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COVID-19 UPDATE AND VACCINATION SITE ANNOUNCEMENT

April 26, 2021

Tanya Bamford, Chairwoman

Montgomery Township Board of Supervisors

As we are concluding our 14th month of operations during a global pandemic, I wanted to provide a status report on COVID-related issues, including cases and deaths, some alarming news about the presence of a new variant, as well as an update on vaccine availability here in the township.

To date, 1,455 Montgomery Township residents have tested positive for COVID-19. Sadly, we lost another one of our neighbors to this disease in the last 30 days. This brings our death total to 43. On behalf of my fellow board members and our staff, I want to express our sincere condolences to those families who have lost loved ones to coronavirus.

We have been monitoring the presence of the virus not only through Montgomery County but also through ongoing analysis of our wastewater provided by the Montgomery Township Municipal Sewer Authority. According to the latest Biobot Analytics report, our COVID numbers are creeping back up and the virus is spreading at a rate of up to 5 new cases per day. The increases are attributed to viral spread from small group gatherings indoors during the recent holidays. This recent uptick is of particular concern because the British variant of the virus has now been detected in our wastewater. As this virus strain is significantly more contagious, we want to impress upon everyone in the community that they need to continue to be vigilant about adhering to CDC guidelines for face coverings, social distancing, and avoiding group gatherings indoors without masks—particularly with people who have yet to be vaccinated. The good news is that all available vaccines have proven effective at protecting against the British strain, and now that registration for the vaccine is open to everyone ages 16 and older, we strongly encourage everyone to get vaccinated who is eligible.

On the topic of vaccinations, I have encouraging news to share about vaccine availability here in the township. We were not at liberty to discuss this at our last meeting, but Montgomery Township has been working for the last several months with Montgomery County to prepare the former Sears location at the Montgomery Mall as a vaccine distribution site. I am pleased to announce that the mall site will open on May 3rd. If you have not already registered, I encourage you all to visit MontCoPA.org to register, and when you are notified of appointment availability, you will be able to select the Montgomery Mall as the location for your appointment. We are excited about hosting this mass vaccination site in the township for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, the Montgomery Mall site will provide convenient access to these lifesaving vaccines for all who reside and work within the township. Beyond convenient access, this site will bring

thousands of consumers to our mall weekly, which we anticipate will have a positive economic impact on our community at a time when it is so clearly needed.

Our top priorities are the continued safety and well-being of the members of our community. This is why we have been utilizing our Community and Recreation Center to conduct life-saving blood drives with The American Red Cross. It is why we have conducted virtual town halls, produced public service announcements, and have been proactively sharing COVID-related updates like this one about the virus spread, testing, safety protocols, vaccination registration, and much more. And it is why Montgomery Township has been communicating with private pharmacies about conducting vaccination clinics at our Community and Recreation Center. The situation remains fluid, with the availability of vaccine doses, as well as demand, fluctuating from day to day. As such, no plans have been finalized for a clinic at that location. Regardless of where clinics are held within our township, our board and staff remain committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our community by contributing to COVID-19 vaccination efforts. As we have done consistently since the outset of the pandemic 14 months ago, we will continue to provide you with updates as more information becomes available.