COVID -19 UPDATE #2

April 20-24, 2020

**Office of the City Manager**

Amidst this global pandemic, the nation is navigating a new normal:

* A Remote Workforce
* Disseminating Required Changes to Operating Procedures
* Need for Timely, Dynamic Communication Options, to Facilitate Understanding of New Procedures

Covid-19 presents an increase in organizational risk at a time when local governments are increasingly called upon to shepherd a panicked public through this terrible storm. And, until a vaccine is available (at least 12 - 18 months away), it is highly likely the nation will go through several waves of quarantine. As a result, municipalities including South Miami are taking prudent decisions to ensure protection of its employees.

The Director of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is risking his job in an effort to put the nation on notice that a much tougher time lays ahead when COVID- 19 is still an active threat and the flu season coincide during the fall through winter periods. He has made such statements recently as quoted in the Washington Post to the dismay and protests of the President. Regarding the probability of a resurgence of the virus, please see the information gleaned from the CDC website regarding the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic attached to the end of this report.

The City has actively been trying to leverage federal dollars to assist the City and others like it with the extraordinary expenses of responding to the pandemic disease. Although South Miami is not fairing as poorly as others, due to the dramatic reduction in certain revenues and the ongoing cost of protecting our employees and continuing to provide public safety and sanitation during this period of unknown length, we still are incurring expenses that should be addressed by federal allocation much like exists for hurricane disasters.

I have written a letter to the Miami Dade County Deputy Mayor who is handling this issue, instructed our excellent federal lobbyist Omar Franko with Becker to work on it directly with Cong. Shalala and the entire Congress and we have discussed it with other local and state leaders.

Senate Majority Leader McConnel has stated in essence that he believes that no federal money should be allocated to State and local governments and he intends to make sure that the Senate does not approve any legislation that would provide such funding.

In addition to the showing of gratitude that staff, the Mayor and some Commissioners made to South Miami Hospital (SMH) health workers, we have facilitated a Farm Share feeding program, created a showing of gratitude for the health care workers at Larkin Hospital and are coordinating with SMH’s Children’s Clinic and Dr Tina Scott to provide some 200 meals for her clients with the help of Wayne Brackin and the Coral Gables Women’s Club. We anticipate doing another show of gratitude at SMH focusing on another shift of health care workers in early May as the first one was apparently very much appreciated by the hospital staff.

Generally speaking, crime is down although still present. The shelter in place effort has resulted in less traffic and calls related to criminal activity but calls for service, such as, please check on so and so at a particular address, have risen.

Our police continue to patrol with high visibility to demonstrate to the extent possible the very solid presence of law enforcement.

Staff is preparing a short agenda for City Commission action at its regularly scheduled date and time on May 5. This will be a Zoom format meeting. Additionally, staff is preparing items for a special Planning Board meeting to be held on May 4.

We are in the process of stocking up on personal protective equipment (PPE) so we will not have to scramble to get it when the next wave of this pandemic strikes. These supplies do not cost that much relative to the potential protection to our staff and community and it is only prudent to purchase them in advance to be ready to serve appropriately.

We expect Mayor Gimenez to open up certain recreational opportunities but not beaches as soon as this Friday. If that occurs we will partially and carefully open some of our parks and inform you when we do.

1918 SPANISH FLU DATA FROM THE CDC

The 1918 influenza pandemic was the most severe pandemic in recent history. It was caused by an H1N1 virus with genes of avian origin. Although there is not universal consensus regarding where the virus originated, it spread worldwide during 1918-1919. In the United States, it was first identified in military personnel in spring 1918.

It is estimated that about **500 million people or one-third of the world’s population became infected with this virus**. The number of deaths was estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide with about **675,000 deaths occurring in the United States**. Mortality was high in people younger than 5 years old, 20-40 years old, and 65 years and older. The high mortality in healthy people, including those in the 20-40 year age group, was a unique feature of this pandemic.

There were 3 different waves of illness during the pandemic, starting in March 1918 and subsiding by summer of  1919. The pandemic peaked in the U.S. during the second wave, in the fall of 1918. This highly fatal second wave was responsible for most of the U.S. deaths attributed to the pandemic.



**More people died during the 1918 pandemic than the total number of military and civilian deaths that resulted from World War I.**

A third wave of illness occurred during the winter and spring of 1919, adding to the pandemic death toll. The third wave of the pandemic subsided during the summer of 1919.

**An estimated 1/3 of the world’s population was infected with the 1918 flu virus – resulting in at least 50 million deaths worldwide.**