

THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020

# THE BOSTON SUN

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## 'We can't shelter in Place': Commissioner Gross says police will not run from the fight

By Seth Daniel

The Boston Police Department (BPD) has a tremendous legacy and history of working through just about every situation – from terrorist bombings in 2013 to

urban rioting in the 1960s – but there are no officers still on the rolls that have worked through a pandemic.

For the BPD, Commissioner William Gross said they are entering uncharted territory as a police

force – responding to regular criminal activity and COVID-19 situations as well, while also trying to protect the officers and staff in the department so as to be able to keep

(POLICE, Pg. 3)



Officers and family members of Officer Omar Borges – who is assigned to the citywide drug unit – gathered last week to celebrate his touch-and-go recovery from COVID-19. Commissioner William Gross said it was a victory for everyone during an uncharted time for police officers.



## Walsh announces antibody testing, allows restaurants to sell groceries

By Lauren Bennett

Mayor Walsh made several announcements over the weekend, including a partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital on randomized antibody testing for 1,000 residents, as well as allowing restaurants to sell grocery items. The public health emergency declaration for the City of Boston that was issued on March

15 has also been extended “until rescinded by the Interim Executive Director,” according to the Boston Public Health Commission.

In response to Governor Baker’s extension of the stay-at-home advisory and closure of non-essential businesses to May 18 as well as the announcement of a 17-member advisory board for a phased reopening of the state, Walsh said on Wednesday that he is “pleased

to pledge our full participation in the governor’s process.”

Walsh continued to remind people to wear a face covering when outside the home, and to keep practicing social distancing. He had a special message for runners on Wednesday, telling them it was especially important for them to cover their faces when near oth-

(WALSH UPDATE, Pg. 4)

## WSANA reports uptick in ‘bad behavior’ from Mass/Cass folks as City focuses 2.0 efforts on COVID-19

By Seth Daniel

As the City’s Mass/Cass 2.0 team has pivoted entirely to curtail the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the population on the corridor, residents from the Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association (WSANA) reported a noted uptick in the instances of

‘bad behavior’ happening on the alleys and side streets of the neighborhood.

The topic has radically changed for WSANA as the 2.0 plan has been totally focused on preventing the spread of COVID-19, testing and caring for the population on the corridor. That has seemingly drawn away from the major efforts

that were seeing success earlier in the winter months – particularly the police presence in the area.

Mike Nelson, a neighbor and liaison for the community on the 2.0 Task Force, presented at the WSANA meeting Tuesday night – which incidentally was the first

(WSANA, Pg. 6)



The 2020 Women's Lunch Place Mother's Day card.

## Women's Lunch Place Mother's Day cards support healthy meals for women

By Lauren Bennett

Women's Lunch Place is offering to make this Mother's Day a little brighter, while gathering much-needed funds to support meals for its guests.

Women's Lunch Place, a day shelter located on Newbury St. for women experiencing poverty and homelessness, provides women with freshly prepared meals, hot showers, laundry, and a place to nap.

Each year for the past ten years, Women's Lunch Place has offered Mother's Day cards with a design by one of its guests in the Creative Expressions program—all with a floral theme. For a \$25 donation, cards can be sent to a recipient of your choice with a personalized handwritten message, and blank cards are also available.

“Each card supports one week of meals for guests,” said Chloe Kimball, Development Coordinator for Women's Lunch Place. Another option is to sponsor a breakfast for \$150 or lunch for \$300 “in honor or memory of a meaningful person in your life,” according to the Women's Lunch Place website.

This year's design features a yellow background with a blue vase full of brightly colored flowers on long stems, drawn by guest Donna.

Kimball said that each card comes with the designer's story printed on the back, so recipients can “hear who designed it and what struggles they've had to overcome.”

Kimball said that Donna had recently started coming to Women's Lunch Place when she was staying in a nearby shelter and had heard about the healthy, fresh meals that Women's Lunch Place provides.

She said that Donna became really involved in the Creative Expressions program, which gives women the opportunity to express themselves through things like art, painting, photography, and more. Donna is also part of the Women's Lunch Place Women's Chorus.

Each year, women in the Creative Expressions program are invited to submit a design for the Mother's Day Cards. Kimball said that about 20 submissions were received this year, and the final decision is made by the Arts Direc-

(WLP, Pg. 5)



# EDITORIAL

## ALLOWING THE STATES TO GO BANKRUPT IS A REALLY BAD IDEA

One of the most glaring shortcomings thus far of the stimulus and disaster packages that have been passed by Congress in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been the failure to provide assistance to the states.

Every state in the nation is seeing its revenues plummet to never-before-experienced depths. However, of the trillions of dollars thus far appropriated by Congress, there is barely a penny for state government operations -- and by extension, municipalities -- which are carrying the battle against the pandemic on the front lines.

The states thus are caught in an ever-tightening vise of plunging tax revenues on the one hand and skyrocketing costs on the other.

Despite the obvious squeeze on state budgets, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell last week commented, in response to a question about whether the Congress soon would be aiding the states, that he believed it would be preferable for states and municipalities to declare bankruptcy than for the federal government to provide needed funding to close their budget gaps.

It is hard to fathom why somebody of McConnell's stature would make such a statement, other than to give voice to the general Republican creed that disdains government operations at all levels. In particular, the GOP has immense dislike for what it considers to be overly-generous pension plans for state and municipal union employees.

However, the reason why states are in such desperate fiscal trouble these days has nothing to do with their pension or budget policies, but specifically is linked to the coronavirus, which has had a devastating financial impact on every facet of commerce, including state budgets.

Questions regarding the pension plans of the states as a contributor to their overall fiscal soundness certainly can be debated, but this is not the time to do so amidst this unprecedented crisis.

State and municipal governments across the country provide the first line of response for every American in protecting our health and welfare, so it makes no sense to allow states and municipalities to fail in this mission at this critical juncture amidst a pandemic that threatens to extend for many months.

In addition, without funding from the federal government, state and local governments will be forced to make layoffs of police, firefighters, teachers, and others in order to balance their budgets, a situation that will exacerbate even further the national unemployment rate.

Finally, the effect on the bond market from a plethora of state and municipal bankruptcies could have far-reaching and long-lasting negative effects for the country and the economy.

In short, there is nothing good that can come out of state and municipal bankruptcies at this time; but there is a lot that is bad.

Mitch McConnell's opinions are a grotesque perversion of responsible government. Hopefully, the rest of the Congress will not go along with his extreme and destructive ideas.

## THE BOSTON SUN

PRESIDENT/EDITOR: STEPHEN QUIGLEY, STEPHEN.QUIGLEY@REVEREJOURNAL.COM

MARKETING DIRECTOR: DEBRA DIGREGORIO (DEB@THEBOSTONSUN.COM)

ART DIRECTORS: KANE DIMASSO-SCOTT

REPORTERS: SETH DANIEL, SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM

LAUREN BENNETT, LAUREN@THEBOSTONSUN.COM

## GUEST OP-ED

### Emergency care has not been put on hold If you need medical assistance, seek help

By Mayor Martin J. Walsh

During this public health emergency, many of us are feeling stressed and anxious. Days are uncertain and our routines have shifted. Many people are working remotely, or have lost their jobs. Students are learning online. Many of our favorite events have been canceled. For some time now, I have urged you to follow many precautions like staying home, covering your face when outside, and not visiting friends and family. But, one thing has not changed and should not change: if you are experiencing an emergency, please call 9-1-1 for help. Boston EMS and our emergency rooms are ready to help you.

In anticipation of Boston's surge in COVID-19 cases, we have been doing our part to not overwhelm our emergency departments. We are asking individuals to call their primary care provider or 3-1-1 if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or have any health-related questions. You can also visit [buoyhealth.com/mass](https://www.buoyhealth.com/mass) for an online screening of COVID-19 symptoms. But, life-threatening emergencies like difficulty breathing or pain or pressure in the chest should be addressed immediately by calling 9-1-1.

Boston EMS will provide you

the necessary pre-hospital care and transport you to the nearest emergency department if needed. Hospitals have seen dramatic decreases in health emergencies, like heart attacks, strokes and appendicitis. Even though coronavirus is a new challenge, that does not mean other health challenges are less present. Please do not delay getting life-saving care because of fear of getting coronavirus. Go to the emergency room if you think you are in need of emergency care. Our hospitals in Boston have been taking many steps to ensure safety and cleanliness, and they have space for you.

Every day we are planning and responding to reduce the further spread of coronavirus. One piece of this has been increasing hospital capacity. We know it is important to be ready to treat as many people as possible, and not just for COVID-19. We must also help front line workers, like our medical professionals, first responders, grocery store employees, public servants and sanitation workers, stay healthy by practicing our guidelines: staying home as much as possible, covering your face when outside your home, keeping at least 6 feet of distance from other people, washing your hands frequently, and disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces.

I know it's a hard adjustment,

and it seems like this has been going on for much longer than it has. But this virus will not stop spreading if everyone follows our guidelines. I want to thank everyone who has been avoiding gatherings and wearing a face covering when they go outside. I know it's not always comfortable or easy to do, especially as we move into warmer weather. Your actions will directly help save lives. To those of you ignoring these guidelines, I urge you to reflect on the consequences of your actions. Is ignoring these guidelines worth risking the lives of your friends, family and neighbors? We can overcome this, but we have to work together.

The City of Boston will continue to take the proper steps to respond to this crisis in a comprehensive way. This is a difficult time for everyone around the world. It's okay to feel stressed. We will get through this together by following the public health guidelines, working together and supporting each other, one day at a time.

For more information on Boston's COVID-19 response, please visit [boston.gov/coronavirus](https://boston.gov/coronavirus) or text BOSCOVID to 888-777 to receive text alerts on a regular basis, available in 11 languages. For non-emergency questions, please call 3-1-1.

*Martin J. Walsh is the Mayor of Boston.*

## GUEST OP-ED

### Fighting for the Frontline

By Maura Healey

More than 300,000 health care workers and first responders in Massachusetts have stepped up to the frontlines in the battle against COVID-19. They suit up in scrubs or uniforms, leave the comfort of their homes, and put their lives at risk to keep us, our families, friends, and neighbors safe. We have an obligation to do everything we can to make sure they have access to the support they need during a time when they are sacrificing so much. That's why my office has launched FrontlineMA.org—a one-stop shop for frontline workers to get the information on resources they need during this crisis.

From Pittsfield to Provincetown, and from Newburyport to New Bedford, our frontline workers are putting in countless hours to combat this pandemic. Thankfully, many businesses, state agencies, and individuals have stepped up to help provide housing, personal protective equipment (PPE), and meals to make lives easier for them. This website provides a centralized place to get information on those resources.

For health care workers who may be exposed and can't be with their families, we've compiled resources for alternative housing so they can have a place to stay and minimize the risks for their families in case they become infected.

For parents who are working essential jobs and are struggling to find a safe place for their kids, we've put everything in one place to ensure they can continue to access childcare.

And to protect our heroes and honor people like Officer Jose Fontanez, who lost his life to COVID-19 while keeping our communities safe, we're working with stakeholders to secure PPE. I encourage health care facilities and providers, police and fire departments, and state and county agencies to consult the resources we've put together to get first responders and frontline workers the protective gear and information they need.



**POLICE** (from pg. 1)

operating full-force.

Bottom line, they will not run from the fight, he said.

"We haven't gone through anything like this since 1918 in terms of working in an environment where there's a pandemic," he said in an interview on Tuesday. "We have had no delays of terms in service during this pandemic. The officers have been performing exceptionally...It's not joke though. I think the morale is great and work ethic is great, but certainly there is a concern out there about how this virus can affect you. When you're getting updated and getting information on this, there are so many opinions it can be confusing. But we can't run from it. We have to work through it."

Gross's message to the public is that the officers are filling gaps wherever possible in helping deliver food and in supporting the schools, while also fighting crime, taking guns off the streets and protecting older adults from a rising amount of scams and targeted crime.

The work has not stopped, he said, even as officers are getting sick, and even having Jamaica Plain Officer Jose Fontanez pass away from COVID-19 two weeks ago.

"We can't shelter in place," he said. "Not only do we have to respond to calls for service that report criminal activity, but also we have to respond to calls for mental health issues and we cannot forget our unhoused population and those people with substance abuse disorders. The first responders fighting through this cannot shelter in place."

**OP-ED** (from pg. 2)

We've also compiled details on priority testing sites, tips for self-care, guidance on self-isolation and quarantine, and a list of free and discounted meals so that our health care workers, first responders, and their families can stay informed, safe, and healthy.

In addition to providing frontline workers with essential information, we want to make sure they know how much our communities appreciate and support them. That's why we created a Hero Wall where people can post pictures and send messages to thank our heroes and our frontline workers can share their own messages. I encourage everyone to post pictures of their sidewalk chalk or window art, or just a kind note, to say thank you to our nurses, doctors, healthcare workers and first responders. Throughout the site, you'll see opportunities

COVID-19 has hit the department in several ways.

On Tuesday, Gross said they had 81 sworn officers and civilians in the department who have tested positive for the disease, and at the moment there are 46 still out fighting COVID. However, several others have recovered and returned to work.

"We have people that are so committed - they go through COVID and heal and get back to work because they know it will take everyone to defeat this disease," he said. "That's inspiring."

One of those inspirations was Officer Omar Borges, who works the citywide drug unit, who recovered from a very serious case of COVID-19 last week. In a very emotional moment, he was reunited with his family and fellow officers outside Beth Israel Hospital. It was a victory, said Gross.

"He almost died, he really almost died," said Gross. "For him to fight through that, to be there with his friends, family and the medical staff, it was a victory for everyone. It shows everyone to never give up...It sends a great message to do everything we can to remain healthy and even if you're in the hospital battling this disease, you can come out of it."

At the same time, they remember Officer Fontanez who did not win his battle with COVID-19, and that's a reminder for officers to be safe and to do things to help them in the field.

Gross said at the outset of the response, Mayor Martin Walsh met with the Police Command Staff, Boston EMS and Boston Fire to review all of the guidelines and protocols and systems recom-

mended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). That resulted in two videos put out to those in the field on how to approach many situations, and the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) they would need.

Gross said officers now report to calls in masks, and are advised to wear them when off-duty as well when they cannot socially distance themselves. Having a mask on, though, can present a problem when trying to communicate with others in critical situations.

"It's very much kind of standard for us," he said. "Every call we go to now, we have out masks on and make sure everybody is clearly communicating. It's tough to talk though the masks and people cannot always hear you."

There are a lot of precautions also taken on calls. Police officers

are one group that is discreetly given the addresses of those who have tested positive for COVID-19 so they can be aware of that if they are called to such an address. The information doesn't go out over the police radio, and no names are attached to the warning.

Meanwhile, they've also brought out an old practice known as 'Call Screening.' If someone calls 9-1-1 and only needs a police report for the matter - not a response - calltakers can do the report over the phone. It's something that used to be done years ago, and was brought back to limit unnecessary interactions in person. That has been one change in response, and has been working successfully so far.

Gross said another thing the public can do is to wear a mask when officers show up at a home, and also be as forthcoming and

honest as possible with the 9-1-1 operators. Give good information, and if one is sick with COVID-19, let responding officers know so they can be prepared to safely offer services.

The Commissioner concluded by expressing his thanks to all of the officers and civilians in the department - as well as first responders in the Fire Department and Boston EMS. He also had a heartfelt thank you to the health care workers - who the Boston Police and other first responders thanked with a rolling rally two weeks ago.

"We know what it is to bust your butt working and get no thanks for it," he said. "This was a sincere thank you to them. Like us, they cannot shelter in place...It was a public display to say thank you."

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# Walsh appoints John Dempsey as commissioner of the Boston Fire Department

Staff report

Mayor Martin J. Walsh last week announced the appointment of longtime Boston firefighter John (Jack) Dempsey as Commissioner of the Boston Fire Department. Commissioner Dempsey has served in the interim role of Commissioner since the retirement of former Commissioner Joe Finn last month.

"I am proud to name Firefighter Jack Dempsey as the Commissioner of the Boston Fire Department," said Mayor Walsh. "He has dedicated his life in his professional career and personal capacity to promoting safety and wellness for firefighters, and I look forward to his continued leadership in this critically important department."

Since taking leadership of the

Boston Fire Department in March, Commissioner Dempsey has proactively prioritized the health and safety of firefighters during the COVID-19 pandemic by supplying firefighters with personal protective equipment, ensuring the frequent sanitation of firehouses, adjusting staffing levels to ensure social distancing, implementing mandatory training for infectious disease response, and more.

Commissioner Dempsey has been a member of the Boston Fire Department for 35 years, having served in multiple leadership capacities including most recently as Chief of Operations for the department, where he oversaw all division of the Boston Fire Department, including the engine company, fire prevention, ladder company, rescue company, safety



*New Fire Commissioner John Dempsey was appointed by Mayor Martin Walsh last week. Former Commissioner Joe Finn retired in March just prior to the COVID-19 outbreak.*

and special operations, emergency planning and preparedness, training and personnel. In this role, he was the highest ranking uniformed firefighter in the force.

He also previously served for four years as the Boston Fire Marshal, where he managed the Fire Prevention Division which is responsible for all fire code and regulation enforcement. In that role, he also oversaw the operation of the fire investigation unit, construction safety unit and all inspections required by Massachusetts General Laws.

"I am proud to be named the Commissioner of the Boston Fire Department, and want to thank Mayor Walsh for the opportunity to serve the residents of Boston in this role," said Commissioner Jack Dempsey. "As a lifelong member

of the department, this is a tremendous honor for me, and I look forward to building on the strong foundations set to ensure the safety and well-being of our firefighters and our community."

Commissioner Dempsey has previously served in several other capacities including on the Board of Fire Prevention Regulations for four years, the Automatic Sprinkler Appeals Board for four years, the Walsh-Kennedy Commission on Hot Work, and the Construction Fire Safety Partnership. He is a current member of the Fire Service Advisory Council, and was instrumental in the development and implementation of the National Fire Protection Association's Hot Work Safety Certification Program.

## WALSH UPDATES (from pg. 1)

ers outside as heavy breathing can spread the virus.

### ANTIBODY TESTING

Walsh announced on Sunday that 1,000 randomly chosen residents in the neighborhoods of East Boston, Roslindale, and Dorchester in zip codes 02121 and 02145.

"It is our hope that by conducting this testing, we as a collective City will get a better understanding of the true prevalence of COVID-19 in our community," Mayor Walsh said in a statement.

"The more we can expand our testing, the more we can learn how to use our medical resources more efficiently, and how we need to focus our current efforts to contain the virus. I want to thank MGH for being an excellent partner on this effort that we hope will be a step forward towards the path to recovery."

The testing will "give us important information about how different populations are being affected," he added at a press conference

on Monday, as well as learn more about the virus.

He said that antibodies are important, as they are proteins that are present in the blood to fight an infection, and remain in the blood after a person has recovered from an illness. Walsh said that doing this kind of testing will provide a better idea of how widespread the outbreak is in the City of Boston. "This antibody testing initiative is certainly a big step forward," he said.

### RESTAURANTS GIVEN PERMISSION TO SELL GROCERIES

On Friday, April 24, Mayor Walsh announced that permitted restaurants would be allowed to sell grocery items like paper goods, produce, and more via delivery, curbside pickup, and takeout.

"This is an unprecedented time for all of us in the City of Boston, and our administration is prioritizing how best to keep our residents safe and healthy, while also supporting our businesses and some

of our City's most vulnerable residents," Walsh said in a statement. "By allowing restaurants to also sell grocery and other essential items, we can help address social distancing concerns in grocery stores while supporting restaurants and food businesses during these unprecedented times."

Participating restaurants are required to follow specific procedures such as including product information available in relation to safe handling instructions and information about what the item is. Additionally, "an ingredient statement, the name and place of business of the food manufacturer, packer, or distributor, net quantity of contents, and allergen information required by the Food Allergen Labeling & Consumer Protection Act" must be made available as well, according to the City.

"In addition, businesses must submit an operational plan to the Boston Licensing Board detailing plans of implementing safe handling procedures and how they will comply with guidance from ISD. The Licensing Board will review each plan and issue correspondence allowing the sale of grocery items by the licensee on a temporary basis given the COVID-19 health emergency. Restaurants are not permitted to sell grocery items before receiving approval from the Boston Licensing Board," the City said.

Walsh thanked the City of Somerville and Mayor Joseph Curtatone for his guidance on this, as Somerville implemented the program earlier. "We should all be grateful for the people supporting our efforts here in Boston," he said.

### OTHER UPDATES

On April 27, Mayor Walsh announced the death of Booby Joe Leaster, a BCYF streetworker, who died from injuries from a house fire.

"We are devastated by his loss," Walsh said. "We will never forget the impact he made."

Walsh also said that a South End resident in his 70s passed away due to COVID-19, a few days after marrying his long time partner, whom he had proposed to while in the hospital.

As of April 28, the City of Boston had 8,613 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 333 people had died.

Walsh also said that at-home instruction will be ramping up again this week after last week's April vacation. He said that more than 2100 WiFi hotspots had been set up for homes that did not already have access, so students would be able to continue their learning at home.

Last week, Governor Baker announced that Massachusetts schools would be closed for the remainder of the year, and Walsh said that the City of Boston is "staying in close contact with school leaders about how distance learning has gone so far." He also said that superintendent Brenda Cassellius is also working on plans for the rest of the academic year to make sure that no student falls behind.

"It's important to remember that our schools are more than classrooms; they're communities," Walsh said. He added that free breakfast and lunch continue to be served to students across the City each day at 65 youth oriented sites. He said that half a million

meals have been served so far, and they will continue to be served as long as schools remain closed.

Food is also being delivered to the homes of students with severe special needs, and going forward, every school will have a student support team to monitor things like student engagement, well-being, and progress.

More than \$27 million has been raised so far for the Boston Resiliency Fund, and Walsh announced on Wednesday an additional \$1.4 million will be awarded to an additional 19 organizations.

Walsh also said that \$3 million in relief for housing payments was made available to those who are unable to get unemployment benefits and have no other income coming in. The City is processing about 800 applications for this money, he added, and \$2 million was allotted for a small business relief fund, of which 83 percent has been distributed to over 500 businesses in the City.

He added that more than \$10 million in federal funding will be used to replenish these programs.

Walsh also said that testing has increased across the city, including universal testing for the homeless population after securing an additional 1000 tests last week.

Walsh, like Baker, advised people to "call 911 immediately" if they are experiencing any kind of medical emergency. "We absolutely have the capacity to treat everyone who needs care," he said.

He also thanked the people who are answering 311 calls, as well as his neighborhood liaisons for making sure residents in every neighborhood are kept informed about the most up-to-date information regarding the virus.



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# DCR, city, state police clean out homeless encampment under Mass. Ave. Bridge

By Lauren Bennett

An area under the Massachusetts Avenue Bridge that was being used as a homeless encampment was cleaned out on the morning of April 27 by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Massachusetts State Police, the Boston Police and Fire Departments, and a hazmat team, according to DCR officials.

Charlesgate resident George

Lewis, Jr. said he noticed people living under the bridge a while ago, and last spring, there was a mattress fire under the bridge.

He said that the City of Boston "has been trying to help these people get food and clothing," but many return to the same area after being cleared out. The DCR has also organized clean ups of the surrounding area for similar encampments in the past.

"The problem is," Lewis said,

is that "people are leaving trash everywhere." He said this is a concern especially now with the COVID-19 outbreak. "It's not sanitary," he said.

He added that there are also a lot of needles under the bridge which is a safety and a health hazard. "They've been there for a long time," he said.

He said that the DCR supervisor on site told him that 20 people were removed from under the

bridge, and a dumpster and dump truck were filled with trash and other items that were left at the site.

"Several organizations were

on-site that conducted outreach to individuals who are homeless and were using the encampment," DCR officials said in a statement.

## Universal COVID-19 testing announced for homeless

Nearly 500 had tested positive in Boston shelters late last week

With the numbers of positive cases among the homeless in shelters heading towards 500, Mayor Martin J. Walsh announced the City of Boston will move forward with universal testing for COVID-19 (coronavirus) for all unhoused individuals in Boston. The City of Boston has secured an additional 1,000 tests, which will allow public health officials to test all clients in Boston's shelter system over the next two weeks. The efforts will be led by Boston's partners at Boston Health Care for the Homeless, in coordination with the Boston Public Health Commission, St. Francis House, and the Pine Street Inn.

The tests are being donated by the Boston company Orig3n.

"We continue to work every day to support our homeless population and the staff who serve them—with shelter, with care, with testing," said Mayor Walsh. "This is a big step forward in protecting our most vulnerable populations. Uni-

versal testing in Boston's homeless community is critical to allow us to provide individuals the targeted care they need. We will continue to work with our partners in government and the nonprofit community about the resources we need moving forward."

As of Thursday, April 23, 1,340 individuals have been tested, and 453 homeless individuals who have been tested are positive, or 34 percent. All Boston Public Health Commission shelters remain open, and the City of Boston has been conducting widespread testing in this population. As testing is completed, individuals who are positive will go to get the care and support they need to recover. Individuals who are negative will be placed in designated areas to allow for better social distancing and help slow the spread of the virus.

Since the start of the public health emergency caused by COVID-19, Boston has worked

to protect its most at-risk populations, including homeless individuals. The City of Boston has added over 900 new beds all across the city to reduce the density in the city's shelters, and to treat homeless individuals who are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Boston Hope at the BCEC has 500 beds dedicated to the care of homeless individuals, and the City of Boston has built quarantine and treatment centers next to its largest shelters.

The City of Boston has also worked with its partners to create 172 beds at Suffolk University dorms to improve shelter spacing, and 70 beds at a former hospital on Commonwealth Avenue in Brighton. The City has also helped add 250 beds at Newton Pavilion, in partnership with the Boston Medical Center. In addition, there are 50 beds for veterans at a facility in Brighton, and Boston University has provided 75 rooms for Pine Street Inn staff.

## WLP (from pg. 1)

tor and some of Women's Lunch Place's administrative staff.

She said they look for a design that is "new and fun," and while the design is floral themed, it doesn't always have to include a vase full of flowers.

"Right now, this campaign is really important because a lot of our other fundraisers have been cancelled," Kimball said. "It's a great way for people to support us during these times."

She said that implementing programs like these to do more outreach is imperative for Women's Lunch Place to be able to continue to provide these important services to women experiencing homelessness.

Women's Lunch Place continues to provide its healthy meals to guests, but it has switched from its typical sit down dining experience to a take-out meal process due to COVID-19.

"Each day we are providing

a nutritious breakfast and lunch with extra snacks to sustain our guests," the Women's Lunch Place website states. "Toiletries, underwear and basic necessities are available. Our advocates are checking in with elderly and shut

in guests and delivering pantry baskets of food and supplies."

The deadline for ordering cards for delivery by Mother's Day is May 4, but e-cards are also available. To place an order, visit [womenslunchplace.org/mothers-day](http://womenslunchplace.org/mothers-day).

Since 1936 we've been in this neighborhood.  
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- Provide one-on-one financial and family support coaching sessions to parents
- Award mini-grants to families who've been impacted by COVID-19
- Enhance program quality through professional development opportunities for our staff; recently trained 13 members of our staff as Family Support Advocates to provide coaching to parents
- Provide children and their families with nutritious and healthy food



To donate to the n2n Fund for Families or to learn more on how we can support you, please visit [www.uses.org/neighbor2neighbor-fund-for-families](http://www.uses.org/neighbor2neighbor-fund-for-families) or email Maicharia Weir Lytle, [mwl@uses.org](mailto:mwl@uses.org).



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# Rep. Livingstone and Councilor Bok join together on volunteer effort to connect with seniors

By Dan Murphy

The offices of State Rep. Jay Livingstone and City Councilor Kenzie Bok are working together to recruit volunteers to check in on seniors in their districts over the phone to see if they are in need of food, medication or just friendly conversation.

More than 100 volunteers have reached out to 1,000 seniors as of Saturday – just one week after the initiative was launched – and their offices are working together using a single phone bank for Beacon Hill, the West End and the Back Bay, which are neighborhoods that both elected officials represent. Volunteers for Rep. Livingstone are also reaching out to Cam-

bridge seniors and Councilor Bok's volunteers are connecting with seniors in other neighborhoods in her district, including Mission Hill, Longwood, Audubon Circle, the Fenway and Kenmore.

"Most seem to appreciate just receiving the call, and some have asked for regular check-ins," Rep. Livingstone said. "Some have specific needs where they required additional help, and our offices have been connecting them with that help, but people getting the calls really just appreciate that someone cared enough to check in with them and see how they're doing."

And the experience has proven to be as gratifying for volunteers as it is for the seniors receiving their calls.

"The callers have really enjoyed connecting with their neighbors, and it's really heartening to see how many people want to connect with neighbors and provide help at this time," Rep. Livingstone said. "It doesn't look like the situation is going away quickly so we're going to continue this for the foreseeable future."

Like Rep. Livingstone, Councilor Bok has also heard this outreach has meant just as much to the volunteers as the call recipients.

"What's amazing is seeing the urge people have to help now, and it's a chance for neighbors to check in with neighbors and see about what they might need as far as food, social contact and medication go," Councilor Bok said.

"Concretely it can also help identify specific needs we can help people with, which is really important at this time because so many people are finding themselves in a situation they've never been in before."

Councilor Bok also credited the Beacon Hill Civic Association for getting the word out about this effort via its daily e-blast and in the organization's weekly Community Corner column in this publication.

"We've been happy to be able to assist Rep. Livingstone's and Councilor Bok's offices to send those requests around and people really want to help and pitch in any way they can," said Patricia Tully, executive director of the Beacon Hill Civic Association.

Councilor Bok said, "We have

some amazing volunteers from Beacon Hill, and not to stoke some friendly competition, but Beacon Hill has had far and away the most calls so far."

Meanwhile, Councilor Bok said during the COVID-19 pandemic, the telephone has come back into vogue.

"It's funny in some ways that in this situation the telephone has come back as real lifeline for people," Councilor Bok said. "For a lot of people in the community, the phone is best way to contact them."

To volunteer for this effort, contact Rep. Livingstone via email at [Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov](mailto:Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov) or Councilor Bok at [kenzie.bok@boston.gov](mailto:kenzie.bok@boston.gov).

## WSANA (from pg. 1)

South End neighborhood meeting to go virtual in the COVID-19 era.

"Our last meeting was focused entirely on the City's response to the COVID-19 epidemic as with everything else in our daily lives," said Nelson. "The number one matte for attention right now is the Coronavirus and the response to it. The virus has reached the population of the people who are in the Mass/Cass area."

That, perhaps, has focused attention away from the huge police presence that was brought

on by Mass/Cass 2.0 last fall and winter.

Peter Sanborn said he has seen a noticeable uptick in problems, and he and others wondered if the police were being occupied with the COVID-19 responses instead.

"There seems to be a lot more presence of the street population back into the neighborhoods and particularly in the alleys," he said. "I'd say there is a marked increase in bad behaviors recently. The police had a marked presence before. I know we're in extraor-

dinary times, but I don't know if other residents are seeing this."

Others also confirmed they aren't seeing the police as much, and there are also some upticks in drug dealing and like behaviors in the alleys.

Nelson said there is a new effort now being unveiled this week to try to focus on getting large congregations of the street population off the corners. The Comfort Stations have been located by the Woods-Mullen Shelter and another at 1010 Mass Ave. in Newmar-



The City is unveiling Comfort Stations this week in WSANA to try to relieve the crowding on street corners of the Mass/Cass population. Keeping social distancing intact amongst the street population has been a challenge.

ket. He said the tent structures have bathrooms, hand-washing stations, outreach activities and part-time staffers. They are open from 2-6 p.m. A police officer from D-4 is stationed in a cruiser outside the Station.

"The idea behind this is to disperse the crowds from the intersections," he said. "They initially were going to have four or five of them, but they started with two on Monday."

The Comfort Stations did draw some controversy. While they are supposed to be in effect only during the pandemic emergency, some neighbors felt it was an expansion of services and might not go away.

"Here we go again with more services in the South End," said Andy Brand. "It's like Long Island again. It was supposed to be temporary, but it wasn't... We're supposed to be going forward, but it feels like we're going backward."

President George Stergios said he has been fighting for the long-term spreading out of services in the last few months, and understood the argument by Brand and others. However, he said he felt this was a short-term measure in the midst of a pandemic.

"These are real emergencies," he said. "The whole thing about spreading people out isn't something we can do now. We can't move them now to Dorchester or Beacon Hill. They don't have the time to do that. The decentralization of services is a long-term plan and can't be overnight. I think we pushed them quite hard to open up services in those neighborhoods where these people are from and not here in WSANA."

Nelson also shared that the overall Task Force is listening, but little is being done on that now.

"The Task Force is at least hyper-aware of the issue, but I can't report to you of any positive action on that other than the usual answers that they are working with partners in other parts of the city," he said.

That is one thing Nelson said he hopes will become clear in the six-month report. The 2.0 plan had a six-month report that would put on paper progress, or lack of, on all of the points in the plan. Things have already been delayed, such as the computer dashboard data project, but the report is expected to come out in about two weeks nonetheless, Nelson said.



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# Baker extends stay at home advisory, closure of non-essential businesses until May 18

By Lauren Bennett

Governor Charlie Baker on Tuesday afternoon extended the stay at home advisory and closure of non-essential businesses until May 18. The original order was set to expire on May 4.

Additionally, Baker extended the ban on gatherings of 10 or more people until May 18.

"I know pushing these dates back a couple of weeks is probably not what many people want to hear," Baker said at Tuesday's press conference, but he said that there are "risks associated with going back too soon."

He said that the measures the state has taken so far with the stay at home advisory and increased testing, among other things, have helped to flatten the curve in the Commonwealth. He added that while hospitalization rates have begun to plateau, they have not yet started to fall with the intensity that would suggest a serious decrease in cases. In order to reopen the state, Baker said the data has to be looked at closely.

"We're moving in the right direction with respect to the virus, but we are not where we need to be," Baker said. "These mechanisms all need to remain in place."

He thanked the people of Massachusetts for "playing their part"

in limiting the spread of the virus. He said he recognizes how difficult the state's decisions have been on people and families. "People have lost jobs, their careers, and in some cases businesses they have worked on for years," he said.

But "since we've acted, we've avoided the humanitarian crisis we've seen...elsewhere around the world," he said.

The Baker-Polito administration also announced the creation of a 17-member reopening advisory board that will work together on a phased plan to reopen the state.

Lt. Governor Karyn Polito said that government officials, industry employees, and customers "will need to work together for this to be successful." She said that Massachusetts is "recognized as a leader in people taking personal responsibility" for social distancing.

"The board will bring a range of perspectives, including an understanding of workplaces and workforces, including insights" into things like education, local governance, manufacturing, and transportation.

She said it will be "a lot of listening" to main streets businesses and other small businesses, as well as metro mayors and local government officials statewide, and the 17 member board will be comprised of three public health offi-

cials, 11 leaders from businesses, including transportation secretary Stephanie Pollock.

"Their insight is key," Polito said. "A lot of the decisions we will make need to be enforced and implemented at the local level."

Baker said the first meeting of the advisory board took place on April 28.

## TESTING INCREASES AND REGULAR HOSPITAL CAPACITY

As of April 28, Massachusetts had 58,302 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 3,153 people had died.

Governor Baker also made several announcements late last week and early this week regarding increases in testing across the state. He said he was "ramping up" a program for testing with Quest Diagnostics in a number of community health centers across the state.

He also said that important factors when analyzing test results are how many people are tested, how many come up positive, and what the ratio between those two numbers looks like.

Baker also talked about the importance of seeking medical care if people are experiencing serious symptoms like chest pain or difficulty breathing. He said that hospitals across the state are

equipped to deal with illnesses and conditions not related to COVID-19, such as stroke, cancer, and injuries, and people should not be afraid to go to the hospital if it is necessary to do so.

"If you're not feeling well, if you have an ongoing medical condition, stay in touch with your clinicians," Baker said on April 24. "If you need to go to the hospital, go."

On April 24, Department of Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel returned to Baker's daily press conference to speak about her personal experience with COVID-19. Now recovered, she described her battle with the virus as including fever and muscle aches, but she still worked from home when she felt up to it.

## UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE UPDATE

He said that the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program, which can help people who are self-employed, "gig workers," contractors, or consultants, is up and running.

He said that this system has processed "well over 100,000 claims" as of April 24.

"The platform for traditional unemployment continues to process claims," he added, and checks include the extra \$600 a week from the federal CARES

Act. Baker said there were over 650,000 new claims filed since March 15, and the state is paying around 400,000 people so far and is "working through the rest of the claims."

## \$130 MILLION FOR NURSING HOMES

On April 27, Baker announced a second round of funding of \$130 million for the state's nursing homes, as they continue to face challenges when it comes to battling COVID-19.

Baker said that as of April 27, 10,031 residents and staff at the state's nursing homes, rest homes, and assisted living facilities had tested positive for the virus, and people in these facilities represent 56 percent of the state's total deaths.

"To date, the mobile testing unit has conducted testing at over 400 facilities," he said. He said the National Guard "has done a tremendous job so far."

He also said there are new requirements for nursing homes, including testing of all staff and residents and meeting PPE requirements, among other things. He said that facilities will be audited to make sure they are complying with the requirements.

## Boston man arrested for setting dumpster fires in the Back Bay area

The search for the suspect wanted for setting several dumpster fires in the downtown Boston areas is over. Earlier this evening, officers arrested William Elliott, 44, of Boston and charged him with the Burning of Personal Property.

The BPD released an image last week and asked for the public's help in an effort to identify the individual responsible for several dumpster and recycle bin fires in Boston. The first fire was reported on Friday, April 17, at about 6 p.m. Since that time, there have been nine additional reports made for a total of 10 dumpster fires. Fires have occurred on the following days in the following locations:

FRIDAY: Three fires reported on Friday, April 17, beginning at about 6:20 p.m.: •Rear of 67 Newbury Street (Public Alley 436)

•Rear of 74 Commonwealth Ave (Public Alley 436)

•Rear of 581 Boylston Street (Public Alley 439)

SATURDAY: Two fires reported on Saturday, April 18, beginning at about 1 p.m.:

•Rear of 200 Newbury Street (Public Alley 441)

•Rear of 120-130 Commonwealth Ave (Public Alley 435)

SUNDAY: Five dumpster fires reported on Sunday, April 19, beginning at about 7:55 p.m.:

•Rear of 327 Newbury Street near 45 Hereford Street (Public Alley 430)

•Rear of 645 Boylston Street (Public Alley 440)

•Rear of 587 Boylston Street (Public Alley 439)

•Rear of 67 Newbury Street (Public Alley 436)

•Public Garden Trash Barrel Fire located near gate at Arlington and Marlborough Streets.

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Includes handwritten message.

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# MBTA's RIDE offering transit services to PCAs

Staff report

The MBTA announced that the RIDE paratransit service will temporarily allow customers to book trips for their personal care attendants (PCAs) in an effort to best support their ADA-eligible customers during the COVID-19 situation. “This change will allow the MBTA to maintain a vital link between RIDE customers and their PCAs,” said MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak. “As we actively monitor the COVID-19 situation, we will continue to make necessary service changes that meet the travel needs of both those who are essential to combating this virus, and, where we can, the needs of those who are the most vulnerable among us.”

A PCA is defined as an individual that provides assistance in performing Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). ADLs include, but are not limited to, mobility, bathing/grooming, dressing/undressing, passive range-of-motion exercises, taking medications, eating, and toileting. Allowing these bookings ensures that RIDE customers continue to receive the same level of daily support they need to live independent and safe lives.

This update is in addition to other temporary RIDE measures already in effect meant to protect the health and safety of T workers

and customers, and preserve services for those who must travel for essential purposes. Other temporary RIDE updates include the elimination of shared RIDE trips, temporarily extending RIDE eligibility and postponing eligibility appointments, adjustments to booking windows, updates to subscriptions, and a reduction in transfer trips. More information on these temporary updates can be found at [mbta.com/theride](https://mbta.com/theride).

In order to book travel for their PCA, RIDE customers should call the RIDE Access Center (TRAC) at 844-427-7433 and inform the agent that the trip is for their PCA. RIDE customers will need to provide the PCA's name, address, and service needs. PCA trips may only be to or from the RIDE customer's home address. RIDE customers can pay for the PCA trip out of the RIDE customer's account with PCAs also able to deposit funds into a RIDE customer's account by calling 888-844-0355. The cost of the PCA trip is equal to traditional RIDE fares. Customers will receive their night-prior call back from the RIDE and customers should let their PCAs know of their pick-up time. Arrival notifications will also go to the customer's phone number.

RIDE service for customer trips will remain the priority. As such, trips for PCAs will be fulfilled only as capacity allows.



PHOTO BY KAY NAGLE.

Friends celebrate Linda Morgan's birthday (seated right) singing “Happy Birthday” at the Fireman's Monument on the Commonwealth Mall. Linda is a long-term resident of Back Bay, lover of the arts, and active participant/leader/organizer in many NABB social events. From left: Ephraim Semah, Bob Nagle, Heber Dominguez (kneeling), Sandy and Les Nanberg, Shirley Shames, Kris Field (party-planner-in-chief), Anne Swanson, Linda Morgan (the Birthday Girl, sitting), Bea Morse, Linda Zukowski, Nancy Olson, and Elaine Sullivan. (Nancy Dolan, attending but not shown.)

## Long-time Back Bay resident celebrates birthday with socially distanced gathering

By Lauren Bennett

Long-time Back Bay resident Linda Morgan celebrated her birthday last year at a restaurant surrounded by friends and neighbors. This year her celebration looked a little different—neighbors donned masks and stood six feet apart.

Social distancing has created challenges for people celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, bridal

showers, and other special events during the COVID-19 crisis, but many across the country have come up with creative ways to still honor loved ones.

Morgan has been an avid participant in many social events with the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, and has contributed to the Back Bay community in a multitude of ways.

Fourteen people gathered on April 23, Morgan's birthday, at

the Fireman's Monument on the Commonwealth Ave. Mall with signs saying “Happy Birthday” and “Linda.”

Back Bay resident Kris Field organized the event, calling it a “really simple thing to do,” but adding that she wanted to do something for Morgan this year even though it couldn't be a regular party.

She said she “emailed a bunch of people I know who were around and who could put masks on,” and told them to meet at the Fireman's Monument at 11:00am on the 23rd.

“We sang ‘Happy Birthday’ to her and she moved about and was able to say hello to everybody and got a big kick out of it,” Field said. “We all feel weird because we don't feel particularly safe these days,” because it can be hard to tell who has the virus and who doesn't with so many asymptomatic carriers. “We were being really careful to keep our distance.”

Field said that Morgan came up to her poised to give her a hug, but then “realized she couldn't.”

Kay Nagle, another neighbor who attended the party, said that she and her husband came up from the Cape just to attend the celebration. They even brought their dog, who got to sniff Morgan's hand. “It was a nice thing to do for a nice woman who has done so much for the Back Bay,” she said.

Even though the gathering was a simple one, it was enjoyed by all who attended.

“Everybody felt good just to come and do something with friends even though we couldn't get close,” Field said. “We all felt very uplifted by the whole thing.”

### DO:

- Place leaves and yard debris in large paper bags or open barrels labeled “yard waste.”
- Tie branches with string 3 feet max length and 1 inch max diameter
- Place barrels, bags, and branches curbside by 6 a.m.

### DON'T:

- No plastic bags
- Don't put branches in barrels
- No dirt

### NOTE:

- If you have two recycling days per week, **collection is on your first recycling day of the week**
- We don't collect leaf and yard waste curbside on non-scheduled weeks
- We collect Christmas trees from January 4 – 15, 2021

### COMPOST AT HOME:

You can buy backyard compost bins and kitchen-scrap buckets at:

Boston Building Resources  
100 Terrace St. Mission Hill, Roxbury

For more information, go to:  
[boston.gov/trash](https://boston.gov/trash)

Leaf and yard waste curbside collection

Household hazardous waste drop-off

2021 Tree collection

Yard Waste drop off  
500 American Legion Hwy, Boston, MA 02131

### APRIL

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### HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

JUNE 20 | SOUTH BOSTON  
Central DPW facility  
400 Frontage Rd.

JULY 25 | WEST ROXBURY  
West Roxbury DPW  
315 Gardner St.

AUGUST 1 | DORCHESTER  
John W. McCormick middle school  
315 Mt. Vernon St.

AUGUST 22 | SOUTH BOSTON  
Central DPW facility  
400 Frontage Rd.

OCTOBER 31 | SOUTH BOSTON  
Central DPW facility  
400 Frontage Rd.



# Tech Teens: Brother and sister reach out to help others with technology

By Seth Daniel

Being tremendously helpful in this pandemic has been as easy as clicking a button for Elizabeth and Thomas Garity – or rather showing others how to click it.

The siblings from the South End have found a lot more time on their hands recently, with Boston Latin School going online for Thomas and Elizabeth's freshman year at St. Andrew's College in Scotland cut short. Back in the neighborhood, they wanted to be helpful to neighbors.

The family lives next door to Norma Zack, who is tied in with the South End Seniors group. The SESs have been quick to adapt, or try to adapt, to technology to continue their weekly meetings – despite not being able to meeting in person at the Haley House.

Some have found the transition very easy.

Others have been challenged.

Enter the Garity siblings.

"At first we wanted to do something to help because we had more

time on our hands," said Elizabeth. "We wanted to help go out and get groceries for the older adults in the neighborhood so they could stay home and be protected. After we heard more about the restrictions being imposed, we decided it would be better to do something with less physical contact."

Having been on Skype face-to-face calls with their grandmother in England routinely, they saw some of the trouble she was having. Then their mother suggested they volunteer their time to help those in the neighborhood, particularly older adults, having trouble communicating online.

"Communicating over the Internet is very important right now," said Elizabeth. "For us, it's easier because we've been doing that six weeks now for school and even before that I frequently used Facetime to talk to my friends. It's just not as easy for people to do these things if they didn't grow up with a computer in front of them like we did."

So far, they have had a handful



*Thomas and Elizabeth Garity, life-long Southenders, have turned to helping others in the community by offering technical assistance for computers – particularly for older adults trying to learn how to communicate online with Zoom or Facetime. With so many older adults staying in so they can be safe, it can be very isolating for those who aren't able to use such technology.*

of people seeking help. Some of them needed help downloading software like Skype, while others wanted help figuring out how to do screen shots.

"They called us and we were able to talk over the phone about it," said Elizabeth. "We can talk

over the phone, but if they know how to use Zoom, we can use the screen sharing technology to be able to see what's happening on their computer remotely."

They have had a lot of communication with the South End Seniors, having an 'in' with Zack to the group, and they said they

hope more folks contact them for help.

"I've been surprised by their humor," said Thomas. "I couldn't believe they called their group the 'Geezers.' That surprised me."

It is something they want to do because they hope someone in England would do the same for their grandparents.

"We're not alone in this," she said. "We need to take care of each other and watch out for each other. Fortunately for us, we have family and are together. Many of the older adults are on their own. It can be really difficult when there is so much infection and it's not safe to go out...Because we're so close to our grandparents, I would hope people in their neighborhood are doing the same thing for them. Right now, it's so important to do your part to help others at a higher risk."

Both said they are willing to help those who are in need of basic technical assistance with computers if they can. They can be reached by e-mail at [esgarity@gmail.com](mailto:esgarity@gmail.com).

## Mayor Walsh says more COVID-19 testing and tracing needed for return to normalcy

By Dan Murphy

Mayor Marty Walsh said during a virtual forum last week he expects a greater capacity for testing for and contact tracing COVID-19 would need to be in place and more data collected before Boston can return to "some sense of normalcy," and that he expects the city's stay-at-home order set to expire on May 4 would likely be extended by an additional five or six weeks.

"Going back will be a whole different situation than it was two months ago because the coronavirus could be very much alive and front and center," Mayor Walsh said during the online discussion on Thursday, April 23, that also featured Dr. Peter Slavin, president of Mass General Hospital and was moderated by Janelle Nanos, The Boston Globe's business reporter. "We need data to decide what to open and see what populations of people are vulnerable."

The city quickly set up, and is now operating 10 centers to test for the coronavirus, which is now reaching its peak, he said.

"For the last two weeks, we've been seeing 200 new cases every single day and for the foreseeable future, it'll probably stay there or even go up a little," the mayor said. "Last week was the largest increase in the city, and for the next week or two, we're going to see the numbers bump up."

Mayor Walsh added, "It's about keeping not getting the virus, and keeping people alive. As of right now, we literally have to take it one day at a time."

In response to whether antibody screening and temperature checks will become routine once "new normal" comes to pass, Mayor Walsh said, "The answers we have today could be very much different than the answers we have tomorrow."

City Hall is now only open two days each week, and temperature checks are administered to everyone who enters the building.

The city is also providing support available for those suffering emotionally from social isolation and other effects of the coronavirus by calling 3-1-1, the mayor said.

Mayor Walsh said more-frequent MBTA service would be necessary as more return to work and when students resume classes, but more data needs to be collected before that happens.

"How do we bring the workforce back in shifts, and will there still be opportunities to work from people for people over 65 or with preexisting health conditions?" the mayor asked. "Having that information is very important to how we get back to work."

Unlike New York City, Boston has no plans to cancel its youth employment program this summer, Mayor Walsh said, but it likely won't be as "comprehensive" as

years past.

And Mayor Walsh was also optimistic regarding the likelihood of the city sponsoring a summer camp again this year.

"By the summer, kids will have physically been out of school buildings for six months," the mayor said. "It's too early to tell, but we hope to have some sort of a summer camp this year."

Mayor Walsh said minorities have accounted for 60 percent of the recorded cases of COVID-19 in Boston, which prompted the city to form the Health Inequities Task Force.

The coronavirus has put the "spotlight" on the inequity between the city's haves and have-nots not just in regard to healthcare, but also housing, access to food and other essential needs, he said.

But even though inequity has been pervasive in the healthcare system for a long time, Mayor Walsh said when it comes to handling patients with COVID-19, "hospitals have treated everyone the same in this case."

Dr. Slevin said lower-income areas like Chelsea and Revere, which MGH has relationships with, have been hit hard by COVID-19, adding that of 200 people tested for the antibody against the coronavirus in Chelsea's Bellingham Square earlier this month, 32 percent tested positive.

As for the cause of these alarming findings, Dr. Slevin cited a recent study of cellphone activity

that showed the wealthy generally stay at home and abide by social distancing while the poor, who often have essential jobs, go to work and put themselves at risk.

"The good news is that it appears that we're reaching the peak of the curve, but we don't know whether it will be a shallow or a steep curve," he said.

While it typically takes between 12 and 18 months to develop a vaccine, Dr. Slevin said other treatment options are now being explored.

"We have our fingers crossed that these drugs will be effective, and local hospitals are working on solutions," he said. "We're hopeful that a treatment is on the horizon."

Dr. Slevin added, "There is a range of antibody testing out there now, and the FDA needs to identify which ones are the highest quality."

In response to the threshold for nonessential businesses to reopen, Dr. Slevin said, "I don't know at this point how long it will take to get there. We have to wait for the transmission rate to get close to 0."

"We need herd immunity where 60 or 70 percent of the population has been exposed to the virus or vaccinated," he added. "We can't fool around with this despite our wish to go summer camp or my desire to play golf."

While Dr. Slevin said the White House has suggested it would make sense for young, healthy people to increase activities first

before older people, he cautioned that reopening society too soon could have dire consequences.

"When will we have the volume of tests to do mass testing, that will determine what can and can't be open this summer," Dr. Slevin said. "We do need to reopen at some point, but we have to be careful as to not precipitate a second wave that would dwarf the one now."

Mayor Walsh also pointed to the very real possibility that Boston could experience a resurgence of COVID-19.

"We have to anticipate a second surge and can't afford to shut down society like we have for the past couple of months," the mayor said.

In looking at ways to mollify the economic impact of the coronavirus on the city, Mayor Walsh said a business person suggested to him that the economy should stop for three months and, during this time, "put things on pause like loans, mortgages and rent."

"Short of doing that, it's up to the federal government to keep businesses alive," the mayor said, adding that the city can't afford to bail out every one of its small businesses without help from the banking industry, as well as the White House.

"It's time for us to come together as a country, and let's leave partisan politics behind," Mayor Walsh said. "And it's time to be a leader because that's what this country needs."



# ATTENTION TO DETAIL

BY PENNY CHERUBINO

## THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The large, recessed windows in the last clue are in a 1966 addition to Northeastern University's Stetson Hall. This H-shaped addition was designed by architects Shepley Bulfinch Richardson & Abbott Inc to serve as a common area between two wings. The next clue will be found in the Symphony Area. Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

## THIS WEEK'S CLUE



# NEWS BRIEFS

## SOUTH END UPDATES

### CHESTER SQUARE NEIGHBORS VIRTUAL MEETING MAY 6

Chester Square Neighbors will be holding a virtual Zoom meeting on May 6 at 7:00pm, where John Tobin, vice president of City and community affairs for Northeastern University and Kathy Spiegelman, vice president and Chief of Campus Planning and Development at Northeastern University, will be giving a presentation and having discussion with the CSN about a potential for collaboration on projects along Mass. Ave.

### BLACKSTONE/FRANKLIN SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETING MAY 19

The Blackstone/Franklin Square Neighborhood Association will be holding a general meeting via Zoom on May 19 at 7pm. That meeting will include our annual board election, a vote on proposed bylaw revisions (originally to have been held at our cancelled March

meeting) and other business.

### EIGHT STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEIGHBORHOOD THANK YOU

Please join us this Sunday, May 3, for a neighborhood thank you. The weather is looking good this coming Sunday. Please sit on your stoop from 6:45-7:15 and wave to your neighbors, and at 7:00 clap for our health care workers and essential workers (while maintaining social distancing of course).

## FENWAY NEWS

### FENWAY DELIVERY AVAILABLE FOR PHARMACY NEEDS

Johnson Compounding & Wellness, a pharmacy in Waltham owned by a Fenway resident, is offering free shipping or free home delivery to the Fenway neighborhood for orders over \$25. Popular items include vitamins, hand sanitizer, rubbing alcohol. Thank you for looking out for your neighbors!

### JAMES TAYLOR CONCERT POSTPONED

The James Taylor with Brandi Carlile and Shawn Colvin concert scheduled for June 21 at Fenway Park has been postponed.

### CONSTRUCTION UPDATE: MGM MUSIC HALL AT FENWAY & PARKING LOT BEHIND CVS

Per the Mayor's directive affecting all construction sites in the City of Boston, work on the MGM Music Hall at Fenway has been suspended.

### OPEN LETTER FROM NABB CHAIRMAN MARTYN ROETTER

As neighborhood associations come together to think of ways to help out the community, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) Chairman Martyn Roetter has written an open letter outlining the information NABB is disseminating, which can be read at <https://www.nabbonline.org/coronavirus/open-letter/>.

## Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
<b>BACK BAY</b>			
Shinde, Manali C	Suite Home LLC	84 Berkeley St #3	\$880,000
Sparks, Aaron	Wu, Di	280 Commonwealth Ave #G3	\$455,000
5 New Lane LLC	D Santangelo RT	86 Marlborough St #9	\$1,805,000
Corcoran, Ann M	Mcbride, Shelley	492 Beacon St #43	\$960,000
Hinshaw, William R	451 Marlborough Res	451 Marlborough St #RE	\$3,662,500
<b>BEACON HILL</b>			
Andrews, Stephanie C	Marcia E Izant RET	15 River St #506	\$675,000
<b>BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE</b>			
Wambach, Valaya L	Yanulis, Peter	285 Columbus Ave #604	\$800,000
Boucher, Peter B	Beck, Christopher M	26 Montgomery St #5	\$680,000
Fusi, John	Altamura, Philip	600 Massachusetts Ave #6	\$1,075,000
Flynn, Ashley M	Jethwani, Kamal	668 Massachusetts Ave #G	\$776,000
Patrick, Michael	Desprez, J David	6 Milford St #1	\$1,750,000
Nallapareddy, Ravi	Mohs, David	121-127 Portland St #203	\$800,000
Dynan, William J	Rodolico, Sarah	32 Traveler St #213	\$226,512
Desprez, John D	Highline Union LLC	48 Union Park #1	\$3,150,000
Yanulis, Peter	Norman, Jay D	77 W Brookline St #3	\$1,189,000
Chong, Paul	JP Property 1 LLC	3531 Washington St #227	\$327,900
Morales, Carlos D	JP Property 1 LLC	3531 Washington St #306	\$186,400
<b>WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN</b>			
Haghighyeghi, Abdol	90-92 Endicott Street	1 Avery St #20A	\$2,150,000
Bohn, Ariel M	Dufton, Mark T	40 Battery St #401	\$1,595,000
Reardon, Keri	Mcguinness, Michael E	120 Commercial St #1-2	\$845,000



# Civic leaders hearing few complaints about PPE discarded in city streets

By Dan Murphy and Lauren Bennett

While the sight of discarded face-masks, surgical gloves and other discarded Personal Protective Equipment on the city's streets has become increasingly more commonplace in recent weeks, leaders of some neighborhood civic groups have heard few concerns from residents to this effect.

On Wednesday, April 1, the Public Works Department tweeted images of city workers sweeping up face masks and rubber gloves from the sidewalk with this message: "PWD crews are working very hard during this difficult time, but we need @CityOfBoston residents to help. We continue to find discarded rubber gloves and masks on our sidewalks and streets. Please be respectful of your neighbors and dispose of your trash properly.

Don't litter!" Concerns over this issue also prompted a follow-up statement from Chris Coakley, head of the department, urging residents to follow the guidance of public health officials by disposing of masks, gloves and other trash in proper waste receptacles, according to The Boston Globe.

Mayor Martin Walsh also warned Bostonians at several of his press conferences earlier this month to properly dispose of masks and gloves in trash receptacles, and not on the street or in parking lots. The City has reported seeing many masks and gloves left in grocery store parking lots as well.

"Let's be good neighbors and let's keep making sure our communities are clean and safe," Mayor Walsh said.

Yet nearly a month later, few residents have raised the issue with

the leaders of their neighborhood civic groups.

Martyn Roetter, who chairs the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay board of directors, said he has only observed a few discarded face-masks and gloves during his routine walks of the neighborhood, and that the organization hasn't received many calls on the matter.

"There's nothing substantial, no more common than discarded Coke bottles or plastic containers," he said, adding that while he had seen some discarded Personal Protective Equipment around supermarkets, it was unclear whether people had recklessly disposed of the items or if the wind carried them to the sidewalk instead.

Just the same, Roetter said, "Discarding face masks intentionally is reprehensible because it's potentially harmful."

Over in between the Back Bay and the Fenway, George Lewis, Jr. of the Charlesgate Alliance said he's only seen "a few here and there. Not too bad."

The same seems to ring true in certain parts of the South End, too. Bob Barney, President of the Claremont Neighborhood Association, said he saw some a few weeks ago but he added: "I have not been on the streets as much with the stay at home guidance," he said.

Chester Square Neighbors president Carol Blair said she's seen "more gloves than masks," but she said she has seen an overall uptick in the amount of garbage being left on the streets, adding that some good neighbors who usually pick up excess trash in the neighborhood might be "less inclined to do so during this crisis of contagion."

Patricia Tully, executive director of the Beacon Hill Civic Associa-

tion, said while the organization hasn't received many calls and emails regarding discarded face-masks, she has seen them "everywhere" while walking around the city.

"It's really disgraceful," she said.

## SERVICES

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## For the Record

**CORONAVIRUS UPDATE:** Due to public health concerns, the hearings that normally would be held on a week have been postponed or canceled due to the guidance of Mayor Martin Walsh and the order of Gov. Charlie Baker. Some meetings, however, have been moved to an online or teleconference format under the emergency order on the Open Meeting Law issued by Gov. Baker.

### •CONSTRUCTION

Due to the public health emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19, Mayor Walsh announced that he is extending the City of Boston's order to pause non-essential construction for City of Boston permitted sites. The initial order announced on March 16th was set for 14 days and will now continue until further notice.

**From the April 30 Council Ways and Means Committee Budget Working Session (via Zoom online meeting):**

•11 a.m. The focus of this working session is the Office of Economic Development (OED) and the Boston Equity Fund.

**From the April 29 Design Selection Committee, 9 a.m., Zoom online meeting (HTTPS://ZOOM.US/J/98224666051?PWD=UMNWZNNKZWNPAJFIRY9ONMLRREMEETING ID: 982 2466 6051 PASSWORD: 85989603DZ09):**

•Boston Public Library – McKim Building Improvements  
The Designer Selection Committee for the above referenced project will interview short-listed firms to select an appropriate designer.

**From the April 30 Council Ways and Means Committee Budget Working Session (via Zoom online meeting):**

•11 a.m. The focus of this working session is the Office of Economic Development (OED) and the Boston Equity Fund.

**From the May 4 Council Ways and Means Committee Budget Working Session (via Zoom online meeting):**

•11 a.m. The focus of this working session is the Department of Neighborhood Development (DND), the Environment Department, the Conservation Commission (ConCom), the Landmarks Commission, the Parks and Recreation Department, Environment & Parks Revolving Funds, and the Parkman Fund.

**From the May 4, 2 p.m., COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKING SESSION:** Order for a hearing to discuss ways to support tenants facing eviction and displacement. Order for a hearing regarding the creation of temporary rental assistance to support residents impacted by COVID-19.

**From the May 5, 5 p.m., COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT Hearing (Online Via Zoom):**

•Message and order for an appropriation order in the amount of Twenty-Four Million Three Hundred and Nine Thousand Dollars (\$24,309,000.00) from the Fiscal Year 2020 Community Preservation Fund revenues for community preservation projects at the recommendations of the City of Boston Community Preservation Committee ("CPC"). The CPC is recommending \$15,750,000.00 in affordable housing projects, \$3,440,000.00 in historic preservation projects and \$5,119,000.00 in recreational use and open space projects.

•Message and order authorizing the appropriations of Seven Hundred Eighty-Two Thousand Three Hundred Ninety-Two Dollars (\$782,392.00) for the admin-

istrative and operating expenses of the City of Boston Preservation Committee ("CPC") for Fiscal Year 2021, and a further appropriation order in the amount of Twenty-Five Million Five Hundred Seventeen Thousand Six Hundred Eight Dollars (\$25,517,608.00) from the Community Preservation Fund's ("the Fund") estimated annual revenues for Fiscal Year 2021, to be appropriated and reserved for future appropriation.

**From the May 5 South End Landmarks Commission meeting, 5:30 p.m., Zoom online meeting (HTTPS://ZOOM.US/J/92337740653):**

**DESIGN REVIEW HEARING:**

•Tremont Street (between Massachusetts Avenue & Arlington Street). Proposed Work: Modify Tremont Street layout and intersections; construct raised crossings, built islands, and raised bus stop platforms; and relocate select utilities.

•685 Tremont St. Proposed Work: Install fencing at Library Park.

•293 Northampton St. Proposed Work: Install a fence, granite curb, planting bed, and landscaping.

•437 Shawmut Ave. Continued from 2/04/2020 SELDC Public Hearing. Proposed Work: Construct a rear shed dormer at the roof.

•9 Cazenove St. Proposed Work: Construct a roof deck.

•5 Rutland Sq. Proposed Work: Construct a roof deck with sliding skylight system.

•11 Bradford St. Proposed Work: Proposed Work: At the roof level, demolish penthouse/solarium and construct stair head house and roof deck; at the front façade third level modify shed dormer openings, install three new windows, and install cladding; at the front façade basement through second levels install fire bell and water connection; replace entry door and infill with new doors and transom; replace vents; and paint concrete base and trim

•566 Columbus Avenue. Proposed Work: Construct a new building.

**From the May 7 Council Ways and Means Committee Budget Working Session (via Zoom online meeting):**

•10 a.m. The focus of this hearing is the FY21 Budgets for the Public Works Department (PWD) and the Transportation Department (BTD).

•2 p.m. The focus of this hearing is the FY21 Budgets for the Library Department (BPL) and Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF). This hearing will also cover the BCYF revolving fund.

•4 p.m. The focus of this hearing is the FY21 Budget for Youth Engagement & Employment (YEE).

**From the May 7 Public Tree Removal Virtual hearing, 10 a.m.,**

The request is for the removal of three little leaf linden trees measuring 2 to 4 inches dbh (diameter at breast height) and one white oak tree measuring 6 inches dbh on Avenue Louis Pasteur near the intersection of The Fenway due to a green infrastructure pilot program being undertaken by MASCO to restore the historic tree canopy along the avenue.

### •HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM PROPERTY

Since taking office in 2014, Mayor Walsh has made fixing quality of life issues a priority in his administration. From investing in Public Works to making sure community policing is a staple in every neighborhood, we are making sure every neighborhood is clean, safe and a great place to live and work in. Unfortunately some properties in Boston need more help than others, and that's why we are here. If you know of a property that fits one of the following criteria: multiple calls to 911, one that's blighted or just a general concern, we encourage you to reach out to your neighborhood liaison.





# COMING SOON!

**73 MOUNT VERNON STREET #1**  
**3 BEDS | 3.5 BATHS | 3,082 SQFT**  
**\$4,295,000**



**33 BEAVER PLACE**  
**4 BEDS | 4.5 BATHS | 4,664 SQFT**  
**\$8,490,000**



**17 LOUISBURG SQUARE**  
**5 BEDS | 3F 2H BATHS | 7,610 SQFT**  
**\$18,500,000**



**390 COMMONWEALTH AVE #408/409**  
**4 BEDS | 3 BATHS | 2,200 SQFT**  
**\$2,490,000**



**144 BEACON STREET #8**  
**4 BEDS | 3.5 BATHS | 3,970 SQFT**  
**\$7,100,000**

