MAYOR’S SEPTEMBER 4, 2020 STATEMENT

The Honorable Joseph M. Corradino

This week we have passed a couple of important milestones. First, we have seen our positivity rate dip below 10%, which is the threshold where the medical professionals feel that we finally have control of the disease. Second, we have reached a hospitalization number that is at where we were during the peak in April.

So, while we have much work to do before those numbers get down to zero, if we continue to do what we are doing now, we can suffocate this disease. Wear a mask, keep your distance from others, stay in small groups, and, when interacting with others, do it outdoors as much as possible. All our hard work is paying off.

September is a critical month. We need to keep the pressure on as the medical professionals anticipate another wave in the next few months. Where we are at the end of September will be an indicator for how we will perform this fall.

The Numbers

Infection Rate: The numbers are going down. When measuring the rate of infection, we have a goal of keeping the percent of positive cases out of total tests under 10% on average over a two-week period. This week, we have reached about 8%. If we can keep doing what we are doing, we can be under 5% by late September. We were at an 8% infection rate in early June. Soon after Memorial Day is when the rate escalated out of control.

Cases: This week, just like last several weeks, most of the cases are occurring in the age group between 18 and 54 years old. The median age is 43. Most hospitalizations are occurring with people over 54 years old. Most deaths are
occurring with people over 65. Most people are reporting getting the disease at home, work and at social gatherings as simple as visiting family and friends or going to activities like a barbecue. Because it is a holiday weekend and there will be lots of parties that will likely produce a spike, it is not time to relax our good habits.

Hospitalizations: At the April peak, we had 710 COVID-19 patients in the hospitals. Because we stayed home for a period of time, that number went down to 546 patients. It stayed flat for two months then rapidly escalated after Memorial Day. It took two months, but the number of COVID-19 patients in the hospital peaked in late July at 2,302, over 320% higher than our April peak. This began to decrease a couple of weeks after the mandatory mask order, the restriction on indoor dining and the curfew. This week we reached 725 patients, 70% less than the July peak, and about equal to the number of people in the hospital at the April peak. We now have the opportunity to drive the hospitalization number down to near zero and let it stabilize before the next anticipated wave.

Utilization: When we measure hospital capacity, we look at beds, ICU beds and ventilators. We should stay below a 70% utilization rate. This is all under control, but the decline in use of ICU bets and ventilators are going down more slowly than any of the other numbers.

Deaths: Average deaths per day over the last month are still rising. Most of the deaths are people over 65.

Contact Tracing/Test Results: We have about 600 tracers where we need 800. Tracers are contacting about 90% of the people that are tested positive. Test results countywide are coming back in less than three days on average. Testing for the disease and the antibodies continues at the Pinecrest Municipal Center. Test results for the swab test are coming back in 48 hours and antibody results are coming back in about 30 minutes. Get tested early and often.

The Future: We finally have reached a point where we can really control the virus. We cannot let down our guard. This September is a very important month. The medical experts have cautioned us to stick with what we are doing. Wear you mask, avoid large gatherings, particularly indoors, and stay 6‘ away from others. They anticipate a wave in the fall following the Labor Day Weekend, the start of colleges and schools and the beginning of flu season. We will have a spike, but if we can end September much better than where we are now, we will have a running start and should be well prepared for the remainder of the fall. If we plateau at the level we are at now, as we did last spring, we could have a rough end of the year. Keep doing what you
are doing; there is light at the end of this tunnel. How difficult or easy we make this is almost totally within our control.

We at the Village of Pinecrest are here to help us get through this crisis. If you need to contact me, please do so at 305-606-2364 or jcorradino@pinecrest-fl.gov. Or contact our staff (manager@pinecrest-fl.gov) and Village Council (council@pinecrest-fl.gov). Each and every one of us is working hard every day as a unified team.