



News Release

Unified Government Public Relations

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WyCo Reviews Order Related to Bar/Tavern Restrictions

UG Health Department, Mayor Alvey, and small biz reps meet to discuss options

Mayor David Alvey helped facilitate a meeting today with UG Health Dept. officials and a number of local small business owners, as well as representatives from the KCK Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau to review and discuss the existing Health Order requiring bars, restaurants, and taverns in Wyandotte County to close at 10:00 p.m. Today's forum provided an opportunity for inputs, recommendations, and suggestions from businesses and the community on how a potential relaxation of the current service hour restriction might be implemented, and what measures these establishments can continue undertaking to ensure the safety of their staff, patrons, and the general public.

"I appreciate the opportunity to bring together and help facilitate discussions with the UG Health Dept. and local small business representatives to identify, review, and discuss the various health orders impacting them and their customers, and how we can best contain the virus, protect our community, and simultaneously allow businesses to operate and succeed," said Mayor David Alvey.

On November 20, 2020, in response to a resurgence of COVID-19, the UG Health Dept. issued an updated order that, among other things, required bars and restaurants in Wyandotte County to close at 10:00 p.m., patrons to be seated when eating or drinking, and limiting groups in establishments to 8 or fewer individuals. While Jackson County and Kansas City, MO enacted similar measures based on public health officials' recommendation, not all jurisdictions in the region adopted identical restrictions, creating some inconsistencies across some state and county lines. As part of on-going regional discussions, UG Health Dept. officials have been in conversations with their counterparts across the region utilizing the latest health data, trends, and information being made available at the national and local levels to discuss and evaluate the various Orders in place. In recent days, regional leaders have also been discussing the requirements and how best to proceed.

The UG Health Department has consistently monitored health data to guide the community's response, evaluating if additional restrictions are required or if existing orders could be relaxed. That has occurred recently when announcing a modified Local Health Order for schools allowing added flexibility in an effort to keep more students in the classroom. Based upon the data now available, public health officials saw a way to work with school leaders to restore some normal activities that had previously been restricted. Those reviews and evaluations have and will continue.

"Wyandotte County business owners and operators have gone to great lengths to comply with and follow health protocols since the start of the pandemic, working hard to keep their staff, customers and the community safe," said Mayor David Alvey. "Based on inputs from public health officials and small

businesses, I'm hopeful that under the direction and guidance of the UG Health Dept., local bars, restaurants, and taverns in our community might be able to find a solution for expanding service hours in a safe and controlled manner. Regardless of the next steps in this process, it remains the responsibility of residents and businesses to adhere to all social distancing guidelines, mask requirements and other protections put in place to keep our community safe.”

Inputs and recommendations from today's meeting will be utilized by public health officials to evaluate how best to proceed starting immediately. Moreover, the UG Public Health Dept. will continue discussions with other regional public health officials, and look to work with small business owners to find a reasonable solution to existing service hour closure requirements in Wyandotte County.

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