

LunchChat

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Rebounding Rockford: Updates on Rebounding with City of Rockford's Covid-19 Work Groups

June 25, 2020

Hosted by Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Today's Partners



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**Northern Illinois Center
for Nonprofit Excellence**

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Today's LunchChat Host



John Groh

President & CEO
Rockford Area Convention
& Visitors Bureau



LunchChat Panelists



John Groh

LunchChat Facilitator
CEO, RACVB



Wester Wuori

City of Rockford
Chief of Staff



Pamela Clark Reidenbach

Rockford Rebounding
Human Services Co-Chair

LunchChat Panelists



Sarah-Eva Marchese

Rockford Rebounding
Small Business Co-Chair



Mary McNamara Bernsten

Rockford Rebounding
Arts & Culture Co-Chair



Anne Weerda

Rockford Rebounding
Tourism and Hospitality Co-Chair

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UnitedWayRRV.org/covid-19

OR

Text TOGETHER to 40403



Wester Wuori

City of Rockford- Chief of Staff

- Purpose of Rockford Region Rebounding Working Groups

Updates:

- Education & Workforce Development
- Government/Efficiency
- Healthcare
- Industry
- Public Infrastructure



Rockford Rebounding Working Groups

Establishment & Purpose



- Mayor Tom McNamara formed 10 working groups in April.
- Purpose: Help Rockford region recover from COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen the community as it begins to navigate a new reality shaped by this crisis.

Rockford Rebounding Working Groups



Purpose Continued

- Work in context of Mayor's long-stated priorities of keeping the public safe, strengthening our neighborhoods and growing our economy.
- Expect groups to ask tough questions, think outside of normal boundaries, challenge conventional wisdom and think exponentially.
- Could future generations be better off by actions taken now?

Rockford Rebounding Working Groups



Thought Leaders & Real-time solutions

- Diverse group of more than 130 local experts and thought-leaders.
- Groups to develop and share information in real-time.
- Groups formed and began meeting in April.
- Groups will work for no more than 90-120 days.

Working Group Purpose & Updates

Arts & Culture and City of Rockford Budget



- **Arts & Culture** – Our city must continue to build a climate where arts and culture help foster creativity and personal growth.
- **City of Rockford Budget** – We must continue the work of strengthening the City's finances, recognizing that a strong financial position is vital to providing key programs, services and infrastructure.
 - Reviewing all prior recommendations from Finance Task Force in 2017/18
 - Reviewing 67 new recommendations from the committee and COR employees
 - Reviewing each department staffing and service—some legally required, which are offset by revenue

Working Group Purpose & Updates

Education & Workforce Development



- **Education & Workforce Development** – It's vital to our economic recovery that we improve our educational and workforce development assets, giving residents a wide range of opportunities, whether they are continuing their education and training or entering the workforce for the first time.
 - Fund it: Create a clearinghouse of ways to make training and college affordable for our residents.
 - Rockford Promise and similar programs.
 - Map it: Create career pathways for residents and match up with employer need.
 - Create a list of personas of community residents and design those pathways.
 - List demand for employers and future economic needs.

Working Group Purpose & Updates

Government Efficiency



- **Government / Efficiency** – We must join with other government entities to consider opportunities to combine services and seek real efficiencies to provide better value to taxpayers at lower cost.
 - 5 units of local government represented to date (COR, WinnCo, RPS, Harlem, RPD)
 - Exploring opportunities for shared services, joint purchasing and other collaboration
 - Look at past studies and national best practices

Working Group Purpose & Updates

Health Care & Human Services



- **Health Care** - Our health care organizations must work more effectively to strengthen the general health and wellness of our residents and make healthy living a part of our community DNA.
 - Make Rockford a healthier city through vaccinations, access to medical services, and education on health and healthy lifestyles
 - Partner with the WCHD on flu vaccination clinics, to use as a platform for COVID-19 vaccinations when available.
- **Human Services** – Our non-profit and social service organizations must align their work for maximum impact and efficiency, eliminating duplication and positioning themselves better for future downturns.
 - ***Faith Community Sub-Group***

Working Group Purpose & Updates

Industry



- **Industry** - We must create a business and employment climate where our companies can play even greater roles in job creation, philanthropy and economic development.
 - All manufacturing allowed in Phase 3 and essential manufacturing did not shut down)
 - Impacted by
 - Lack of childcare
 - “Open” states recruiting employee spouses in non-essential industries
 - Slow results from free community testing of symptomatic employees
 - PPE availability
 - Orders down, but picking up.
 - Sectors like heavy trucks picking up.
 - Defense work is very strong.

Working Group Purpose & Updates

Public Infrastructure



- **Public Infrastructure** - The City of Rockford must be well-positioned to receive COVID-19-related state and federal funding to improve its infrastructure and should identify and develop shovel-ready projects to leverage dollars for maximum impact throughout the city.
 - Collaborated around inter-industry best practices related to COVID response specific to critical infrastructure workers
 - Utility operators, construction trades, engineering consultants, etc.
 - Compiled regional list of public infrastructure improvements and identified alternative funding sources by way of potential grant opportunities.
 - Working to reconstitute a legislative priority book that identifies the Region's capital project needs.
 - Include active transportation projects, bridge, roadway and public transit improvements, vertical infrastructure and water resource management.

Working Group Purpose & Updates

Small Business and Tourism & Hospitality



- **Small Business** – Entrepreneurs and small businesses are the backbone of our city and we must give them the tools to form, adapt and grow.
- **Tourism & Hospitality** - We must develop innovative approaches to strengthen the impact of tourism in Rockford, which employs hundreds of residents and generates millions of dollars in annual economic impact.
 - ***Restaurant Sub-Group***
 - ***Special Event Group***

Thank You



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**Northern Illinois Center
for Nonprofit Excellence**

Pamela Clark Reidenbach

NICNE

Rockford Rebounding
Human Services Co-Chair



Co-Chairs and Committee Members

Co-Chairs: Anqunette Parham-City of Rockford and Pam Clark Reidenbach- NICNE

Members:

Kim Adams-Bakke, Rock River Valley Pantry
Pastor Alexander, New Hope Fellowship
Laurie Anderson, Rockford Park District
Diana Chandler, Community Advocate
Joyce Higgins, Booker Washington Community Center
Virgil Hobson, 100 Strong
Ald. Karen Hoffman, City of Rockford
Mike Hughes, Lifescape

Maureen Kirschmann, Rockford Public Schools
Kay Larrick, Carpenter's Place
Paul Logli, United Way of Rock River Valley
Maureen Mostacci, Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling
Brent Pentenburg, YMCA
Luz Ramirez, YWCA
Carly, Rice, Miss Carly's Place
Shannon Scheffel, Harlem Community Center
Laura Snyder, Rockford Housing Authority
Chip Stoner, Boys & Girls Club



Mission/Purpose

Co-Chairs: Anqunette Parham-City of Rockford and Pam Clark Reidenbach- NICNE

Nonprofit and human service organizations align their work for maximum impact and efficiency, eliminating unnecessary duplication, improving collaboration, and positioning organizations for future downturns.



Goals

Co-Chairs: Anqunette Parham-City of Rockford and Pam Clark Reidenbach- NICNE

1. Determine short and long-term needs of organizations to support our most vulnerable people;
2. Ensure adequate State and Federal funds are provided to organizations and people in the Rockford area;
3. Pursue areas of collaboration and consolidation to ensure effective and efficient delivery of services and
4. Assist with plan for the re-opening following safety guidelines.



Accomplishments

Co-Chairs: Anqunette Parham-City of Rockford and Pam Clark Reidenbach- NICNE

- **Established** a dialogue among providers;
- **Identified** critical issues faced by human service providers;
- **Encouraged** collaboration;
- **Participated** in the legislative forum organized by NICNE and UWRRV;
- **Worked collaboratively** with Health Department to prepare for opening of childcare centers and summer camp programs;
- **Identified a supplier** for needed disinfectant and sanitizer;
- **Building partnerships** to address the expected influx of evictions when moratorium is lifted;
- **Collaborating** with City and Park District to bulk purchase for cost savings.

Moving Forward

Co-Chairs: Anqunette Parham-City of Rockford and Pam Clark Reidenbach- NICNE

- Continue to meet regularly to build and expand collaboration among agencies;
- Advocate as a sector on issues relevant to the group;
- Follow through with the eviction mitigation strategy and bulk purchasing opportunity; and
- Acknowledge key partners to carry work forward.





Mary McNamara Bernstein

Rockford Area Arts Council

**Rockford Rebounding
Arts & Culture Co-Chair**

ACE: Co-Chairs and Committee Members

Co-Chairs: Mary McNamara Bernsten- RAAC and Martesha Brown- RACVB

Members:

Mary McNamara Bernsten, Rockford Area Arts Council (Co-chair)

Martesha Brown, RACVB (Co-chair)

Kelly Nokes, City of Rockford

Ald. Gasparini, City of Rockford

Beth Howard, Friends of the Coronado

Carrie Johnson, Rockford Art Museum

Jodi Carroll, Consultant

Julie Thomas, Rockford Symphony

Ricardo Montoya-Picazo, Congresswoman Bustos Office

Deon Freeman, Freeman Ent.

Armando Cardenas- Coalition of Latino Leaders

Rebecca Francis- VP of the SOAR Awards

Mustafa Abdall- Community Advocate



Factors Within Our Goals

Co-Chairs: Mary McNamara Bernstein- RAAC and Martesha Brown- RACVB

- Partnership over duplication of efforts
- Seek ways to be impactful for our entire city/neighborhoods
- Ensure we welcome, celebrate diversity, and remove barriers
- Remain cognizant of the needs of our arts community as we seek to rebound



Our Goals & Status

Co-Chairs: Mary McNamara Bernstein- RAAC and Martesha Brown- RACVB

1. **Develop critical mass** (network) with the arts/culture groups to prepare for local, state, and federal funding and advocacy
2. **Increase the community trust and pride** using the transformative power of the arts
3. **Prepare to help increase the community's perception** for gathering post COVID-19
4. **Streamline processes for art, culture, and events**



Moving Forward – The Commitment Continues

Co-Chairs: Mary McNamara Bernstein- RAAC and Martesha Brown- RACVB

- **Co-chairs for continued commitment and completion of initiatives:**
 - Monthly meetings and communication lead by the RAAC in partnership with agencies such as the RACVB for centralization of resources.
 - Community Art Project that reaches all neighborhoods and seeks engagement from our community
 - Establishment of a group to help Streamline processes for art, culture, and events to educate and facilitate in an effort to improve the number and diversity of our community art scene.





Anne Weerda

Burpee Museum of Natural History

**Rockford Rebounding
Tourism and Hospitality Co-Chair**

Tourism and Hospitality : Co-Chairs and Committee Members

Co-Chairs: Anne Weerda- Burpee Museum and John Groh -RACVB

Members:

- Anne Weerda
- John Groh,
- Troy Flynn
- David Anderson
- Marcus Bacon
- Fred De la Rosa
- Sarah Wolf
- Al Castrogiovanni
- Michelle Lamay
- Louis Mateus
- Vickie Fogel
- Wester Wouri
- Frank Beach.
- *Additional community members serve on the Events Subcommittee and Restaurants Subcommittee*

Our Goals

Co-Chairs: Anne Weerda- Burpee Museum and John Groh -RACVB

1. Report in real time and pass along recommendations or questions after each meeting
2. Help the industry be ready to open safely, responsibly and sustainably
3. Help city secure as much federal/state aid as possible for the sector
4. Build off our cultural momentum; protect what's unique about Rockford (e.g. attractions, events, etc.)
5. Retain/grow position as a sports tourism destination



Goals Accomplished

Co-Chairs: Anne Weerda- Burpee Museum and John Groh -RACVB

- Clean Hands, Open Doors
- Developed local guidelines for outside dining and inside dining
- Shared industry protocols with subgroups such as museums, restaurants, hotels, sports facilities, etc.
- Raising awareness/serving as a voice for the industry and what is needed in re-opening/recovery



Moving Forward – The Commitment Continues

Co-Chairs: Mary McNamara Bernstein- RAAC and Martesha Brown- RACVB

- Hosting a “State of the Sector” Summit (virtually) with local elected officials
- Advocating for funding to market the industry during recovery
- A subgroup is working on events that would allow small-scale outdoor public gatherings



Thank You



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Sarah-Eva Marchese

Floracracy

**Rockford Rebounding
Small Business Co-Chair**

Small Business : Co-Chairs and Committee Members

Co-Chairs: Sarah-Eva Marchese- Floracracy & Mike Mastroianni- Rockford Chamber of Commerce

Members:

- Jonathan Bell, *City of Rockford*
- Alderman Tuneberg, *City of Rockford*
- Alderman Quinonez, *City of Rockford*
- Alan Golden, *Northwest IL Building Trades Council*
- Cesar Gustafson, *Midland States Bank*
- Jarrod Hennis, *Rockford Art Deli*
- Jay Gesner, *Souse's Lounge*
- Jerry Sagona, *RAEDC*
- Jim Knutson, *Rockford Acromatic Products*
- John Phelps, *Rockford Local Development Corporation*
- Josh Binning, *Lucha Cantina*
- Karen Elyea, *Minglewood, River District Assoc.*
- Lauren Davis, *Culture Shock, Winnebago Buy Local*
- Mustafa Abdall, *Winn. Emerging Small Business Support Director*
- Thinh To, *Small Business Owner*
- Carrie Zethmayr, *Zethmayr*

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Accomplished Goals

Co-Chairs: Sarah-Eva Marchese- Floracracy & Mike Mastroianni- Rockford Chamber of Commerce

- **Advisement** on policies released in the region (Subjects include; conflict resolution, legal, and best practices)
- **Research** alternative forms of funding
- **Generate** resources for local businesses
- **Translate** all materials to multiple languages
- **Mentorship** on finance related questions

Moving Forward – The Commitment Continues

Co-Chairs: Sarah-Eva Marchese- Floracracy & Mike Mastroianni- Rockford Chamber of Commerce

- Establish long-term positioning for goal outcome
- Monitor progress of Restore Illinois Phasing Plan to keep strategies fluid



Q&A

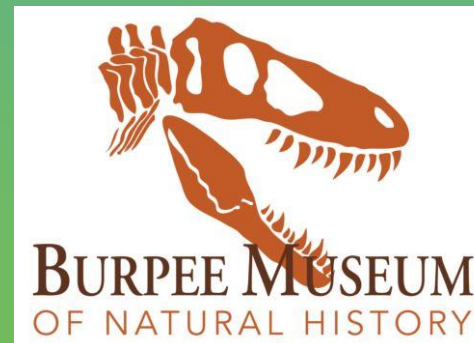
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Second Thursday of every month

www.gorockford.com/lunchchat

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Text TOGETHER to 40403

Stay Connected & Rockford Area Resources

GoRockford.com/ResourceCenter

Information about local sites/attractions/restaurants, and resources for families and small businesses

Facebook: GoRockford

www.gorockford.com

info@gorockford.com



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Thank you!