

Highlights of the April 6th, 2021 meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

Legislature Hears Presentation from Emergency Operations Center on COVID-19 Response and Vaccine Administration

Tompkins County Public Health Director Frank Kruppa and County Administrator Jason Molino presented an update on the COVID-19 pandemic and local progress vaccinating the public against the disease.

In her opening comments, Legislature Chairwoman Leslyn McBean-Clairborne reflected on over one million COVID-19 tests being administered by Cayuga Health System in Tompkins County, "We've made it a habit of excellence responding to this pandemic." She thanked Cayuga Health System, stating "This is a testament to planning and excellence of heroes and sheroes at CHS and brave community members signing up to get tested." She continued by recognizing local business, Rheonix for their work in creating machines to turn around test results in a matter of hours, and thanked the Legislature and City of Ithaca Common Council for purchasing machines for Cayuga Health System to increase access to testing and quick results.

Administrator Molino shared that as of April 6, all New Yorkers aged 16 and over are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine and that everyone should sign up for the County's registry when they are able.

Public Health Director Frank Kruppa detailed the current disease prevalence in the community, sharing that case numbers are down, and things are moving in the right direction. Kruppa outlined the vaccine administration progress to date, sharing that over 44,000 Tompkins County Residents have received at least the first dose of the vaccine – Tompkins County ranks second amongst Counties in New York on percentage of population having received at least one dose of the vaccine. Kruppa also outlined the department's vaccine administration through local clinics to-date, including vaccinations for senior living facilities, the homeless population, and other hard to reach populations including several inmates at the Tompkins County Jail.

Demographic data on County residents vaccinated to date were shared with Legislators, including age, race, and ethnicity. The data showed that older populations have received a majority of the doses available so far (aligning with eligibility guidelines to-date) and Kruppa shared that over 75% of the County's 65+ population has been vaccinated, outpacing the State's goal for that population. Regarding the pace of vaccine administration across residents of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, Kruppa stated, "We have work to do to reach our Black, Hispanic and Asian communities, this is part of the reason we're working on pop-up clinics to bring appointments closer to these communities."

A published timeline of vaccine distribution in Tompkins County can be found on the Health Department website [here](#).

A comprehensive document outlining the Tompkins County's COVID-19 response can be found [here](#). Contacts: Jason Molino, Tompkins County Administrator, 607-274-5551; Frank Kruppa, Tompkins County Public Health Director, 607-274-6674

Among Other Business

A proclamation was read acknowledging National Public Safety Telecommunicators week and recognizing the work of 9-1-1 dispatchers at the Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response. Deputy Director of the Department, Jessica Verfuss and Communications Center Manager, John Halaychik accepted the proclamation and spoke to the dedication of their staff.

Newly Elected Legislator Leslie Schill (D-Ithaca, representing [District 2](#)) was welcomed by several of her colleagues. Schill shared her excitement and thanked County Staff for her swearing-in going smoothly.

Legislator Rich John (D-Ithaca) shared that a resolution to consider the Community Justice Center in addition to the recently passed Reimagining Public Safety plans will be considered by the Public Safety Committee next week ([April 15, 3pm](#)).

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