

# City Council Special Called Meeting (Joint Meeting with Travis County Commissioners Court) Transcript – 05/25/2021

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[9:03:01 AM]

>> It's 9:02 A.M., on may 25th, 2021. We have a quorum. We're going to get started with our joint briefing with the Austin city council, and, mayor, I will pass it over to you.

>> Thank you, thank you to the board for for this joint meeting. Just repeating for the record today is may 25th, 2021, 9:03 A.M. And we have quorum as well present. And we are ready to proceed.

>> Judge Brown: Thanks. And we will -- I think that this morning we have Dr. Pickett with us, and Dr. Escott had a family matter to deal with, and we will get started. Dr. Pickett, if you're ready to give us your briefing, we can go ahead and get started and then we can go through questions from individual commissioners, one question each, and then one question each from all of the

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city councilmembers after you -- after I will give a briefing. So about go ahead, Dr. Pickett.

>> Thank you,.

>> And mayor and commissioners. I'm standing in for Dr. Eskotd Escott today and let me not stand on ceremony and go ahead here. And we are showing progress towards herd immunity within Austin Travis county. So we have in yellow our confirmed cases and then our additional confirmed cases of 12% for a total of 18%. Happy to report that 43% of our community is fully vaccinated with both doses, for those who took a two-dose vaccines. And then another 13% being at least partially vaccinated, having had at

least one dose of the vaccine. So this leaves about a quarter of our community who are still vulnerable to covid-19. Now this is assuming that there

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is little overlap between those who have had confirmed covid-19 and those who have been vaccinated. So that 26% number may -- may be a little bit larger. The takeaway from here is that covid-19 is still with us, and it is still in our community. There's still a lot of people who are vulnerable and it can still readily spread in our community and we need to keep remaining vigilant in our distancing and our protective measures. However, we do have still good reason for being proud of the work that everybody has done and in helping to slow the spread of this disease. Here we have our new confirmed cases. There's a little dropoff there because we're no longer reporting these numbers on the weekend, so the weekend numbers will be reported on Monday. Here looking at our new admissions we're still seeing this oscillating a little bit up and down movement here.

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So we're not seeing large substantial change within our new admissions within the metropolitan statistical area. And we've taken to filtering our moving average of admissions to help us to understand what is our community and also those who are admitted within our community, but are not Austin Travis county M.S.A. Residents. So when we filter those out, we find that our moving average of admissions is 13.85. And we are still firmly within stage two of our risk-based guidelines. And then the current hospitalizations and I.C.U. Admissions and ventd later use, again, you can see that there's some oscillation in the hospitalizations but no large changes over the past couple of weeks. And the same with the ventilators and I.C.U. Usage.

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Here we've got our count of hospitalizations by age group, and so you will notice a little uptick in hospitalizations among those 70-79. As well as those 40-49. And a bump also in our 20-29 age group. I'll get to that in a moment as well. And here we have our count of hospitalizations by race and ethnicity. So green representing our Latino population. Blue is our white/non-hispanic, and gray is our black/hispanic there. Orange, asian/non-hispanic, a fairly small number there. And our american-indian and Alaska an native in blue. And then "Others" in yellow. So our positivity by week has continued to go down for the

[9:08:07 AM]

last several weeks. This is good news and we're currently at 2.5% overall positivity. And as I get to this next slide here for first time since the start of the pandemic, all race and ethnicities are below the 5% positivity rate. So, again, this is good news for us. Here with our age groups, the thing to take away from this is that the 20-29 age group represents the highest positivity rate among all of our age groups. This is, of course, of concern to us as this is our -- essentially a large portion of our workforce and a large portion of folks who are out and about in the community, interacting with each other. And this is our positivity rate and school-aged children. Again, below 5%, which is great. High schoolers are representing

[9:09:08 AM]

the highest positivity rate. And our middle school and our elementary school and preschool is following behind them significantly. So here's our long-term care facility, weekly dashboard. And this rate continues to go down, which is great news. This large vaccination effort that we've had within the nursing facilities has done quite a bit to protect our nursing home population and protect our elderly. And as such, to give them a little more freedom with visitation. And so as you can see, those graphs in the center of the screen there, the green and the purple, these cases are pretty flat since starting that vaccination effort at the beginning of the year. So covid-19 variants, um, these are the variants of concern that originated in the U.K. And Brazil and South Africa etc.

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We are not seeing a whole lot of variants of concern here in our community currently. These variants are of concern to us because they do have a penchant for reinfection, so for those patients already infected by covid-19, the variants can invade some of that natural immunity. The vaccines, however, the modern and pfizer have been shown to be very effective against these variants, so still getting good protection from the vaccines. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine as well has been shown to be pretty effective against the variations -- or the variants. So covid-19 breakthrough and reinfections. Breakthrough are those who are fully vaccinated and yet end up contracting covid-19 anyway. And then the reinfections for those who had covid-19 and confirmed covid-19, who then become infected again.

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The breakthrough infections, what we're showing here in our community is that we've had 0.02% breakthrough rate for those who are fully vaccinated. So this is showing that the vaccines are really just incredibly effective at preventing infection. We've had seven hospitalizations, all of whom were over the

age of 50, and only two deaths, all whom are over the age of 70 -- or both are over the age of 70. Reinfections -- we've had 362 potential reinfections and we're still investigating those cases as well, but this shows that there's a .4% rate, so the rate of infection is 20 times higher with -- if you had natural infection versus if you have been vaccinated. 44 hospitalizations and four deaths among that reinfection group. The take-home is that even if you've had covid-19 infection,

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you really do need to be vaccinated. It provides much better protection against the variants and the infection overall. So here we are at stage two, and this is our -- these are risk-based guidelines. If you are fully vaccinated, then you can gather for indoor groups or outdoor private gatherings without masks, going out and dining and shopping without masks. Still for travel or gathering in very large groups, attending events, masks are still recommended whether you are vaccinated or not. For those who are partially vaccinated or unvaccinated, we do recommend masks for gatherings, for private gatherings, for travel, for going out and dining and shopping. So these recommendations are, again, fully vaccinated, you can participate in gatherings and you can dine and shop without

[9:13:09 AM]

precautions if allowed by the business. Of course, the businesses have the right to set those conditions within their own walls. If you're partially vaccinated or unvaccinated, we do recommend that you take precautions, including masking and distancing. Regardless of your vaccination status, travel -- especially in public transportation with precautions. With that, I will take any questions that you have.

>> Judge Brown: Thanks, Dr. Pickett. Turning it over to interim director, and we will have a short briefing from constable morales and chief Bailey and chuck -- on the county's efforts, but turning it over to director Adrian stirrup.

>> Thank you judge brown. Dr. Pickett, thank you. First of all, to just share the update for vaccines in our community, a reminder that this

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is community care and E.P.H. Data combined. So we're at a total of 422,422 vaccines for our community. And and we delivered 9,786 vaccines. If you visit the dashboard you can hover over the pie charts at the bottom in terms of our demographics and we have made incremental improvements in our communities of color. 35% of the vaccinations delivered were in the hispanic population. 7% black. And 6% Asian. And so we will continue in our community and place-based efforts to help those numbers to

improve even more. Next slide, please. And according to the dshs vaccine report in Travis county by age, you can see that we have about 64% that have at least one dose, with 51% fully vaccinated.

[9:15:13 AM]

At our last session there was some interest in the number of children that were vaccinated and that report shows that we have over 13,000 children in Travis county between the ages of 12-15 who have received at least one dose of the vaccine. For our 65 and up population, we're at 85%, with at least one dose, and 73% fully vaccinated. And again here's the maps of our clinics. Delco STA center will be demobilizing this week and we will still have walnut creek library, and the center in east Austin flipped from a testing site to a vaccine location. And also it's prudent for us to give a testing update as we begin to stand down some of our community-based testing options, we still will have our public

[9:16:14 AM]

drive-thru testing at St. John's and we will still offer in-home testing and residents can call the number listed there to set those up, but with the availability of testing at local pharmacies and clinics, we feel at this time that it's okay for us to roll that back. As we shift more to our role as a safety net provider, we are in conversations about adding testing to our mobile ramp programs if you're aware right now, we do H.I.V. And S.T.D. Screenings and blood pressure and glucose checks so there's a possibility that we could add covid-19 testing to those mobile operations in the future. Next slide, please. Well, that's all that we have for today. We will kindly take any questions.

>> Judge Brown: Awesome, thank you. And constable morales and chuck, are you on here?

>> I'm here, constable morales

[9:17:18 AM]

is here as well. And before we get to their updates with our teams I wanted to give you,. Judge and mayor and commissioners the update on the central Texas counties that are in cooperative efforts with our continuum of vaccination efforts. We did 10 weekends at circuit of the Americas with a very successful mass drive-thru vaccine campaign. We transitioned three weekends ago from coda, because it adds that demand and the thousands per day of the vaccines that we were doing began to taper off, we recognized that we needed to get away from that large site to a fuller footprint and we chose the center on decard lane and we have been there for three weekends and we'll be there this weekend and beginning to plan how to scale that effort down as

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the drive-thru demand, again, continues tapering off and we ramp up to more of a team effort getting out into the community, into churches, schools, and other neighborhood settings where we expect to see ongoing demand. So this past weekend at expo, we did a total of 3 -- well, let's see, 160 on Friday and 335 on Saturday, and 219 on Sunday. Those were first doses delivered at expo. We will get to second doses. We did a last round of second doses on Sunday at expo -- those were second doses that were holdovers from coda. So we get to second doses at expo starting -- not this coming weekend, but the weekend after, but, again, we expect that

[9:19:19 AM]

demand to continue shrinking as people take advantage of opportunities to come to vaccination centers in their communities, closer to where they live. So with that, I will turn it over to chief Ken Bailey with district 11 and he will present about constable morales will talk about our team. Chief Bailey?

>> Good morning. Thank you,. Judge.and in terms [broken audio] With constable morales. I will share my screen. Assuming that everyone can see that. Our effort was a joint effort between several counties, and Caldwell and bastrop county and this is specific to Travis county. We've had two vaccinators of

[9:20:19 AM]

record for the collaborative community care, which is the largest one providing the bulk of the work at coda. We also started to scale down. We recognized the need to address some vaccine hesitancy issues and moving into the community to make it easier for people that were unable to seek the vaccine at a large site. We were focusing on the eastern crescent, and what that work produced was 24 different locations where we were providing vaccine to the community collectively, 84,000 vaccines delivered, and creating a number of partnerships -- 18 plus and growing. One of our goals was to remove obstacles, optimize the flow of vaccine into the community, and then create and leverage partnerships. We now have a partnership with Austin public health. We have a partnership with

[9:21:24 AM]

Dr. Smith at Maynor which was a very big thing for us. And then the Austin community and a number of other people. To give us some sense of what was delivered, we've taken the vaccine and recognize that over 50% of our vaccine -- the collaborative effort -- at least relative to Travis county, was done in the eastern crescent. The constable will talk about our outreach beyond the mass vaccination site.

>> Good morning, council and commissioners, judge and mayor. Our barrier free vaccine distribution throughout the eastern crescent, we focused on the communities that did not have means of transportation or access to technology. You know, one of our main shots was bringing the shots into the community. I'm sorry, bringing the shots to

[9:22:27 AM]

the community. By utilizing the groups existing, our community groups, our association and our neighborhood, you know, and how we accomplished that was, you know, using people that have familiar faces and trusted people in the community. Our card carriers were those that we followed with the census, the undercounted and the hard-to-count and the hard-to-reach people and, again, the best way to do that was going out within our community, finding people who were trusted, and kind of educating people about the vaccine and how we can get it to them and areas that were hard to reach. You know, I say this all the time, you know, this is an effort with other agencies. We don't do this by ourselves. The community care, the city of Austin and our councilmembers and our commissioners and our

[9:23:29 AM]

judge is going out and actually reaching our community and making them feel comfortable. Now I explained this a bit before that it's the outreach 101 that is very important. By doing so we can make our city a lot safer and save more lives. So the effort with the mobile vaccine is simple -- you know, we know that there's working families that work, you know, until 5:30, and rather than taking a day off for the vaccine, we give the shot after 5:30, and we'll run to 10:00 at night if we have to. And those who can bring their children on Saturday because of school, and now that school is coming to an end, we want to make sure that our children are safe, especially for summertime. And that people can go back to a somewhat normal lifestyle. But that's the goal of the mobile vaccine and our strike team. Chief?

>> Thanks.

>> So to give you some idea of the proportion of the vaccine

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given within the community, Dr. Karen Smith, mayor Wallace of Maynor partnered with us and delivered a large amount of vaccines into the Maynor area and dove springs is another focus of ours as well. And to give you some idea of the breakdown of -- by race -- because of the way that we report to the state, you will see on the race is 54% white, but 77% of that 54% are hispanic ethnicity. And then the age group is interesting. I was looking through the numbers last night and about one-third of the recent --

probably the last month of the vaccinations have been going to kids under 18. We've seen a large interest from the school districts. And then the last thing before we are happy to answer any questions -  
- Travis county and

[9:25:31 AM]

chuck Brotherton has provided leadership and holding the group together, and support through the mayor's office and the judge's office and instrumental in supporting us. This is a lot of players coming together, ceton played a huge role in this, and community care has just crushed it with helping in every way they possibly can in removing all of the obstacles. And now I think that the struggle for us going forward -- oh, and I do want to mention councilmember Casar and councilmember Fuentes have also been instrumental in driving some of these community efforts with us so that we can get in there and they have been trusted voices and allowing us to deliver the vaccine in those areas of the community. And the challenge moving forward is the vaccine hesitancy, and we are -- the collaborative is actively working with aph and others to address that.

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Happy to answer any questions.

>> Judge Brown: Thank you all very much. I will pass it on -- or, I guess that I'll start with the questions now and we'll check in with commissioner gómez to see if you have any questions for Dr. Pickett or director Sturrup or the chief?

>> Gómez: I don't have any questions and we're making progress it looks like. Especially with the fact that the constable and the chief are going directly to people where they are with their needs and overcoming barriers to them getting the vaccine. And I think that has been very instrumental in trying to increase the numbers. And then forming those partnerships -- those are really a good -- it will produce good results. So I'm very proud of the team. Thank you so much for all that

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you have done to increase the number of people who are vaccinated. Thanks.

>> Judge Brown: Thanks. Commissioner Shea?

>> Shea: Good morning, everyone. Nice to see you counselor morales and chief Bailey and thank you for the work that you're doing in the community. One of the things that I'm, um, trying to get a better sense of is, um, if there's a coordinated plan to reach the younger people I guess, once the vaccine is approved

and more of the vaccines are approved for young people. School is ending. Potentially summer camp is starting. Is there any kind of a strategic plan for a more coordinated outreach? It sounds like the drive-thru is really kind of winding down, but if you could speak to that aspect of it, because it seems to me that's the largest sort of singular group -- they're not

[9:28:33 AM]

singular -- but specific group that may be unprotected, the most unprotected.

>> I can speak to that, commissioner. We're working with our ISDs in Travis county and the city of Austin. Just recently we did almost 500 shots a day in elementary schools for children over 12 years of age and partnering with the city of Austin rec and park, and we know that there's a lot of summer camps and we want to target and to kind of educate parents and encourage a shot in those efforts there. We do have those events coming up in June, and even when schools are out we still have -- working with ISD and a couple of the other ISDs with their sport specialists to have pop-ups in the local schools.

>> Shea: Thank you. So is somebody else going to

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address the extent that there's other follow-up? Thank you.

>> So as Mr. Brotherton mentioned there's the Austin Travis vaccine collaborative group, and we are talking about doing more with the constable -- which the constable just mentioned. And we have told the ISDs, including charter schools in the area. From this standpoint we partnered out at coda this weekend so that we could get our vaccinators used to pfizer and we have been working with modern. And so we will add to those efforts. We have plans for our shots for tots clinics to offer the pfizer vaccine as well, but, you know, with the messaging of driving parents to wherever pfizer is being offered, as well as supporting the community collaborations for pop-ups in different areas.

>> Commissioner, just this past Saturday, the county collaborative and the Austin public health worked together to

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do two ISD sites on Saturday. Austin public health was focusing on del valley high school and the collaborative was focusing on the Daley middle school and we provided pfizer, the collaborative provided pfizer vaccine for both sites and we did just over 650 doses on Saturday, and we will continue working with the ISD going forward on Saturdays, as long as there's demand, we will plan to be at both

of those schools. Also Dr. Escott and I have been meeting weekly with our ISD superintendents for the past year, and we have reached out to them to see who among them might like us to help to organize some efforts in their schools. And pflugerville ISD has expressed interest, so we'll be putting them in touch with our strike team coordinators to get an effort going in the pflugerville ISD. So, yes, we continue to work with the ISDs and I'm happy to

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organize strike teams anywhere that they might like us to. Thanks.

>> Judge Brown: Commissioner Travillion.

>> Travillion: Well, first, I want to make sure that we commend the staff again for reaching out into the communities and working -- working with -- with the neighborhoods and with people from the neighborhoods. I talked to constable morales fairly regularly about how we work together to address the needs in the eastern crescent. And just so that I can shout out to a couple of people -- a few people who are doing this work as well -- he has worked directly with constable Nixon. I think that the work they've done together has been significant. And the black leadership collective, as we have worked since the pandemic and through the storm and set up centers at

[9:32:39 AM]

Simms and the millennium center to provide a lot of resources for the community. And Dr. Ho ckaday. And the church community, and mount Zion and St. James. And I had numerous community organizations that have gotten involved. And the councilmember out in pflugerville, mayor Wallace and his team, and St. Mary's and abundant life churches in the pflugerville area. So we see a lot of community people coming together and working together. We just have to make sure that as we build out our next iteration of strike teams that they reflect all of the communities that have been underserved or have not gotten us to the point where we can achieve herd immunity. So I just want to say how much I

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appreciate the efforts in the field. And the community groups that have stepped up to work on these issues. And we want to make sure that we maintain this type of robust effort, certainly, through June where we've got several activities planned. So, thank you.

>>> A lot of gratitude for the collaboration and I don't have questions.

>> Judge Brown: Thanks. Just one question for constable -- if there's a community group that wants to host the vaccination or a company that wants to have y'all to come to their office or something like that, what is the best way for them to reach out to you, or how do we make that happen?

>> I would suggest that they contact our Travis county collaborative, and I don't have the information, but we do have that information that we can share with you. You know, I think that it's very simple. Once we get contacted from a

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group or a company that we're ready to go. You know, our teams are hot.

>> Judge Brown: Awesome. Thanks. Sorry, go ahead, Adrienne.

>> Sorry, I would add from the city side that the easiest way to get that is for someone to call 311, and then those operators will transfer to the appropriate person in Austin public health.

>> Judge Brown: Terrific. And, chuck, is there a way for them to reach out to the collective effort? Is that --

>> I would offer that they can call me, of course. We are bringing in some additional capacity today at commissioners court voting session. We are asking for authorization to hire three additional people to work specifically on coordinating and outreach for our strike team efforts. So these three people would be assigned over at the constable

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precinct headquarters with constable morales, working with the constable to reach out into the community and also to be a point of contact for community leaders to reach back into us and to get our strike team efforts scheduled. 311 can be a useful tool. There's a lot of good cooperation between the county and the city at this point. 311, the number is actually -- if you live outside of the city of Austin, they don't reach 311. So for folks in the county, the 10 digit number for contacting us is 512-974-2000, and that can also -- I would offer it would be a useful clearing degreehouse for us to get information for folks looking for us to do strike teams.

>> Great, if you have a group that needs vaccinations, 311, and constable morales and my

[9:36:47 AM]

office, we will figure it out and send the team to you. Mayor, I will pass it over to you.

>> Mayor Adler: Judge, thank you. And we'll start with district 10 and work our way back to the mayor pro tem. So we'll begin today with councilmember Alter.

>> Alter: Good morning. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Alter: Okay, great, thank you. Thank you, everyone, for all of this really important work. It was great to hear from the new experts that we saw today for these meetings. So I appreciate all of the work that you're doing out in the community. I have a question for public health and maybe for the city manager's office. We've been hearing that our seniors who are now vaccinated which is awesome, are trying to get out more, but the programs that are set up to help them

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need more drivers. So I know that seniors are in desperate need of more drivers. And meals on wheels, needs drivers to help them to deliver meals because a lot of people had stopped doing that during the pandemic. So I'm wondering if the seniors team can check in with those organizations and maybe the city can do some kind of P.R. Assistance to that to help to get the word out. You know, we'll be including something in our newsletter, but I wanted to flag that and it's great that our seniors want to get out, but I think that we do need to support those organizations with the volunteers, because one can only imagine the higher level of demand that they're under right now, now that people are finally feeling a little bit more comfortable to either have someone to come into their home or to go out.

[9:38:51 AM]

So I don't know if that's Miss Sturup or the city manager?

>> I really appreciate you flagging this, councilmember, and we will certainly be talking to our team and the folks that work with the senior population within the city to not only to raise their awareness, but to see how we can add additional resources to support these efforts. Howard, do you want to add

>> We met with the senior members yesterday, and Austin public health has Tabatha Taylor from Austin public health. So what we'll do is collaborate with Tabatha, to have her to collaborate with the various city departments that work with seniors in their capacity as well, and then to get with our

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communications team across the service area, because I think that would be very helpful and then we have those contacts at meals on wheels and drive a senior and family elder care. And so she can reach

out to them and to just kind of brainstorm how we could do some type of public relations type of campaign.

>> And then as we're thinking about our covid dollars, I know that there's some potential transportation investments that some of these organizations may need in order to be able to transport the seniors or to deliver the meals under kind of the new environment where people are still working at home more. So, you know, as you're looking at the health dollars, etc., if we could explore that, that would be great.

>> Okay, we will. Thank you, councilmember.

>> Mayor Adler: Sorry. Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Thanks, I have two questions but they're super

[9:40:53 AM]

quick. Page 20, can you tell us Dr. Pickett, what percentage that 315 represents?

>> I can't.

>> Tovo: It would be interesting to know in the future. Of course I hope that number will increase but it would be interesting to know what percentage that is. And then with relationship to the slide 15, I hope that I'm going to ask this correctly -- but is the research suggesting any difference in terms of how individuals who have had covid are -- is there any difference in the reinfection rate among those who have had covid and been vaccinated, versus those who have had covid and not been vaccinated? I think that you addressed this but I kind of missed it. I know that you talked --

>> So for those who have been through the virus and had their vaccination, I do not have that data.

>> Tovo: Okay, thanks.

[9:41:56 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

>> Tovo: The upshot is that I'm just wondering if people who have had covid have higher levels of immunity with the vaccine or the same level of immunity or less immunity. So, anyway, it would be interesting to know if that's being studied anywhere.

>> That's a good question, councilmember, and I'm afraid they don't know that answer offhand.

>> That's not the reinfection rate?

>> Tovo: I think that the reinfection rate is not divided by those -- not broken down into those who have had the vaccine versus those who have not. That's my understanding of the information.

>> There's a breakthrough on the reinfection on slide 15.

>> Councilmember, that -- and commissioner -- that reinfection rate is those who have had the virus and it does not necessarily include those who have had the virus and been vaccinated and potentially have a double layer of protection. Also I want to bring up as we have been talking about vaccination of children, that

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modern released their stage two and three trial data on ages 12-17, and they found that it was safe and they had no infections of covid among the kids who received the modern vaccine, and we expect the authorization for that age group will follow shortly.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, thank you. Councilmember Ellis.

>> Ellis: Thank you, mayor. Dr. Pickett, can you go over brief best recommendations for individuals who might travel? I know that a lot of people have held off traveling for a very long time and so now that people are feeling a little more comfortable with it, what is the best practice, and what should we be doing if people are going to take trips?

>> Thank you, councilmember, and that's a great question. First and foremost, wear a mask while traveling. It's impossible to avoid folks in those close confines of airplanes and the airport. So you should wear a mask while

[9:43:58 AM]

traveling. Frequently use hand sanitizer and wash hands. Distance from others as much as is possible. Of course, I'm sure that we have all been through the airport and the airplane and distance is one thing that is very hard to come by, but to -- as many layers of protection as possible. So the key -- first and foremost

-- wear that mask, wash your hands, sanitize your hands frequently. And when traveling in public transportation, such as buses, that those recommendations hold firm as well.

>> Ellis: Thank you, I appreciate that. And I know that there's other things besides covid that people have been transmitting to each other and you cough and nice and you're in close environment. So I thank you for that reminder to continue being safe.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, councilmember pool.

>> Pool: Thanks. And I just want to pencil in my

[9:45:01 AM]

deep appreciation one more time to the team that has been across awftin and Travis county. It also feels like a bit of a breakthrough week with this report. And I mean breakthrough, not in the covid reinfection sense, but breakthrough in actual concrete progress being charted. I know that we have all been urging and concerned that our east side communities get inoculated and it's been difficult to penetrate deeply into that community, but I think that the community-based friendly familiar face approach that has begun to take hold really is the way to go. And I'm glad to see that there is real progress being made. My goal, of course, is for everybody in our area, our region, our state, to be inoculated and I thank you all

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for the dedicated and the persistent work that you are all bringing to the effort. Thanks.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember Kelly.

>> Kelly: Good morning, and thank you, everyone, for all of the hard work that you're doing. I definitely appreciate it and I know that our community does as well. I do not have any questions. Thanks.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Thank you. Just a quick question. Thank you all for all of the work that you are doing. Vaccination is clearly important to decrease our risk and to reduce the spread. I have a quick question related to the b116 and the variants. My understanding is that it is spreading throughout the united States, and I have seen it recently reported in Dallas. And I'm also hearing that pfizer announced that they have -- that

[9:47:02 AM]

pfizer is less effective against that variant. I think they mentioned 70%, 75%. Can you just speak to -- I think that I heard you say that we haven't seen that variant or other variants in our community yet. And could you just speak to what the ability to protect ourselves against that variant and the thinking at least in our community related to the vaccines' protectiveness against that variant in particular?

>> Thank you, councilmember, that's a great question. We have not yet identified that variant in our community here, although it has been identified in Texas and as so it's likely a matter of time before it does make an appearance here. Although the vaccine -- the pfizer reports a little less effectiveness against that variant, the vaccine is still very effective against the variant. So, first and foremost, vaccination is the best measure that one could take to protect one's self against this and the other covid-19 variants.

[9:48:04 AM]

With regards to other protective measures, then the advice that we have given regarding covid in general with regards to masking and distancing and hand washing still holds true here. I would caution anybody against drawing conclusions from the origin of the variant and any apparent ethnicity or race of someone. We certainly saw that with anti-asian discrimination with folks with the virus being associated with China. We do not want to see that with any -- with any variant. Specific measures for folks coming from different areas of the world or who have different ethnicities are not effective at preventing the spread and only increase the division in the community.

[9:49:04 AM]

>> Kitchen: Thank you for saying that. I apologize, I should not have used that moniker. It's the b16 variant so you're absolutely right -- the origin is not relevant here. And so I will refer to as the b16 in the future. So thank for mentioning that. So one last question then -- what about -- ventilation is -- or air flow perhaps might be a better word -- is really critical. Which I am understanding is one of the reasons that we really don't need to be concerned if we're outside. Can you speak to the latest, you know, thinking at least in our community that you're aware of regarding the use of air purifiers and other things like that to assist with ventilation in our buildings as we -- as we start to go back to our more normal activities.

>> Thank you, councilmember, it's another great question. And as often as you can turn

[9:50:06 AM]

over the air within a building, that helps to reduce the amount of circulating virus that is hanging in the air. And with regards to use of -- excuse me -- air purifiers, I can't speak to the effectiveness of one method over another. I know that some have installed things like ultraviolet air pyre fewers and high efficiency filters and that sort of thing. I'm sorry that I do not have the data on the effectiveness of one or the other over this particular virus.

>> Kitchen: I think that you said that air flow is an important piece of it? Okay, thank you.

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, councilmember Casar.

>> Casar: First, I'd like to also add my thanks to the county collaborative team. I know that it's not the Ken and George show, but thank you to both of you and send our thanks to everyone.

>> It's just really quiet so we

[9:51:07 AM]

can barely hear what you are saying.

>> Casar: I will talk louder. Is that better? Thanks to Ken and George and sending my thanks to the whole team there. At the last session, I had asked for maybe some demographic information similar to what you have presented on the city side. So I'll just mention if we could get that for -- for the next but my question is more to where do we go from here. I understand that we're demobilizing Delco soon and working at the community level, but how can the council and the community help? What is our path that we're thinking about for the next, you know, several tens of thousands of these vaccinations? Can y'all lay out -- whoever it is, you know, probably people from multiple teams here -- can y'all lay out to us your thinking since we're starting to demobilize sites and that probably means that we're moving

[9:52:08 AM]

resources to other places -- how can we help? And what should the community be expecting that our strategy is to get to the next big chunk of vaccinations, since we know that we need more.

>> Well, I'll start and then I'll allow my colleagues to jump in. I think that the collaboration will continue. That will be key to our efforts. It warmed my heart to hear what was going on with -- you know, with the constable and the things that were happening in the community because each of us were playing opposition, but having a good collective effort. And so as aph shifts from being a hub, we will too join in those efforts to have those more community-based -- we have started the base initiative with the churches on the eastside. And we have been partnering with the county and del valley as well, and so it really will be

[9:53:09 AM]

using the community model, not only to deliver vaccines, but to make sure that we are addressing the community's concerns about vaccines. Our messaging will be targeted and culturally relevant and specific, making sure that we're using language and imagery that resonates with the population that we're trying to reach. Central health and community care have these forums every Tuesday night on Facebook where they address a certain section of the population. The mayor has been involved and I have been a panelist on those. So I keep telling people, like the water weight is gone, right, we got the first pounds off easy, and now we have hit that wall where we have to really dig in and work for it. So it will be those intense community-based efforts that will get us over the next hump. And I am excited that we have partners at the top that we can continue to collaborate and make

[9:54:10 AM]

sure that we are complementing the efforts. So that's what I have to say from aph standpoint. And I invite my partners from the county to add to that.

>> Good morning. I think that it's a great question and I would agree with the previous comments. I think that one of the things that is a question of data, and aph we recently in the collaborative -- because of some of the meetings -- found out that they are measuring the uptake or the decline by zip code each week. And so we also have to recognize that the one message is not going to fit all. There's this [broken audio] That is going to take some messaging for different groups in that. But with the data that aph is collecting, we can see and test in various places to see what is more effective, and then move our resources and adjust.

[9:55:10 AM]

But I think that she hit the nail on the head, you know, the water weight is gone and this is going to be -- this is tough. This is the hard part. But I think that our partnership will help us to push through that. Maybe not as quickly as we all want.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember Renteria.

>> Renteria: Thank you, mayor. My question is, do you have the data that has been taking the vaccine by zip code?

>> Yes, sir.

>> Renteria: Can you talk about that.

>> Yes, sir, we do have that data available and I can send a breakdown to your office after this meeting.

>> Renteria: Yeah, I would like to see that, because I think

[9:56:11 AM]

that by looking at the zip code we might be able to concentrate more in that area to administer the vaccine there. And so I would like to have that data. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Would you go ahead and get that to all of the council offices and also over to the county so they can distribute it as well. Thank you. Councilmember Fuentes. Do we have councilmember Fuentes with us? I don't think so. Mayor pro tem.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you, mayor. I actually don't have any questions. I appreciate the effort. I guess that I do -- although it's not a question -- I do continue to have some concerns about the number of people who are hesitant to receive the vaccine. And so my hope is that we

[9:57:13 AM]

eventually sort of get to the root of that hesitancy and to encourage more people to pursue being inoculated.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Again, and I think that the theme of today's meeting might be the city/county collaboration and that's just really good to see and I know that everybody is working closely together to make sure that gaps are being met. I just want to thank everybody that's had a chance to speak. I was encouraged yesterday at the announcement that the soccer stadium could be at 100% capacity following whatever masking guidelines, that the health authority suggests to them and their intent to follow that guidance. Also the foreshadowing by the county judge that the city and

[9:58:13 AM]

the county are going to work together to make sure that there's vaccinations available to ticket holders going to that game that might want to get vaccinated. And as the county judge and I and many others have discussed, building on that strategy as we add more and M more larger events happening in the city, trying to provide those kind of pop-up opportunities at these events that are already gathering people is certainly something that I'd like. And, finally, I just wanted to reiterate that the request that councilmember Casar made, and the information is cumulative, but at this point, you know, the last two or three weeks -- four weeks -- to change the demographic numbers because the numbers are so large. And, frankly, when we were starting out with vaccinations,

[9:59:14 AM]

the initial priority was to get as many people vaccinated as we could in age groups and otherwise in order to decrease the infections of the overall community. Now that we have targeted efforts and the demographic information that the chief and the council has provided with respect to the activity over the last several weeks is really the last several weeks was helpful to gauge whether the efforts we've been doing recently are hitting the vulnerable populations they're trying to focus on. So, director Sturup, I think it would be really helpful if we had that same kind of more recent data for the larger public health system, community care, and the county. So, more recent information and demographics, I'd like to see as

[10:00:14 AM]

well. Judge, I think that takes us through our entire group. So I turn it back to you.

>> Judge Brown: Thanks, mayor. Yeah, thanks, everyone here, especially chuck and constable morales and chief Bailey for your report. I guess we'll keep doing that. Thanks, aph, and everyone on the call for the partnership and trying to keep improving things and keep getting more people vaccinated. I really appreciate that. Mayor, we will adjourn and come back at 10:10. So we'll adjourn for ten minutes here. And thank you, mayor and city council for joining today.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

>> Shea: Stay safe.

>> Mayor Adler: Judge, thank you. I hear that on the 25th, at -- what time is it? At 10:00, this meeting will be adjourned. Colleagues, I urge you all to check the message board. We'll still talking about when

[10:01:16 AM]

we get together, whether there will be a special called to discuss information related to spandling, the possibility of a meeting on Friday. Check it now. If not, anticipate having it as a discussion the next Tuesday and Thursday. And maybe that option until the following week. But please pay attention to the message board. Dependent really on the manager at this point. He's checking with staff to make sure when we get together, it's a meaningful opportunity for us. So, check the message board. With that, we're adjourned. Judge, we'll get out of your hair and let you guys hold your meeting. Thank you.