

Kane County COVID Task Force Call Updates

September 3, 2020

In attendance:

Alan Alldredge, Kane County Emergency Services
Tracy Glover, Kane County Sheriff
Rob VanDyke, Kane County Attorney
Lamont Smith, Kane County Commissioner
Andy Gant, Kane County Commissioner
Brent Chamberlain, Kane County Commissioner
Rhonda Gant, Kane County HR Director
Camille Johnson Taylor, Kane County Tourism Director
Dave Owens, Kane County IT Director
Mark Fisher, Kane County Water Conservancy District
Dr. David Blodgett, Southwest Regional Health Department Director
Christa Werlinger, Delaney Mattheson and Shana Chavez, SW Health Dept, Kane County
Britt Baer, Kane County Hospital
Whit Bunting, BLM Kanab Field Office
Jessie Staples, Alton representative
Kasey Ramsay, Workforce Services
Megan Ramsay, Kane County Dispatch
Tom Cram, Kanab City Police
Scott Alvord, Utah Division of Emergency Management
Pat Guerrero, Kanab Area Chamber of Commerce and Best Friends

Dr. Blodgett reported that Kane County has a couple of new cases but is doing very well and went nearly a month with no new cases. There have been no cases attributed to large outdoor events in the Southwest region.

Hospitalizations are down dramatically and fatality/mortality has dropped with the improved therapeutics. 93-94% that die have underlying medical conditions and age (or both) that contribute to death. Dr. Blodgett is advocating a shift from a broad-based approach to one that focuses on the vulnerable population.

School openings are going well. So far, no spread of COVID in the schools. There have been 12 cases of students or faculty but they contracted it elsewhere.

A vaccine is expected to be available by mid-November. There will be smaller amounts available initially and more will come in over time. There are six manufacturers working on the vaccine and as soon as one is approved after testing, it will be available. The vaccine will likely be a two-shot series and will provide lasting immunity.

The flu vaccination event, "Kane County Shootout," will be a rehearsal of how they will handle the COVID vaccine. It will be held in the Kanab Fire Station and allow a drive through or walk-up option. They are asking everyone to get the flu vaccine this year so that we can reduce the flu cases and not deal with **both** COVID and the flu in our hospitals and communities.

Rob Vandyke reported that he's working with the school on updating their operational plan and Dr. Blodgett agreed to work with Rob on that.

Commissioner Chamberlain remarked that while there was concern with potential spread of COVID at the Western Legends event held in mid-August that there were no cases attributed to

that. Dr. Blodgett confirmed that and mentioned that most cases are from extended close contact with families and with co-workers.

Britt Baer with Kane County Hospital noted that there is a difference in the numbers on the SW Regional Health Department's page versus their case count, since they also count the cases from Fredonia and Moccasin which are out of state. The hospital count is at 81 cases. She also reported that they haven't had a severe case now for several weeks. She said the hospital is getting back to normal somewhat and now they have time to catch up on education requirements.

Sheriff Glover reported that they are now doing bookings again. They expect a busy Labor Day weekend especially on Cedar Mountain and at Lake Powell.

Whit Bunting with the BLM said their main office is now open M-F, 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. All Grand Staircase Visitor Centers in Kanab, Big Water, Escalante and Cannonville are open Thursday-Monday 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. He confirmed that there are a lot of backcountry campers currently.

Christa and Shana with the local health department reported more on the Kane County Shootout flu vaccine event. It will be Saturday, October 10th 9a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Kanab City Fire Station. They will be scheduling other shootouts throughout Kane County either late September or early October but they won't be able to schedule until the rest of the vaccines arrive.

Camille Johnson Taylor with the Tourism Office reported that they were happy that their events have gone well and that there hasn't been COVID cases as a result of the large outdoor events. She reported that the Last Ditch RMPRA Rodeo will be held September 25-26. They expect strong attendance as this is the last rodeo for participants to qualify for nationals.

Pat Guerrero with the Chamber of Commerce and Best Friends reported that on their virtual Chamber meeting to be held later in the day in conjunction with the St. George Chamber. They have a session on PPE loans that can be forgiven. She reported that as of August 1st Best Friends was open to visitors and volunteers from all areas. There are no further geographic restrictions.

Kasey Ramsay with Workforce Services reported that things continue to move online including workshops and virtual meetings with employment counselors.

Megan Ramsay with dispatch said that they were gearing up for Labor Day weekend as they expect it to be super busy.

Mark Fisher with Kane County Water Conservancy District said no problem with the water- water is still flowing. Reservoir is down but they can still go lower if needed. He mentioned it's hard to balance use without knowing what will come in.

Scott with Utah Division of Emergency Management said they are moving ahead at the state level- no face to face training. Grants still moving forward. They are due Oct 2nd. They are determining if local emergency managers will work with school districts to distribute PPE.

Alan concluded the meeting. The next COVID Task Force call will be held on September 17th.