Dear Valued Members, Guests and Supportive Community,

As I’ve shared in the past, we are in a marathon that is COVID-19 and it continues even as we’ve had glimpses of normalcy mixed with chaos. As a YMCA we are tasked with delivering different levels of services that range on the scale of essential to non-essential and as such can create variances in how different programs are treated or prioritized through our YMCA. Even today’s announcements will illustrate those discrepancies. I want to update you on the return of racquetball, the status of childcare, a recent suspected COVID-19 case, and the impact of the City Council’s consideration of enacting a mask ordinance.

**Racquetball:** Effective August 3 (today) we now offer, by reservation only, singles racquetball for limited times. Reservations can be made through MotionVibe. The racquetball courts will be mopped, and touchpoints cleaned between user groups. No more than two people can play in any reservation block, so playing doubles or rotating in a third player in a set is not allowed. Currently we are only offering this on one court as we test our system and continue to get up to scale on the staffing required to offer and manage this opportunity.

**Childcare:** When we were first closed our building, we significantly cut our YMCA childcare to families of essential workers only. We promised no child would lose their spot in our childcare program. That is, once we returned to non-COVID-19 operations they would be able to return. Since this announcement, more and more people have returned to work and fallen under the “essential worker” status. However, our YMCA’s childcare program and all childcare programs in the state remain under COVID-19 operational restrictions, which require a reduced staff-to-child ratio that is isolated from other classrooms. Effectively, these protocols require 40
percent more staff and 10 more licensed rooms to service the same number of children. We are working nonstop to identify qualified staff and prepared licensed spaces to provide for the return-to-work need in childcare. Unfortunately, we have now reached the intersection where staff availability and need collide. Please be patient with us as we continue to find the qualified staff needed to care for your children. We are still holding to our commitment that no child will lose their spot when our COVID-19 operating restrictions are removed. In the meantime, we will attempt to accommodate as many of those children as we are able.

**Suspected COVID-19 Case:** Late last night we received word that two people at our Maple Ave Preschool program were experiencing symptoms that could be caused by COVID-19. Per state guidelines we must treat those symptoms as a “Suspected COVID-19” case and follow the protocols that requires. We immediately did the following:

1. Closed the two classrooms at Maple Ave for at least 14 days.
2. Advised staff and the children’s families that they should be tested and should also quarantine.
3. Advised those families and staff that the rest of the household should quarantine if they test positive or develop symptoms.
4. Through our staff vacation and sick policies and the FMLA guidelines for COVID-19, assured staff that they will be compensated during this closure.
5. Conducted a deep clean of the classrooms and will do so again before we reopen those spaces.
6. Finally, we ask for your thoughts and prayers for those who are symptomatic to get well quickly and to peacefully address the stress and anxiety the uncertainty this virus brings. We extend those same thoughts and prayers to any other staff member or child who should develop symptoms.

By late in the day today, we received word that one of the two experiencing symptoms has tested positive for strep throat and is not currently suspected of having COVID-19. I have never been this thankful to hear of a strep-throat diagnosis. I do wish this individual a quick recovery. We also note that the other person experiencing symptoms was in a different room and is awaiting test results.

**Mask Ordinance:** The City will be voting later this week on a city-wide mask ordinance. I have spoken at great length with several city council members regarding this ordinance and they have confirmed with the city attorney that any member-based organizations, such as the YMCA, are
excluded from this ordinance as it is currently written. The primary reason for that exclusion is that member-based organizations do not meet the definition of a public organization referenced in this ordinance. When writing the ordinance, they decided not to include member-based organizations. So, unless something changes in Thursday’s meeting, we do not expect a change in our mask policies in the YMCA this week. However, we will continue to follow the State Re-opening Guidance for the policy we have in place.

**Other Reminders:**

**The Pool and Group Exercise** still require reservations via MotionVibe and members will still check in at their respective doors.

**Masks** are still required when not working out; i.e., traveling through the building, changing in the locker room, etc.

**Screening questions and temperatures** will still be required at the Welcome Center.

**Member Cleaning:** We still will need your help in remaining compliant with the cleaning for the safety of us all. Members will still need to clean equipment before and after use. In our busy times we may also ask you to put a “out for cleaning” sign on equipment when you finish using it so our staff can give it the final cleaning.

For those of you that can stay with us through this crisis, I offer my **deepest thanks and appreciation.** For more than 130 years, the Keene Family YMCA has always been an organization that walked in the direction of the challenge. Today, our walk is joined by you for the betterment of our community.

Please stay socially distant and community focused,

Dan Smith
CEO