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CITY OF AMESBURY
IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO

SPONSORED BY:

Steven J. Stanganelli
Councilor-at-Large

BILL No. 2022-012

A Resolution in Support of Extending a Temporary Mask Mandate to All Indoor Spaces to Support Ongoing Public Health and Safety Needs

Summary:

Whereas, the City of Amesbury and surrounding communities continue to face challenges resulting from COVID-19 infections; and

Whereas, COVID infections in Massachusetts have recently topped one million according to recent data provided by public health officials; and

Whereas, the two-week case count stands at 133 as of December 31, 2021 with a total of 1,759 confirmed cases per PCR tests and 46 deaths entered into the Massachusetts Department of Public Health systems since the beginning of the pandemic; and

Whereas, Dr. Glenn Focht, MD, vice president and chief medical officer at Anna Jacques Hospital (AJH) noted support for an indoor mask mandate during a recent Newburyport Board of Health meeting that AJH "is stressed and stretched to be able to continue to meet the needs of all of its patients" and "If our hospitals are overwhelmed, society shuts down ... That is what is at risk;" and

Whereas, the infection positivity rate in Amesbury has increased to 9.18% and is higher than the 7.31% infection positivity rate of Newburyport, and 7.74% infection positivity rate for the Commonwealth as of Christmas Day as reported by the COVID-19 Response Reporting page on the state's website; and

Whereas, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has issued an updated advisory encouraging the use of masks or face coverings when indoors (and not in a person's residence) regardless of vaccination status; and

Whereas, the health statistics indicate that we are in a critical period where time is of the essence; so therefore,

Be it resolved by the City Council assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows and as allowed under Amesbury City Council Rules and Procedures as adopted and revised for its twelfth session as of 2020, Addendum E, Section 3-7 – Emergency Measures (page 39)

That the City Council strongly endorses the adoption of a temporary indoor mask mandate through February 1, 2022, and that it be further extended if conditions warrant it; and

That the City Council strongly urges the Amesbury Board of Health to convene, in emergency session if necessary, and adopt an indoor mask mandate in all venues, public or private, throughout the City through February 1, 2022.

References:

Newburyport Daily News, December 30, 2021:

https://www.newburyportnews.com/coronavirus/newburyport-amesbury-announce-mask-mandates/article_951211f6-69ad-11ec-9e09-ef84a76199fb.html

MA DPH Winter Advisory as of December 21, 2021: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/updated-advisory-regarding-masks-and-face-coverings-0/download>

COVID-19 Response Reporting: Amesbury Positivity Rates: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting?fbclid=IwAR3k2t1q-mXjSCE6oUhf1ySPK0bD8BcY-Be96WCkNjN7SwjQCuAYn4XJb4>

City of Amesbury COVID-19 Data: <https://datstudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/c5cfc1b1-5270-4b85-81d2-ff63a6c3596e/page/4nKIB?s=hOJV7cld-4>