Reopening Summary 10/7/2020

US Chamber Economic Updates provided by Jim Giammarinaro:

K shaped recovery, top part of K will do well or recover quicker and bottom part of the K will either not recover and close or recover slower.

Sam Wong, Health Director City of Framingham commented that retail stores could sustain through this if they follow the guidance properly. Safety measures and store layout can help support this model for retail. Limited time in stores and proper signage should help with this. Outdoor dining is still safer than indoor but winter months will severely affect the ability to do this. Framingham expanded seating and licensing for restaurants for ease in access and outdoor dining options throughout the winter months.

Can you receive another PPP loan if you received one in the past?

Bruce Miccile, Middlesex Savings Bank answered this. He will confirm if companies can apply for another round of funding. More funding may help travel and leisure industries. Most banks have started taking forgiveness applications through the portals. The bank is helping with calculations to maximize forgiveness. It is ideal to help to catch errors in the beginning to help with the process. Applications go through fast once corrections are made.

Health Updates from Sam Wong:

Case count in Framingham is still high, RED. Fluctuating over the past few days. Still seeing majority of cases happening with lower-income, living in crowded apartment buildings, in-person working, not working from home are those getting infected. Social gatherings are still an issue with higher case counts. More testing is available and Mr. Wong encourages everyone in Framingham to get tested. Contact tracing is from CDC guidance. Public health nurse will contact the infected person and make sure they have the medical help and resources that the need. Then ask questions as to where the person has been and who they have interacted with. Within 48 hours of positive case and who has been in close contact with someone who is less than 6 feet to them and for 15 minute duration. Those who were exposed and told to quarantine.

Updates from Kevin Shea, Economic Development, City of Framingham. Framingham will continue emergency programs to help residents and small businesses. HUD money received by the city just over $1 million dollars in total. The City has encouraged small businesses and residents to apply. Applications are processed as quickly as possible. The City is contacting small businesses and restaurants are being forwarded applications directly to them. Local businesses only, no national chains are eligible for these programs. Referrals accepted and get the word out about programs. Small businesses can qualify for up to $10,000 and $3,300 to households for rental/utility assistance.

Brian Casaceli, Employment Attorney, Mirick O’Connell: Best practice question:
If an employee tests positive in the workplace, what can the employer say to other employees? It is up to the employee to share their positive case information with co-workers. Employers cannot reference the employee’s identity if the employee does not want their name shared. The employer can simply state that a person has tested positive and the steps to take to keep everyone safe. Liability insurance may help the employer but not 100% known. Each policy would need to be reviewed.

Sam Wong stressed that employers should contact local board of health if they have a positive case at their worksite. Understanding privacy issues, but would help with contact tracing.

How quickly can a restaurant reopen if an employee tests positive? The requirement is for the restaurant to perform a deep cleaning and communicate with the board of health. They don’t necessarily need to close for an extended period of time.