

On Nov 8, 2020, at 6:53 PM, Tiffany Hale <[haletiff.817@gmail.com](mailto:haletiff.817@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Mayor Grenier,

I am writing to share with you my concerns over the proposed mask mandate. I do plan to call in Monday with a condensed version for the public record. Out of respect for time constraints during Monday's hearing as well as the weighty decision this is for you warranting additional time to consider, this is simply a Berlin resident and taxpayer communicating person to person with you in order to equip you with greater understanding of the leanings of your constituents as you endeavor to represent our best interests.

First and foremost there is the matter of the greater good. This matter has a very personal basis since my second child was born premature, therefore had underdeveloped lungs and was considered immune compromised the first several months of her life. Many contagious ailments were extremely dangerous, even potentially deadly to her. I was absolutely terrified for her health and safety. However I was not so selfish as to expect my entire community to disrupt life as we know it nor to expose themselves to potential negative affects of measures to protect \*us\*. I took personal responsibility by staying home as much as possible, avoiding crowds, and refraining from inviting guests over, but never expected anyone else to refrain from eating out, doing business, attending school, having private gatherings, attending religious services, nor did I demand a city full of healthy people cover their faces on account of \*my\* worry for the safety of someone I love more than life itself. Presently I'm also concerned about my almost 80 year old mother. I get the worry and the fear. I'm right there feeling it too right here and now. I don't know what I'd do if something happened to my mom. I want her to enjoy her life to the fullest, yet I simply cannot justify burdening my community with unethical measures such as mask mandates. Despite our worry for ourselves and those dear to us we simply must find it in our hearts to prioritize the greater good of our community over our own personal concerns. As hard as I know it is, we **MUST** look at the whole picture and make the decision which supports the good of our entire community, not just our own fears: the decision not to impose a mask mandate.

Private businesses with a strong preference for masks are already requiring customers to wear them. The law is already on their side. Similar to "no shirt, no shoes, no service" establishments may refuse service to persons not wearing masks if they choose to do so. Proprietors may tell persons without masks to leave the premises if they wish or altogether deny entry. Should someone refuse to leave their establishment they even have legal recourse since that would constitute trespassing, a law enforcement officer can even be called to escort a person without a mask off the premises should the proprietor so desire. No mandate is necessary. Customers may simply select curbside pickup from businesses not requiring masks if they are concerned about entering. Berlin has recently been publicly criticized for being hard on businesses. I propose proving that claim wrong by respecting the rights of business owners to run their establishments to the greatest benefit of their clientele and community.

As I am sure you already realize, viruses do not simply disappear. As this spring's quarantine measures have proven, when virtually the entire world locked down for several weeks. If it were effective we wouldn't be having this conversation right now. Lockdowns, masking, all the rest does NOT eliminate the virus no matter how much we wish it did. As even pro-mask sources acknowledge, masks alone make a negligible impact at best. In order to truly eliminate positive test results absolutely draconian mandates would be necessary. Unfortunately there is as of yet no way to predict when or even if a safe and effective vaccine will be made available. On the bright side, among those diagnosed with Covid-19 in the developed world there is a greater than 99% chance of survival. There will always be high risk persons and there will always be contagious infections posing a risk to them. If we truly are prioritizing their safety then temporary measures against only one infection are not enough. To truly practice that priority we must be prepared to permanently eliminate in class school, require public masking, discourage tourism, and strictly enforce social distancing. We must be willing to sacrifice the good of our children and our community, forever. If our priority is the greater good we must be willing to keep our community functioning as efficiently as possible while continuing to explore common sense accommodations for our most medically fragile relatives and friends.

Worthy of note, no other constituency in the North Country has a mask mandate. Bethlehem considered it but ultimately decided against a mandate simply publishing a recommendation. For regional consistency, as well

as to avoid creating any greater disadvantage for our local businesses, a recommendation rather than a mandate would be a sensible solution.

Finally, I want to propose a demonstration of **your** confidence in this measure before seriously considering a mandate: resume full time in class school. If masks are effective then it's safe to be in class with a mask requirement. Resume in person city meetings with a mask requirement. If you do not believe masking is effective enough to safely resume in person school and meetings then what is the point of a city wide mandate?

I'm worried about our community. I'm worried about the health, safety, and quality of life for the wonderful people who live here. I worry about our local culture, businesses, and our city's future. We've interacted a handful of times. You know how deeply I love and care about the city of Berlin. I know you share all my worries and love for our beautiful city. I know you don't take your responsibilities lightly. I have full confidence in your ability to find a real solution here, continuing to accommodate the concerns of the handful of at risk persons without sacrificing the greater good of our community. **This is why I'm urging you to say NO to the proposed mask mandate.** Should you feel it reasonable to forward this message to members of the City Council for their review as well please feel free to do so.

Respectfully,  
Tiffany Hale