**From:** esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com
**To:** "Tracy Rose"; Brownie W. Newman; Fletcher Tove
**Subject:** RE: Response to critical Xpress letter?
**Date:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020 3:10:13 PM

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Ms. Rose, here's my response
"The City and County have been working in collaboration through our combined emergency response team to build and implement a strategy that keeps our community as safe and healthy as possible. This crisis, unprecedented I our lifetime, has challenged our community as well as all levels of government. I am proud of the local, coordinated response here in Asheville and Buncombe County and the leadership shown by Governor Cooper."

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**From:** Tracy Rose <trose@mountainx.com>
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020 1:20 PM
**To:** Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>; brownie.newman@buncombecounty.org; fletcher.tove@buncombecounty.org
**Subject:** Response to critical Xpress letter?

Dear Mayor Manheimer, Chairman Newman and Mr. Tove:

Hello! I'm the Opinion editor at Mountain Xpress, and we received a letter to the editor that's critical of how you all have responded to the coronavirus crisis.

We typically reach out to individuals who are being criticized with a summary of the writer's points to see if they'd like to offer a short response that would run in an editor's note at the bottom of the letter.

Here are the relevant points:

* Chairman Newman and Mayor Manheimer have failed miserably with the response to the virus, initially trying to carve out your own response.
* With the addition of Fletcher Tove, they learned they were not competent to deal with the virus, so ducked behind state guidelines, with the caveat that they would be more restrictive when it came to tourism
* Hiding behind the state ignores that Buncombe County is vastly different than many other counties, with Buncombe having minuscule case of the virus, low hospitalizations and deaths flat (deaths were elderly people with underlying conditions).
* They put boot on the neck of businesses, further strangling the already-suffering people of city and county
* They cherry pick negative statistics and ignore positive ones.
* Millions of dollars are going from area residents to Tennessee and Georgia, plus

millions from non-county residents who would rather have spent their money here.
* If they are not smart enough to come up with new well-thought out ways to keep the virus at bay and save our future, they could at least copy other states (with masks for employees, strict disinfecting criteria, slightly diminished capacity of spaces, checking temperatures and health of employees, checking temperatures of diners before they enter a restaurant).

Would any of you like to offer a short response? If you could let me know by noon tomorrow (Thursday), then I could take a response as late as the end of the day Friday.

Thanks very much.

**Tracy Rose**
Opinion Editor | Mountain Xpress

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*Local Matters.*