

First Selectman's Report

May 5, 2020

COVID-19 Update: As of May 5 there are 13 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Morris. While the number of hospitalizations for COVID-19 are decreasing it is still important to continue with social distancing, wearing a face covering and washing your hands often. We are following the Governor's Executive Orders and as things change we will review our policies and change to comply with the Executive Orders.

Town Meetings and Referendums: On May 1st the Governor signed Executive Order 7HH to clarify Executive Order 7I, section 13 to require the budget-making authority (Board of Finance) of every municipality to adopt a budget for the July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021 fiscal year and to set a mill rate and suspends any requirement for a vote on such budget by town meeting or referendum. The Board of Finance, once they have a draft budget to present, will post the draft budget and accept public comment through email for a period of time before they approve the budget and set a mill rate.

Memorial Day and Town Beach: As things change and restrictions from the State ease, we will reassess on how we proceed with Memorial Day ceremonies and the opening of the Town Beach. At this point in time there won't be a parade, but we will have a small ceremony at each cemetery and a small service that we will air on Facebook and the Town website for viewing. It does not appear that the Town Beach will be open before the 23rd of May.

Low Interest Rate Program: On April 21st the Board of Selectmen voted to approve an option proposed by the Governor in Executive Order 7s 6(b) which allows a municipality to place a lower (3%) interest on current back taxes until July 1 and on past due taxes from July 1 to October 1st in place of the current tax penalty.

Transfer Station: Things at the Transfer Station are starting to return to normal. Brush and leaves are now being accepted on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, but not on Sundays. The Transfer Station remains closed on Saturdays from 11- Noon and no fee based items accepted at this time. The Swap Shop remains closed. It is our goal to open everything back up by May 20th with exception of the Swap Shop which will remain closed for the time being.

Morris Public Library: The Library is now offering library book pick up by appointment. For details and any questions, please contact the library at 860-567-7440 or email at egranoth@biblio.org. Check out their website at morrispubliclibrary.net.

Personal Protective Equipment: The State of Connecticut has partnered with CBIA-CONNSTEP to assist in the distribution of donated surgical masks to eligible, essential small businesses with 50 employees or less. These eligible, essential small businesses and their employees located within our Town are the backbone of our economies and these masks will help to ensure their continuity. The Town will pick up the masks ordered by Morris businesses this coming Thursday

and distribute them to the businesses that ordered them. So far we have had two businesses sign up and have received their deliveries.

Smokey Hollow Bridge Project: The project is over 80% complete and is expected to be completed by the end of May. The project was delayed one month due to issues with the steel delivery from PA and modifications that needed to be made. There was a pre-paving meeting today and it is expected to have the paving completed by May 12th. The Town received payment from the State for the 150,000 STEAP Grant that was approved for this project and is receiving the 80% reimbursement from the Federal Government as well.

Morris Fire Company and the Morris Food Pantry: We would like to thank the Morris Fire Company for organizing and collecting food for the Morris Food Pantry this past Sunday night during their weekly Fire Truck Parade along with Litchfield Volunteer Ambulance. Also, a big thank you to all those that donated food!

Tom Weik

First Selectman

