Peter Elwell

From: Peter Elwell
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 9:50 AM
To: Jan Anderson
Subject: COVID-19 Rumor Control

Importance: High

Good Morning Local News Media:
I am sharing the email below with you in the hope that you can help us keep the public accurately informed about the status of COVID-19 in Brattleboro.
Thanks,
Peter Elwell
Town Manager
Town of Brattleboro

From: Peter Elwell
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 9:40 AM
To: Brandie Starr <bstarr@brattleboro.org>; Tim Wessel <twessel@brattleboro.org>; 'dschoales@brattleboro.org' <dschoales@brattleboro.org>; Elizabeth McLoughlin <emcloughlin@brattleboro.org>; Daniel Quipp <dquipp@brattleboro.org>; Ian Goodnow <iangoodnow@gmail.com>
Cc: Jan Anderson <tmsecretary@brattleboro.org>; Patrick Moreland <pmoreland@brattleboro.org>; Michael Bucossi <mbucossi@brattleboro.org>; Leonard Howard <lhoward@brattleboro.org>; Steve Barrett <sbarrett@brattleboro.org>; Daniel Tyler <dtyler@brattleboro.org>; Fitzgerald, Michael <Michael.Fitzgerald@vermont.gov>; mark.carignan@vermont.gov; Sue Fillion <sfillion@brattleboro.org>; Stephen Dotson <sdotson@brattleboro.org>; Carol Lolatte <clolatte@brattleboro.org>; 'Starr LaTronica' <slatronica@brattleboro.org>; Jenepher Burnell <jburnell@brattleboro.org>; Hilary Francis <hfrancis@brattleboro.org>; Sally Nix <snix@brattleboro.org>; Laurie Garland <lgarland@melansonheath.com>
Subject: COVID-19 Rumor Control
Importance: High

Good Morning –
I have been advised this morning that some rumors of significant COVID-19 impacts are circulating in Brattleboro. Examples include "hospital staff have been instructed not to report to work" and "police officers are wearing masks whenever they are in public." **These rumors are not true.** Please continue to monitor the situation on the Vermont Health Department's website at https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus. Please also continue to encourage members of the public to use that Health Department site as their source of reliable information about COVID-19 in Vermont. The link to that site remains posted in the "News" section on the right side of the Town's homepage. The Health Department is updating the site at least daily and some days it is updated multiple times.
We have progressed in Brattleboro from a "planning and early preparations" mode to a "preparing for possible impacts" mode. There is an information and training session this evening at the Central Fire Station for all area fire departments, police departments, ambulance organizations, other first responders, school officials, Selectboard members, and other town officials. Active response plans and continuity of operations plans are in place, and we are considering contingencies for the possibility that more extreme measures might become necessary. But to reiterate: **We are in a state of heightened awareness and preparation to take emergency response action(s)**. **We are not at this time in active response mode**. Individually, the best action we can take is to

continue to be vigilant about hand washing, sneeze and cough covering, surface cleaning, staying away from sick individuals (if possible), and staying home if we ourselves feel sick.
The State of Vermont is activating its Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to coordinate continued communication of accurate information statewide and to be ready as more significant response actions become necessary in some areas. In the State's announcement this morning of standing up the SEOC, Governor Scott was quoted as saying, "**While COVID-19 is not widespread in Vermont and the risk to the general population remains low,** we can slow its spread by following the Health Department's guidance. With an increasing number of Vermonters being monitored, the first positive test [in Bennington], and the likelihood that there will be more cases, ensuring enhanced coordination and information sharing is critical. This step positions the State to scale its response as COVID-19 becomes more prevalent at the community level."
-Peter