PM
Time (Ending): 6:45 PM

Location: Webex Virtual Hearing
Total Attendance: Approximately 60 people

Committee Members in Attendance:

Danielle McCray John Bullock Mark Conway Ryan Dorsey
Phylicia Porter James Torrence Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer

Bill Synopsis in the file? [X] YES [] NO [] N/A
Attendance sheet in the file? [X] YES [] NO [] N/A
Agency reports read? [X] YES [] NO [] N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded? [X] YES [] NO [] N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file? [] YES [] NO [X] N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners? [] YES [] NO [X] N/A
Final vote taken at this hearing? [] YES [X] NO [] N/A
Motioned by:
Seconded by:
Final Vote:

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

Commissioner Letitia Dzirasa, MD, Health Department
Sherita Hill Golden, MD, MHS, Johns Hopkins Medicine
Michelle Gourdine, MD, University of Maryland Medical System
Destiny-Simone Ramjohn, PhD, CareFirst

Major Issues Discussed

1. Chairwoman McCray called the hearing to order, explained the Committee's plan for the proceedings, and discussed the importance of sharing information about the COVID-19 vaccines with the public.
2. Commissioner Dzirasa presented facts on the COVID-19 vaccines and the Health Department's vaccination strategies, plans, and progress (presentation in file).
3. Dr. Golden explained how Johns Hopkins Medicine is working to ensure equity in its vaccination efforts for both staff and patients. Examples included modifying the vaccine sign-up system to make it accessible to staff who do not regularly use computers or certain systems for their jobs and direct outreach to hard to reach patients.
4. Dr. Gourdine discussed the University of Maryland Medical System's efforts to educate staff and patients about the vaccine. She also noted that overcoming community mistrust is a challenge.
5. Dr. Ramjohn discussed CareFirst's efforts to eliminate barriers to vaccination for patients, provide information to doctors and patients, encourage flu shots, distribute personal protective equipment, and address other health disparities aggravated by COVID-19.
6. Committee members asked the following questions:
 - a. What issues has the City seen with the appointment system? The online system presents an equity issue for those without internet access, and the City has also had some problems with overbooking and cancellations.
 - b. Is the City receiving the appropriate vaccine supply? The City requests doses weekly but is not always receiving as much as requested.
 - c. What is the City's engagement plan? There is a call center for older adults and the City has expanded outreach for registration.
 - d. How does the City ensure that people come back for the second dose? Patients schedule their second appointment when receiving the first dose and there are follow-up reminders.
 - e. How can we reduce the hotline wait times? The City is working on strategies to reduce call wait times.
 - f. What percentage of eligible Johns Hopkins staff have been vaccinated? About 50 percent.
 - g. How is Johns Hopkins working on equitable vaccination within the community? Johns Hopkins identified clinics in its system with high risk patients and identified specific patients over 65 for outreach through phone calls. Outreach can be undermined by unpredictable vaccine supplies.
 - h. Are there gender disparities in current vaccinations? Yes, more women are getting vaccinated. Some additional outreach is being focused on black men because of disparities in vaccination rates.
 - i. When will we reach herd immunity? Herd immunity likely requires 60-80 percent of the population to be protected. The City's goal is 80 percent vaccinated by February 2022.
 - j. Can people who had COVID-19 get the vaccine? Yes, once they have recovered. They will be eligible based on the same phased approach as everyone else.
 - k. Can senior neighbors go to senior housing buildings for vaccines? The City recognizes the issue of seniors aging in their homes needing better access to vaccines and will be working on the issue.

- l. Is there outreach targeted to Latino populations? Yes, the City is using its existing community relationships to do outreach.
 - m. What is the basis of the City’s 80 percent by February 2022 goal? Vaccine expectations and the timing of clinical studies for vaccinating children.
 - n. Is the vaccine technology used in the COVID-19 vaccines well established? Yes, mRNA has been studied for years and the trials for the authorized vaccines were done with the usual standards.
7. Chairwoman McCray explained that the Committee will hold additional hearings in the coming months to keep the community informed about vaccination efforts and progress in the City and recessed the hearing.

Further Study

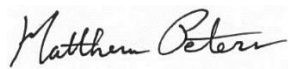
Was further study requested? Yes No

If yes, describe.

The Committee will hold additional hearings in the coming months to keep the community informed about vaccination efforts and progress in the City.

Committee Vote:

- D. McCray:
- J. Bullock:
- M. Conway:
- R. Dorsey:
- P. Porter:
- J. Torrence:
- I. Schleifer:



Matthew L. Peters, Committee Staff

Date: January 29, 2021

Cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File