



OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

James M. Kreidler, Jr.
Town Administrator

May 6, 2020

Dear Townsend Community:

I would like to thank you all for your continued cooperation as we navigate these very unprecedented waters.

The following serves as the most current state of affairs for us here in Townsend.

Any matters that have been updated since the last writing are shown in bold and highlighted.

We have taken the following additional protective measures:

- **Town Building Closures Extended-** the town has extended the closure of all town buildings to the public, excluding the public safety buildings, until **May 18, 2020** at which time this access restriction may be adjusted or discontinued.
- **Municipal Workforce-** With the exception of Police and Fire-EMS, the affected town buildings will not be staffed until **May 18, 2020**. Town department heads are working remotely and will still be responding to email questions. Department contact information can be accessed here- <https://www.townsend.ma.us/home/pages/town-directory>
- **Taxes and Fees-** Reminder that the Board of Selectmen voted that the real estate and personal property tax due date has been extended until June 30, 2020 and that all interest and penalties on late excise tax payments will be waived.
- **Library-** The Library has implemented a curbside material pickup program beginning on May 18, 2020. Details can be found on the Library webpage here: <http://www.townsendlibrary.org/>

- **Senior Center**-The Senior Center will continue providing the Meals on Wheels program in an effort to continue these essential services to our senior population. Additionally, they will reopen the Ride Share on a very limited and safety conscious manner effective Thursdays beginning May 6, 2020.
- **Annual Election and Town Meeting**- The town election and the annual town meeting have been postponed.

The town election has been scheduled for June 29, 2020 from 7am to 8 pm.

The Town Clerk strongly encourages residents to vote via mail-in ballot in an effort at being most safety conscious.

For those choosing to vote in person the Clerk has developed protocols that will limit interactions and most safely provide for voting. Access to the building will be limited to the back parking lot doors. The halls will be marked in 6' increments. There will be only two voting booths in use and only two voters allowed in at any one time. Voting booths and pens will be sanitized between users. All exiting the building will be via the front doors (unless the use of the elevator is required).

Town Meeting has been set for June 23, 2020 and is still subject to change based upon social distancing protocols and policy determinations made by the CDC, MDPH, the Governor and the Town.

- **Public Events**- All public events are cancelled between now and May 18, 2020.
- **Face Covering Directive**- Effective May 6, 2020 we are all under the directive issued by Governor Baker re: face coverings. See the directive here: https://www.townsend.ma.us/sites/townsendma/files/uploads/ma_face_mask_order_5-4-20_0.pdf

The Board of Health met on May 5, 2020 and adopted the Governor's directive as the town's position.

Additionally, the Board of Selectmen have directed that employees in municipal buildings must wear face coverings at all times when they cannot achieve social distancing and when in common areas.

- **Accounting, Assessing and Treasurer-Collector**- These financial departments have been changed from non-essential to essential effective Monday May 4, 2020 to best enable us

to keep the financial business of the town operating as efficiently as can be expected during this time.

- Reopening Plan- Over the next week I will be soliciting the written opinions of department heads regarding the inevitable reopening of the town buildings and the return to the provision of public services in a COVID-19 sensitive manner.

These decisions are being made to protect the health and safety of the community, our vulnerable populations, our staff, and to slow the transmission of the virus. As this situation has rapidly evolved and is highly fluid, we will continue to provide updates to the public through the town website, the town wide email, and the local news media.

Please continue to follow the preventative protocols issued through the Department of Public Health and the CDC guidelines and we will continue to post updates with any new information.

As a final note for this report I want to express my gratitude for the extraordinary efforts being made by our frontline essential personnel. Our Police, Fire-EMS, TEMA, Council on Aging and several Highway, Water, Cemetery and Parks and Town Hall team members do not have the luxury of working remotely. They are out performing their crucial functions, on our behalf, day and night during this crisis. Further thanks is due to the often unthought-of family members of these public servants. We truly owe them all our thanks.

Lastly, a note of great appreciation must go out to our local Board of Health and our agents from the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health. They have been on the front end of this pandemic navigating between the realities of a pre-and post-COVID 19 way of life. Their efforts can often go unnoticed and I want to assure them that that is not the case for me and others in our community who remain grateful for their work.

Sincerely,

Jim Kreidler

Jim Kreidler
Townsend Administrator