

Cheltenham Chamber of Citizens

A 501(c) (3) Nonprofit

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Annual Meeting Minutes: January 31, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

- I. Welcome and Introduction of Board Members** – Olga McHugh, President., *Olga welcomed members and participants. There were a total of 29 participants on the Zoom meeting, and 43 who attended via a live Facebook feed.*
- II. Secretary Report** – Gail Post – *Motion to accept Minutes from January 26, 2020 annual meeting, which were posted on the CCC website – 1st - Emily Stine, 2nd – Susanne Whitehead, approved.*
- III. Treasurer Report** – Poppy Bass – *The financial report was posted on the website There is a balance of \$1505.92. 1st - Judi Gratz, 2nd – Edie Cerebi, approved.*
- IV. Web Administrator Report** – Edie Cerebi – *Information was posted on the website. There were 68 emails sent in 2020 to 408 email addresses, with a 34% open rate. The website is maintained at OneCheltenham.org. 1st - Emily Stine, 2nd – Poppy Bass, approved.*
- V. President’s Report**
 - a. Board Reorganization Meeting: Sunday February 14, 2021 at 7pm, via zoom. Thanks to Brooke, Edie and Liza for coordinating this meeting through Zoom. Thanks to Poppy for inviting Dr. Kasbekar, and to Edie for inviting Napoleon Nelson to join us.*
 - b. 2021 Monthly Board Meetings: Regular meetings will be held the 2nd Sunday of the month at 7:00PM, unless Board members agree that a change must be made. Meetings will be via zoom until it is safe for in-person meetings. Dates: February 14, March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13, July 11, August 8, September 12, October 10, November 14, and December 12. Members are welcome to join the Board reorganization meeting on Feb. 14. Contact Olga.mchugh@gmail.com.*
- VI. 2020 Civic Engagement**
 - a. During this pandemic, we have strived to inform our Neighbors via Email and Facebook about township events and concerns. While we cannot attend Township meetings in person, Board members have been attending Township Zoom meetings to keep up with our local government. We all look forward to a more normal daily life.*
 - b. We have made a donation to Cheltenham Police Athletic League (PAL).*
- VII. Presentation of Board Members for 2021 and Nominations from floor**
 - a. Slate will be read and nominations from the “floor” will be taken. The slate of board members includes the following: Poppy Bass, Edie Cerebi, Judith Gratz, Olga McHugh, Liza Meiris, Jeff Olawski, Gail Post, Emily Steinberg, Emily Stine, Brooke Welsh, Susanne Whitehead. 1st- Emily Steinberg, Jeff Olawski, approved.*
- VIII. Election of Board Members**
 - a. Voice vote - approved*
- IX. Old Business**
 - a. We will entertain questions, but, wish to keep this very short due to our guest speakers. No questions from the floor.*
- X. New Business & Announcements**
 - a. We will accept comments from attendees, again hoping to keep this time short due to our guests. No comments from the floor.*
- XI. Adjournment** – 1st – Judi Gratz, 2nd – Emily Steinberg, approved.

Guest Speakers

Nishaminy Kasbekar, BS, PharmD, FASHP

Topic: The Covid-19 Vaccine

Dr. Kasbekar is the Chief Pharmacy Officer for the Penn Presbyterian Medical Center in Philadelphia. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Pharmacy and her Doctor of Pharmacy Degree from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. She then completed an ASHP residency in Pharmacy Practice and a Specialty Residency in Infectious Diseases at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Dr. Kasbekar described the serious effects of COVID-19, along with the problem of staff burn-out, and the enormous public health effort required to provide vaccines to the public. She discussed the following:

- 1. Statistics associated with COVID-19 - 26.3 million people have been affected, with a 1.7% death rate, which is disproportionate in its effect on certain subgroups in the population. At this point, 11.2 million people have recovered. New variants are not causing more mortality, and the new vaccines work against these variants*
- 2. How the COVID-19 vaccine works - Vaccines imitate infection by causing a weak or dead form of the virus to increase the body's immune response to the virus. There are four different types of vaccines available - or will be available soon - and utilize the new mRNA technology. This form of vaccine has been researched for three decades. – the vaccine is injected intra-muscularly, and creates a spike protein similar to COVID-19, and then antibodies to it are developed. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are not FDA approved yet, as the FDA requires at least 30,000 participants in a trial. However, recent trials have demonstrated a 95% efficacy rate. It is unclear how long the vaccine will provide immunity, and it may be similar to flu shots, which are needed yearly for protection.*
- 3. Distribution: The Pfizer vaccine requires subzero freezer storage, and the two injections are administered 21 days apart; the Moderna vaccine requires a regular freezer, and doses need to be 28 days apart. There have been three phases of distribution proposed, with the first phase targeting health care workers and residents in long-term care facilities. The inclusion criteria in each phase keeps changing, and is different in various locations. There typically are mild side effects after injection, and 75% of people have mild systemic effects after the second dose. No deaths related to the vaccine have been reported. There are some precautions and concerns regarding some populations who may not be able to receive the vaccine, including the immunosuppressed, and those who are pregnant or lactating. If someone is positive for COVID-19, they need to wait 14 days after symptoms remit.*
- 4. Dr. Kasbekar discussed widespread myths that contribute to vaccine hesitancy, and took questions from the floor. Some responses to questions include the following: The upcoming Johnson & Johnson vaccine may have a lower efficacy rate. It is a decision between patient and health care provider to determine which vaccine to choose, as personal risk factors may play a role. There is still no clarity regarding whether Blood Type has an effect on the illness or which vaccine to use. Transplant patients need to speak with their health care provider about the vaccine. Any abnormal adverse reactions to the vaccine should be reported to the CDC. Despite mutations in the virus, the vaccine is still effective against these variants, although more research is needed. There have been some trials with children, although use with children is not yet approved, and children appear to be at much reduced risk of contracting the virus, or having severe symptoms from it.*

PA State Representative Napoleon Nelson

Topic: His initiatives in Harrisburg.

Napoleon Nelson was elected to represent the 154th Legislative District in November 2020.

A native of Philadelphia's Mt. Airy neighborhood, Napoleon moved to Cheltenham in 2003. He has been active in the community and civic leadership ever since.

State Rep. Nelson responded to questions from the floor regarding his brief tenure so far in the Pa. House, and upcoming plans.

- 1. He discussed COVID-19 vaccine distribution. Philadelphia has a separate distribution process than the rest of the state, as 17 major cities in US have been identified and distribution is managed differently. Phase 1A now allows those 65 and older. It was recommended that residents of Montgomery County who qualify should register with the county, and will be notified when they are eligible. Currently, supply of the vaccine is limited, and residents are also welcome to check with local health care facilities or pharmacies about scheduling.*
- 2. Rep. Nelson noted that he has been assigned to the following committees - child and youth, education., finance, and aging and older adults. He is particularly committed to education, tax reform, community development and ensuring that local governments receive improved support. He can be contacted at repnelson@pahouse.net, and residents may request to receive a weekly newsletter.*
- 3. He noted that Republicans in the House are focused on a few initiatives, and oppose the stay at home and shutdown orders. In 2020, the Republicans passed an amendment to restrict the Governor's ability to execute a state of emergency that would last longer than three weeks without general legislators signing on – and the House and Senate passed HB 55 in 2020, which will go to primary ballot in May. He also noted HB38, which would change the state's higher court system and result in regionalized Supreme and Superior courts. This would skew to Republican control, and will go to the primary ballot in May also.*
- 4. Rep. Nelson offered some additional comments, and responded to the following additional questions from the floor: Residents younger than 65 might not be able to register yet for the vaccine with the county. A senate bill to be voted on this week will allow survivors of sexual abuse to file suits against perpetrators within the next two years – even if the assault occurred years ago. This bill likely will pass and receive support from both parties. He supports traffic calming, and would encourage more local autonomy regarding decisions related to state roads, and would like PennDOT to have less authority. He has not committed to a stand yet on allowing local police to use radar to increase traffic calming efforts. He supports fundraising drives, and noted a recent successful drive for women's sanitary care products, and wants to start a new drive for pet food. He responded to concerns regarding incoming water from neighboring townships that results in flooding. The bill proposed initially to prevent new construction that would increase water flow is not a powerful bill and has little impact. He suggested that that concerned participant send an email regarding the details of this problem, so that he can better respond to this. In response to concerns about gerrymandering and differences across the state, he noted that he wants to get to know more about other areas, since his vote not only affects his district, but the rest of the state also. He would like to break down barriers and move toward greater understanding. He noted that he had a good impression of the Speaker of the House, and he is working on a bill to address prison reform. He encouraged residents to contact him at any time.*

Respectfully submitted by Gail Post on 2/2/21