

Meghan Kinsey
One Griffin Court
NBPT

Councillors,

As I stated in an email I sent to each of you today, I truly appreciate you and the time you are putting into this. Your job is not easy, I know!! SO THANK YOU!

It is my hope that you took the time to review the two interviews I sent to you today. Both were interviews with Dr. Paul Offit who is a widely-published pediatrician specializing in infectious diseases and an expert on vaccines, immunology, and virology. He is the co-inventor of a rotavirus vaccine that has been credited with saving hundreds of lives every day. Dr. Offit has been a member of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

What I appreciate most about Dr. Offit's perspective in both interviews, the most recent being last week, is his non-alarmist nature. As I said in my email to you this morning, I feel it is of the utmost importance that each and every one of you ensures that you are seeking out and reading expert opinions that may fly in the face of your current opinion. **It is only then that you have truly done your due diligence.**

In hopes that you listened to the interviews with Dr. Offit, I ask you this: Is this potential ordinance what Dr. Offit is talking about when he discusses unintended consequences and the Precautionary Principle? Are we exercising caution to avoid harm?

While I understand and agree with the need for social distancing, I believe that the ordinance before council could create more harm than good as is cautioned by the Precautionary Principle.

- City representatives being in harm's way again and again as they cross a 6 foot threshold to ask for ID and produce a ticket.
- Police being taken away from real emergencies to back up the ticketing and fining of a small group of adults who were doing their best to get out of their homes and breathe again.
- Residents who are out of work yet may be getting steep fines for underestimating the distance between them and a friend.

Could we be better served with a resolution by council as opposed to an ordinance? Additionally, perhaps a request by Mayor Holaday to Marshall Murray and the NBPT Police Dept. to utilize a bullhorn to disperse groups that may have underestimated their social distancing?

The pitting of neighbor vs. neighbor is already happening. Now add to that the multitude of 911 calls going into dispatch to ask police to break up a group of unlawful walkers.

I do believe the vast majority of Newburyporters are doing their best in what is an extremely difficult and unprecedented time in our society. Please don't add fuel to the fire.

Thank you and stay well,
Meghan Kinsey

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Subject: [Ext]Social Distancing

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Dear City Councilors,

I want to thank you for taking the health and safety of human beings all over the world seriously. We have been given guidance to maintain social distancing and to stay indoors in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Unfortunately, I have seen these suggestions being blatantly ignored (particularly on Plum Island). We are being asked by medical experts all over the world to maintain social distancing in order to save lives and prevent the spread of Covid-19, however people can not seem to take these suggestions seriously. The thoughts of their grandma on a respirator (like my Grandma is as we speak), of businesses going bankrupt by remaining closed to ensure social distancing, and doctors losing their lives is not enough for people to take the small sacrifice of maintaining a 6 foot distance from themselves and others when in public seriously. We need an ordinance to enforce this. The whole point of laws is to protect others from potentially reckless behavior. This is the reason we have speed limits, jay walking fines, and penalties for ignoring stop signs. Unfortunately many people will not follow laws without a strict penalty being enforced. I would support the penalties being much harsher, however I understand that many have not been directly effected by this virus. The faster people start following guidelines by medical experts, the faster we can restart the economy and protect our loved ones. Thank you for pushing this ordinance for the safety and protection of all

Thanks,
Brian Belts

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Subject: meeting

Byron,

Here are some of my thoughts that you can share at the meeting tonight.

I have worked as a nurse practitioner for the past 15 years, 12 of which have been in Newburyport. As a safety measure, the practice where I am employed has recently transitioned our office visits to consist of mostly telemedicine visits. I am triaging several patients a day who display symptoms of COVID19. Our practice, like many in Massachusetts, are conserving testing for patients who meet specific criteria. Instead, we are asking patients to self treat at home and quarantine themselves. One could easily come to the conclusion that the number of actual

COVID cases in our county is grossly underreported. Most of these patients had been in self-imposed quarantine before they spoke to me, but others had been proceeding with business as usual. This is deeply concerning.

COVID19 is forcing us to prioritize the wellbeing of the collective versus the rights of the individual. If we continue allowing residents to continue socializing, we can rest assured that social distancing measures will continue to be extended and the death toll in our city will continue to rise.

Warmly,
Nikoletta Tarkan, NP

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To: byron@byronlanenbpt.com
Subject: COVID-19 Newburyport

I'm a travel nurse from Newburyport, currently working on a designated COVID-19 unit down in Florida. While it hasn't become a "hot spot" (yet), I can definitely say i'm seeing what this horrible, ruthless virus is doing to people. I also follow plenty of private nursing groups on facebook with nurses from all around the country and world, including New York (the main hot spot at this time), and let me tell you, I AM SCARED. and you should be too.

With that in mind, seeing the people who are not taking this virus and quarantine seriously INFURIATES me. I wish HIPPAA wasn't a thing right now so that healthcare workers could show the country what is happening inside the walls of these overworked hospitals. People are dying alone because visitors are restricted. Even where I am, we're only allowed to enter the patient's room a certain number of times per shift. We can't go in just to chat with them and do little things like comfort them throughout the day, while they're locked in a tiny room (sometimes with no windows) for sometimes 2 weeks, if not more.

Basically, what I am getting at, is people need to realize how scary this is so that they will take the quarantine seriously. People need to stay home. That doesn't mean play dates for your kids, hanging out at the park, etc. If you don't live with someone, you shouldn't be seeing them unless it's through a computer screen. Whether it's your parents, cousins, siblings, coworkers, friends, it doesn't matter. This virus has a 14 day incubation period. You may have this virus and not know for up to 2 weeks. Now imagine how many people you've had contact with and how many things you've touched in those 2 weeks. Yes, touched. Coronavirus lives on certain surfaces for days. A mandatory lockdown is 100% necessary to contain the virus and stop the spread. I want to see people being arrested for being out in public. I want cars getting pulled over, asking where they are going and why, and if they don't have a legit reason, they need to be getting in trouble for this. Yes, the parks and beaches are closed, but how much is this being enforced? They need officers posted everywhere in order to mandate this quarantine.

I see people arguing about a lockdown, saying the government cannot control them like this. The government is not doing this to control you, they are doing this to protect you and the ones you love. There are people saying they don't need the government telling them this, that they'll do it on their own. That is great! I wish everyone would do it on their own. But unfortunately, that is

not the case and that is why this needs to be more strict. There are still people who think they won't get sick. Maybe you won't, i pray you don't. But you could. And that is what we need to prevent. If you aren't going to think about your own health, at least think about the people who are less fortunate, the immunocompromised, the elderly, the neighbor you have with diabetes, or cancer, or asthma, etc.

The quicker we shut down and take this as serious as it is, the sooner it will be over and we can return to our everyday lives, hopefully without too many loved ones lost.

Newburyport is and always will be the place I call home. I want to do everything i can to protect its citizens, and I hope this message helps the city see how important it is to tighten the laws around this quarantine.

Let's come together as a city, as a family, and protect each other by following the guidelines and **STAYING HOME**.

It's scary, but it won't be forever.

Thank you and please, please **STAY SAFE**.

Eliza MacDiarmid

Subject: [Ext]Proposed Ordinance 056

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Dear City Council Members:

I'm writing to express my opinion on the proposed ordinance 056 that was first discussed on April 6th and which will be further reviewed by councillors tonight, April 8th, with amendments as agreed upon. I do NOT support this proposed ordinance, and I encourage you, our elected representatives, to please carefully consider what voting in favor of this measure will mean.

None of the sidewalks in my neighborhood (Bromfield St.) are 6 ft wide. That's ok... my experience has been that just about everyone outside lately is willing to cross a street when they can to avoid passing close-by... but there are times when they can't. When two people are walking on a sidewalk with a busy street next to them, which one is required by your new law to step off the sidewalk and *into traffic* to avoid the other pedestrian? Or should they both get tickets? If I'm out walking/running/biking with a family member, do I need to be able to prove to law enforcement that we reside together? What if I don't have a proof of address on-hand? And how are our police officers supposed to enforce this new law on top of their already onerous responsibilities?

This proposed ordinance, while perhaps coming from a place of concern, takes the law and your roles as part of our local government way too far. We, as citizens, are still afforded the right of free movement. Instating a punitive ordinance that infringes on that right would be a big mistake, both legally as well as for local morale, community-spirit, and individual well-being. Better to stay the course with your very helpful and repeated communications to the public about the importance of physical distancing. People ARE responding. If there have been intentional and egregious violations of the physical distancing and park closures, then having a police presence

or conversation would probably have more affect than fines and punitive, martial-law-type fear and posturing.

Our current situation is unprecedented, dire, and difficult. There have been serious and reasonable steps taken by every level of government, as well as by individuals and businesses, to help manage the spread of COVID-19. Those measures have largely been adhered to, and they're making a difference... albeit slowly. The new ordinance you're considering will not work in furthering those efforts. It WILL, however, hurt many residents by essentially making it impossible for us to leave our homes for fresh air and exercise without fear of punishment. The benefits (if any) do not justify the means. Please vote No.

Thank you for considering my point of view, and for your continued service to our community.

Elena J. Russo
22 Bromfield St.

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Subject: [Ext]social distancing

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Hello everyone,

I'm writing to share my scary experience with someone who vociferously opposed social distancing. About two weeks ago, I went very cautiously into the US Post Office. I have a serious health condition, and I wasn't about to risk entering a crowded space. What a relief to see that the people in line were staying six feet apart! Then a group of three came in and the man joined the line close behind me. I turned and asked if he would please maintain the six foot space. I don't remember his words, just the shouting. I asked if he could indulge an old lady who has some health issues. More screaming from him about where he was supposed to go. My last attempt to communicate was to ask him to just maintain the distance. After more ear shattering yelling, he left the line.

The room was silent. The teller was very solicitous when my turn came. I'm lucky the man wan't contagious.

Maybe this account will help your deliberations. As a member of the ACLU, I am committed to civil liberties. I hope we can find a balance between liberty and life.

Until this incident, I felt safe because of the laudable timely precautions the city of Newburyport adopted. Thank you for your work to protect the citizens.

Elizabeth Valeriani

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Subject: [Ext]Tonight's meeting

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Dear City Council,

I would like to share my opinion regarding the vote you are taking tonight regarding charging/fining people for violating physical distance rules, among other things. I feel that the proposal is a violation of civil rights. I have a few questions for the Council regarding this matter.

Is your opinion about this vote based on fear, or a real concern that we have a public health non compliance issue in the city at large that needs to be addressed? Yes, I heard this was some kind of tailgate gathering, but have there been chronic and widespread violations of recommendations? I think its so incredibly important to pause and look at this.

If the police are going to stop people to question them in order for people to justify their being together, how can we as citizens be reassured that they will not come closer than 6 feet to us? Will they throw down a tape measure? Are we supposed to trust them that they can eyeball it perfectly because they are the police? Do I have any legal recourse against the police if I feel they come too close to me?

Will people be made to show identification to prove they are related? Proof of address to show they actually live under them same roof?

Has anyone walked the rail trail and assessed its appropriateness to be accessed while maintaining physical distancing? Does it make sense to leave that public path open and send the police around to fine people for being on it when there is no way to stay an appropriate physical distance from others there?

How much peer reviewed research are you reading on this topic to TRULY understand this virus and treatment options? Is your information and understanding coming from science, or individuals and social media?

I would like to share an experience my children and I had yesterday.

We live in the South end and my girls and I took one of our dogs on a walk. We walked in the middle of the street to avoid other pedestrians. Two MEN IN MASKS started speaking very loudly first to themselves and then to me AND MY CHILDREN about how they looked like friends and friends should not be seeing each other, how my children should be at home and how it was inappropriate for us to be out without masks on and it was inappropriate for my dog to be outside. My children were TERRIFIED and kept insisting that we go home. As a governing body, do you want to empower and embolden people like this? My children no longer feel safe being outside without me and I no longer feel safe having them walk anywhere by themselves. Children and adults are already traumatized. How much collateral damage is justifiable in the name of public safety?

Back in the fall, the Council caved to peer pressure from a small, very aggressive group of people insisting there should be a revote on allowing retail marajauna shops in town. Those people lied and violated campaign finance laws to ensure their agenda would be completed. The Council invalidated a previous vote tand went against state law allowing this special interest group to achieve their agenda. Not even 6 months later, here we are again, in this gray area

where City Government is deciding what is best for citizens instead of letting us decide for ourselves. Yes, sometimes our choices negatively effect other people. Thats part of life.

I am a pediatric registered nurse with 2 colleges degrees and over 25 years experience. I also have a child with a serious chronic illness who is immune suppressed. I have not gone inside a public place without a mask or gloves for over a month. I do not need my neighbors or my City's assistance in helping to keep my family safe. A few people are always going to break the rules. There will never be 100% compliance with anything. When this pandemic is over, will you look back and feel like the decisions you made as a governing body represented the people and their rights or did you fall pray to fear mongering?

Be well,
Valerie Natoli RN
19 Otis Place

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Hi Rich,

If you could be so kind as to read this into the public record that would be great:

I am opposed to ordinance DNC056-04-06-2020. This just goes through each piece of the ordinance.

1) For the City Council to feel the need to have an ordnance outlawing gatherings of 10 or more people is unnecessary and an overstep.

2) This is a useless ordinance because no event would happen anyway.

3) I think caution tape around playground structures like at the Mall is a good idea. Do that to all structures you don't want people crawling on (the train on the railtrail comes to mind, as an example). However, to prevent individuals or families from using a basketball hoop, tennis court, a giant field or an empty lacrosse net isn't logical. You can allow people to walk on a sidewalk, the railtrail, change the ruling to allow people to walk on the track, but not allow a kid or siblings to use a basektball court? This doesn't make an sense and is wrong in my opinion. If people follow the 10 person rule and practice social distancing they should be allowed to use these facilities.

4/5) This whole defining, policing and fining people for being caught within 6' is too much. First, as with the 10 person rule, our governor and the CDC have set these guidelines and social distancing is now and forever a part of our social lexicon. People know to stay 6' away from each other, and most people I've ever passed are trying to stay that far apart. If they don't it's not by design but by circumstance....how on Earth can you enforce that? Having city employees and police out on the hunt to catch people who accidentally enter a 6' barrier is fruitless. What we should do is get the cops on the road and on their bikes to show their presence and be a deterrent, but NOT be on a mission to fine people who are breaking the rules.

We are doing a very good job of social distancing in this town as is evident in our relatively low Covid-19 cases. So unless and until the governor puts us in lockdown, we are permitted to be

outside walking and exercising. It's not your job to make us feel like idiots or criminals in case we slip up. Rather what the City Council should be focusing on is making sure stores that are still allowed to operate are protecting their staff and patrons. My experience at a local hardware store recently was very disturbing due of the lack of protections they had in place.

Thank you,
Pat Fuller
24 Eagle St.

Subject: Social distancing

Hi Byron,

Here a a few thoughts.

This virus has hit all parts of the world like a wave. It seems to start slow, but then rises exponentially in a few days only and overwhelms the medical system in less than a week. Initially it was felt that one person infects about 3 others and the goal was to bring this down to 1 - a ratio similar to the flu . But I just read that in hot spot areas this ratio can be as high as 5-6. What we have learned from other countries is that extreme social distancing is the only public health measure to reduce this ratio. There were pockets even in northern Italy where certain communities saw only low amounts of cases. Our local resources are very limited. AJH draws from all the surrounding communities, I believe there are way more than 100,000 residents in this circle. The most important piece in all this is to try to not have the medical resources at hand being overrun. The hospital is qualified to deal with a steady amount of patients. But unlike other situations, the extremely sick patients might not be able to be transferred into Boston and will require a lot of attention. But once we are reaching a tipping point, we could see situations similar to what we have seen on TV elsewhere. And unfortunately I still observe a way to casual approach when it comes to staying home, people going to stores in groups and also too often, people assembling in larger groups etc.

I endorse any efforts by the city and just as well by any surrounding communities to be way more aggressive on a local level to keep the distance and avoid any unnecessary exposure.

Kay A Ficht, MD
