

WORK SESSION NOTES

Resolution: 21-0003R

Informational Hearing - Baltimore's COVID-19 Vaccination Plan

Committee: Health, Environment, and Technology

Chaired by: Danielle McCray

Hearing Date: January 12, 2022

Time (Beginning): 10:00 AM

Time (Ending): 11:00 AM

Location: Webex Virtual Hearing

Total Attendance: Approximately 50 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? YES NO N/A
 Attendance sheet in the file? YES NO N/A
 Agency reports read? YES NO N/A
 Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded?..... YES NO N/A
 Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?..... YES NO N/A
 Evidence of notification to property owners? YES NO N/A
 Final vote taken at this hearing? YES NO N/A
 Motioned by:
 Seconded by:.....
 Final Vote:

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

Dr. Letitia Dzirasa, Commissioner of Health
Dr. Adena Greenbaum, Department of Health

Major Issues Discussed

1. Chairwoman McCray called the work session to order.
2. Dr. Dzirasa provided an update on COVID-19 cases, vaccination progress, and the Health Department's continuing efforts to vaccinate residents (presentation in file).
3. Committee members asked the following questions:
 - a. The need for take home COVID tests over the holidays was underestimated—what is the Health Department doing to address demand? The demand rose very quickly during the holidays and the City has received test kits from the state and purchased more to try to meet demand. The Health Department should be able to meet the demand for tests going forward and is working on better predicting surges like around the holidays in the future.
 - b. How is the Department educating parents on the importance of boosters? The Health Department has been working with schools and other partners to develop and distribute information on boosters for young residents.
 - c. Why have daily case counts started to go down? The combination of the omicron variant and holiday gatherings contributed to the surge. With the holidays passed, the spread may have slowed. It is unclear what effect more at-home testing may be having on the data.
 - d. How is the Department managing long waits at testing sites? The Department, state, and partners are expanding testing. The Convention Center is still operating but requires appointments due to demand. Many City run sites are walk-up and sites being set up at hospitals are also walk/drive-up.
 - e. How is the City using wastewater testing data? The Department uses the data to identify areas for outreach but the widespread transmission going on currently limits its utility.
 - f. If the City starts requiring vaccine passports, how do we ensure that unvaccinated people can still get essential goods and services? Vaccine passports would not be required for essential services. The requirement would only apply to nonessential services, like indoor dining, bars, and entertainment spaces.
 - g. What would the definition of essential services? The passport requirement would likely focus on defining the places where it would be required, rather than defining essential services where it would not be required.
 - h. Is wastewater sampling focused just on public housing? The Health Department is not involved in the sampling, but understands that it is limited to specific public housing sites.
 - i. How is the City supporting schools in testing and vaccinating children? The City has donated rapid test kits to the school system, partnered with schools in low vaccination areas, and provided grants to support vaccination efforts in communities.
 - j. Is the City considering a change to the definition of fully vaccinated to include boosters? The City will try to stay aligned with the CDC definition.
4. Chairwoman McCray explained that the Committee will meet again on the resolution in the coming months and recessed the work session.

Further Study

Was further study requested?


Yes **No**

If yes, describe.

The Committee will meet again 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 13, 2022

Cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File