



Office of the City Manager

TO: Mayor Dana S. Hilliard and City Council Members
FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager
DATE: Friday, May 29, 2020
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for Monday, June 1, 2020

Unfinished Business (Under Section 14 of Agenda)

Ordinances

- A. Ordinance No. 20-20: Supplemental Appropriation to Install Fencing and Other Improvements for a Dog Park at Millennium Park.** Again, the Finance Committee and Recreation Committee voted to sponsor this Ordinance regarding a Supplemental Appropriation for the Dog Park at Millennium Park. As noted, the funding for this project is provided by a combination of donations received through the Dog Park Funding Campaign (to date: \$2,006.00) and the transfer from the Cable Fund to the General Fund of \$18,000.

Resolutions

- A. Resolution No. 48-20: Vote to Authorize a Bond for Road, Sidewalk, Drainage, Water, Sewer and Other Improvements to Cemetery Road.** Again, the Finance Committee voted to sponsor this Resolution and to move forward with this Bond recommendation. The Bond calls for 15 years, however, Council has the option to change the length of the Bond amortization.
- B. Resolution No. 49-20: Vote to Adopt a Policy of Staffing the Fire Department With a Minimum of Four (4) Firefighters on Each Shift.** Mayor Hilliard referred this Resolution to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet on June 9th at 3:30 p.m. to discuss this Staffing Policy.

New Business (Under Section 15 of Agenda)

Ordinances

- A. Ordinance No. 21-20: Add to Chapter 19 Zoning Ordinance, Section 19.20.D.2.F, Somersworth Plaza Signage.** The Economic Development Committee met on May 13th and voted to send the Plaza Signage standards to City Council for consideration as an Amendment to the Chapter 19 Zoning Ordinance. The Economic Development Committee has been scrubbing this proposal over several meetings with Staff. Attached is a Memorandum from Director Shanna Saunders that provides some background information. I recommend a Public Hearing be scheduled at the next regular Council meeting.

City Manager's Items (under section 11 of Agenda)

A. Informational Items.

1. Upcoming *Draft* City Council Meeting Schedule Items – Pending Mayoral Approval.

➤ Monday, June 15

- 6:00pm: City Council Workshop regarding New Fire Station Presentation by Port One Architects
- 7:00pm: City Council Meeting
New Fire Station Bond Resolution's First Reading

➤ Monday, July 13

- 6:00pm: City Council Workshop regarding Form Based Codes
- 7:00pm: City Council Meeting to include City Auditor's Presentation of Financial Statements Year Ending June 30, 2019

Attachments

- 1. City Attorney Certifications One (1)**
- 2. City Department Operations – Updates & COVID-19 Memorandum emailed on May 28th**



City of Somersworth – Ordinance

Ordinance No: 20-20

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION TO INSTALL FENCING AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS FOR A DOG PARK AT MILLENNIUM PARK

May 18, 2020

THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH ORDAINS THAT pursuant to Section 7.7(A) of the City Charter:

The annual budget for the City of Somersworth for Fiscal Year 19-20 is amended as follows:

Appropriate \$20,000 from unanticipated City revenue and a transfer from the Cable Fund to the Capital Outlay section of the FY19-20 General Fund budget as follows:

Revised Budget
\$ 537,913

Amendment
\$ 20,000

Revised Budget
\$ 557,913

Approved as to Funding:

Scott A. Smith
Director of Finance and Administration

Recorded by:

Kelly Gagne
Deputy City Clerk

Background:

This Ordinance appropriates funding to install fencing, signage, and other improvements for use as a dog park at Millennium Park. The funding for this project is provided by a combination of estimated donations received \$2,000 and a transfer from the Cable Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$18,000.

This Ordinance requires a public hearing and requires a 2/3 majority vote of the City Council after the public hearing subject to Section 7.4.1 and Section 7.7 (A) of the City Charter.

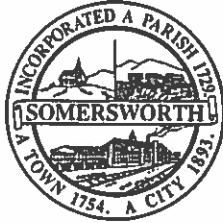
Authorization

Sponsored by:

David A. Witham
Nancie Cameron
Donald Austin
Richard Michaud
Martin P. Dumont, Sr.
Martin Pepin
Crystal Paradis

Approved:

City Attorney



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: 48-20

VOTE TO AUTHORIZE A BOND FOR ROAD, SIDEWALK, DRAINAGE, WATER, SEWER AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO CEMETERY ROAD

May 18, 2020

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted Resolution 18-18 to authorize the City Manager to contract with Wright Pierce Engineers of Portsmouth, NH to provide engineering and design services for various complete streets projects which included Cemetery Road, and

WHEREAS, the engineering and design for the improvements to Cemetery Road are nearing completion, and

WHEREAS, Wright Pierce Engineers has estimated the cost to construct the improvements to Cemetery Road to be \$3,800,000 (Three Million Eight Hundred Thousand dollars), and

WHEREAS, the project cost includes engineering, contract administration, construction inspection, and construction of road, sidewalk, drainage, water, and sewer improvements to Cemetery Road, as well as other associated ancillary costs (collectively, the "Project"),

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT an amount not to exceed \$3,800,000 (Three Million Eight Hundred Thousand dollars) is appropriated for the Project, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

- (a.) the City Manager is authorized to borrow up to \$3,800,000 (Three Million Eight Hundred Thousand dollars) under the Municipal Finance Act and issue bonds and notes payable within 15 years from their dates, and
- (b.) the City Manager is authorized to issue temporary notes in anticipation of the issue of these bonds or notes, and
- (c.) the City Manager is authorized to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project, and
- (d.) the estimated useful life of this project is expected to exceed 15 years.

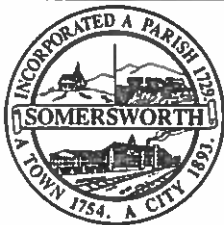
Authorization

Sponsored by Councilors:

David A. Witham
Donald Austin
Martin P. Dumont, Sr
Martin Pepin

Approved:

City Attorney



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: **49-20**

VOTE TO ADOPT A POLICY OF STAFFING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT WITH A MINIMUM OF FOUR (4) FIREFIGHTERS ON EACH SHIFT

May 18, 2020

WHEREAS, the current policy of the City of Somersworth is to staff a minimum of four (4) firefighters on each night shift and a minimum of three (3) firefighters on each day shift, and

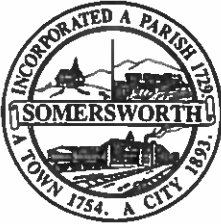
WHEREAS, after review of this policy the recommendation is to increase minimum staffing to four (4) firefighters on all shifts which will benefit the City by improving efficiency and response capability of the Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, the recommendation to change this policy has been reviewed by the Public Safety Committee and they support this change and further recommend that the City Manager cover any incremental cost increases due to this policy change from the current FY2020 budget and the FY2021 approved budget through City Charter Transfer of Appropriations authorizations outlined in Ch. 7.6 (D) ,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City adopt a policy of staffing the Fire Department with a minimum of four (4) firefighters on each shift, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the City Manager shall cover any incremental cost increase due to this policy change from the current budget as outlined in the City Charter, Transfer of Appropriations, Ch. 7.6 (D).

Authorization	
<i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> Martin Pepin Kenneth S. Vincent Crystal Paradis	<i>Approved:</i> City Attorney



City of Somersworth – Ordinance

Ordinance No: 21-20

ADD TO CHAPTER 19 ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 19.20.D.2.f, SOMERSWORTH PLAZA SIGNAGE

June 1, 2020

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOMERSWORTH THAT the Ordinances of the City of Somersworth, as amended, be further amended as follows:

Add to Chapter 19 Zoning Ordinance, Section 19.20.D.2.f Somersworth Plaza Signage:

19.20.D.2.f Somersworth Plaza Signage

- 19.20.D.2.f.i The Somersworth Plaza is owned by the City and is a significant part of the Main Street economic community. For that reason, the City of Somersworth has direct jurisdiction over both freestanding signs and signs on the façade of buildings that are part of the Plaza. The City encourages sign designs that enhance the aesthetic quality of Downtown and the Main Street economic sector. Applications shall include the Development services Sign application, renderings of the proposed signs and pictures of the façade showing sign placement. Applications shall be submitted to the City Manager's office for acceptance and subsequent review by the City Council Economic Development Committee.
- 19.20.D.2.f.ii The structural aspects of signs that are part of the Plaza, such as poles, supports and cabinets should be constructed of colors and materials related to the principal building. Signs shall be constructed of durable materials. Paper, cloth, canvas and plastic sheet signs are prohibited.
- 19.20.D.2.f.iii When signs are removed or replaced with a sign of a different shape or size, all holes shall be patched and surfaces repainted or refinished to match surrounding wall surfaces. Business logos are encouraged when combined with business names.
- 19.20.D.2.f.iv Freestanding signs shall be as follows:
- 19.20.D.2.f.iv.a One (1) free standing identification sign shall be allowed for the entire plaza;
- 19.20.D.2.f.iv.b The maximum sign area allowed shall be twenty (20) square feet for site/building/center identification and address plus an additional four (4) square feet for each business to a maximum of fifty-six (56) square feet (10 businesses).
- 19.20.D.2.f.iv.c Max sign height is 12 feet. Landscaping is required around the freestanding sign to reduce the emphasis on the mechanical and support aspects of the sign.

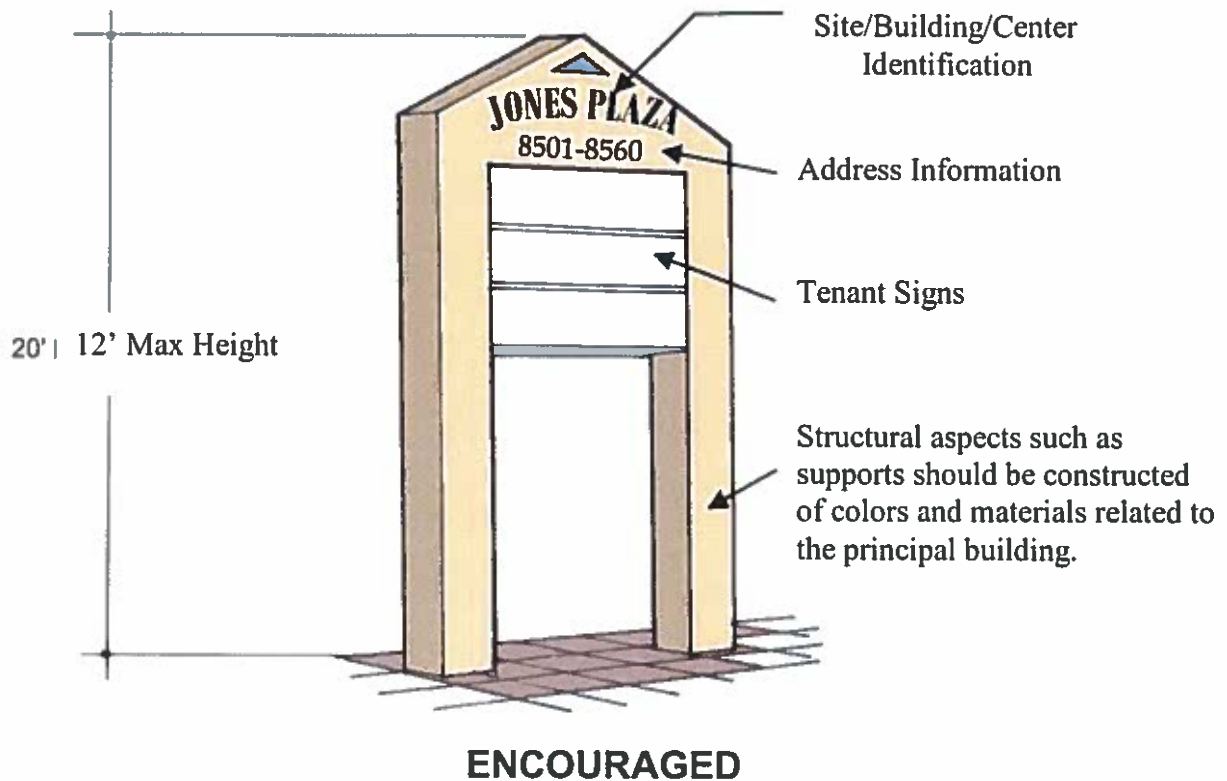


Figure 1

19.20.D.2.f.v In addition, wall signs are permitted to have a sign area of up to 1 sf per linear foot of the principal business frontage. Wall signs shall be placed on the beige stucco horizontal panel between the round light fixtures. Units directly under each of the two towers may place signage on the tower itself in a location approved by the City.

19.20.D.2.f.vi Window signs are permitted and must follow Zoning Ordinance Section 19.20.C.3.w, "Window Signs".

19.20.D.2.f.vii Special Event signs are permitted and must follow Zoning Ordinance Section 19.20.C.3.r, "Special Use/Event Signs".

This Ordinance will take effect upon passage.

Authorization	
<i>Sponsored by Councilors:</i> Martin P. Dumont, Sr. Richard R. Michaud Crystal Paradis	<i>Approved:</i> City Attorney



**Shanna B. Saunders, Director
Development Services**

To: Bob Belmore
Date: May 28th, 2020
Re: Plaza Signage Plan

The existing Somersworth Plaza signage rules were roughly drafted under the Urban Renewal project of the 1960's. That original guidance has survived for decades without change. Recently Stripe 9 Brewing moved into the Plaza and completely renovated the unit, which led to a lot of out-of-the-box thinking. Including about signs. We realized it was time to update the outdated and antiquated rules.

Drafting the document was a series of different thought processes. The Somersworth Plaza is in the Business District. We liked some of the underlying Business Zone regulations but saw that they didn't address large scale buildings such as the Plaza and didn't require consistency across all signs in a building where the architecture from unit to unit is consistent because of the façade.

For that reason, we allowed for larger sized signs at the Plaza than in the rest of the district and spoke specifically to the large freestanding sign and the placement of signs on the two towers. We integrated the language right into the existing zoning section that regulated signage in the Business District.

The proposed Ordinance amendment follows:

**Shanna B. Saunders, Director
Development Services**

To: Bob Belmore
Date: May 12, 20120
Re: Plaza Signage Plan

The Plaza is currently in the Business (B) Zoning district. My recommendation is that we simply amend the existing sign ordinance, B-zoning section, to include more details about the Plaza property.

EXISTING:

19.20.D.2 Business District (B):

19.20.D.2.a Signs attached to buildings are limited in area so that the sign shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total area of the front wall (face) of the building. In the case of a multi-story building, the sign shall not be more than ten percent (10%) of the face of the first story.

19.20.D.2.b No wall sign shall be erected which is greater than one third (1/3) of the height of the first story.

19.20.D.2.c Signs associated with businesses that close at 10:00 pm or earlier shall shut off all lighted signs at 10:00 pm. Signs associated with businesses that close later than 10:00 pm shall shut off all lighted signs at closing time.

19.20.D.2.d In addition to the total allowable sign area, canopy signs may cover up to ten (10%) percent of the area of the canopy façade.

19.20.D.2.e One freestanding sign per lot is permitted. The size of said freestanding sign shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet in surface area on each of two sides or a total of forty (40) square feet on all sides.

No freestanding sign shall be more than eight feet (8') in height above finish grade. Height shall be measured vertically from the established average grade directly below the sign to the highest point of the sign including support structures. No portion of the sign may extend into a public right of way.

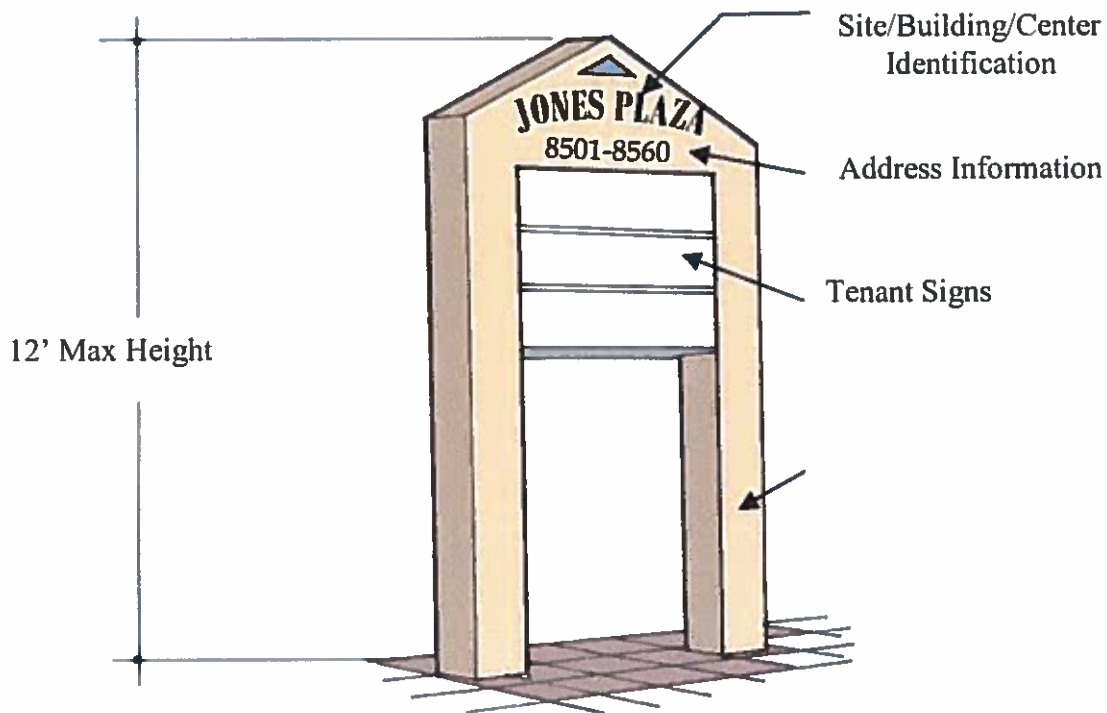
NEW:

19.20.D.2.f The Somersworth Plaza is owned by the City and is a significant part of the Main Street economic community. For that reason, the City of Somersworth has direct jurisdiction over both freestanding signs and signs on the façade of buildings that are part of the Plaza. The City encourages sign designs that enhance the aesthetic quality of Downtown and the Main Street economic sector. Applications shall include the Development services Sign application, renderings of the proposed signs and pictures of the façade showing sign placement. Applications shall be submitted to the City Manager's office for acceptance and subsequent review by the City Council Economic Development Committee.

The structural aspects of signs that are part of the Plaza, such as poles, supports and cabinets should be constructed of colors and materials related to the principal building. Signs shall be constructed of durable materials. Paper, cloth, canvas and plastic sheet signs are prohibited. When signs are removed or replaced with a sign of a different shape or size all holes shall be patched and surfaces repainted or refinished to match surrounding wall surfaces. Business logos are encouraged when combined with business names.

Freestanding signs shall be as follows: One (1) free standing identification signs shall be allowed for the entire plaza; The maximum sign area allowed shall be twenty (20) square feet for site/building/center identification and address plus an additional four (4) square feet for each business to a maximum of fifty-six (56) square feet (10 businesses).

Max sign height is 12 feet. Landscaping is required around the freestanding sign to reduce the emphasis on the mechanical and support aspects of the sign.



ENCOURAGED

In addition, wall signs are permitted to have a sign area of up to 1 sf per linear foot of the business. Wall signs shall be placed on the beige stucco horizontal panel between the round light fixtures. Units directly under each of the two towers may place signage on the tower itself in an location approved by the City.

Window signs are permitted and must follow Zoning Ordinance Section 19.20.C.3.w, "Window Signs".

Special Event signs are permitted and must follow Zoning Ordinance Section 19.20.C.3.r, "Special Use/Event Signs".

MITCHELL MUNICIPAL GROUP, P.A.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
25 BEACON STREET EAST
LACONIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03246
www.mitchellmunicipalgroup.com

WALTER L. MITCHELL
LAURA A. SPECTOR-MORGAN
STEVEN M. WHITLEY
NAOMI N. BUTTERFIELD
JOSEPH H. DRISCOLL, IV
JUDITH E. WHITELAW (OF COUNSEL)

TELEPHONE (603) 524-3885

May 28, 2020

CERTIFICATION

Re: City of Somersworth, New Hampshire

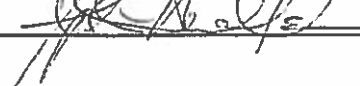
Ordinance No. 21-20

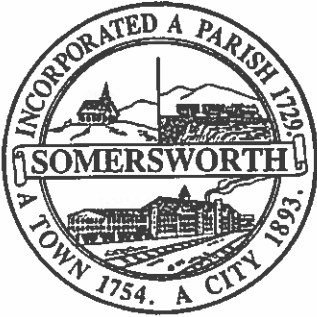
Title: ADD TO CHAPTER 19 ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 19.20.D.2.f.
SOMERSWORTH PLAZA SIGNAGE

This is to confirm that in accordance with Somersworth City Council Rules and Regulations #17 (D)1, we have reviewed the above referenced Ordinance. To our examination it is in correct technical form, and to our understanding is not repugnant to the laws and constitution of the State of New Hampshire nor the Charter and Ordinances of the City of Somersworth.

MITCHELL MUNICIPAL GROUP, P.A.
City Attorney

Date: 5/28/2020

By: 



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Dana Hilliard and Members of the City Council

CC: Department Heads

FROM: Robert M. Belmore, City Manager

DATE: May 28, 2020

RE: City Department Operations – Updates & COVID 19 Adjustments

City Management – HR

- City Council meetings have been held via Zoom and Council Committee meetings are back in more of a regular meeting schedule via Zoom. City Council meeting packets will continue to be available electronically with hard copies via the drive-thru window or at your City Hall mail box.
- Employment recruitment: candidates are being interviewed primarily via Zoom as we have moved forward in filling positions recently such as Library Director.

Finance Department Operations

- The Tax Office is operating the drive-thru window for customers and is seeing a great deal of activity. In addition to that we are encouraging residents to utilize our on-line and mail in processes for property taxes, utility bills, and motor vehicle registrations.
- We are currently putting together the details to begin providing curbside delivery of books and other materials from the Library for patrons. We anticipate having a plan together for the City Manager to review and hopefully begin providing this service soon.
- We are putting together a list of where we will need Plexiglas barriers, mainly areas that will be dealing directly with the public upon re-opening and planning on getting those in place.

Development Services Operations

- **Economic Development Recovery Aide:** We continue to let our business owners know about recovery aide including the SBA-SBDC Funds, or Main Street Relief Fund of \$ 400 Million. This program has a mandatory prequalification form due by May 29 and the Paycheck Protection Program: The PPP was extended into “round two”. Many Somersworth Businesses applied and received funding.

- **Restaurant Temporary Opening:** Consistent with the Governors "Stay at Home 2.0" Order, effective May 18 Somersworth restaurants may open for outside service. A temporary application has been developed and disseminated. 3 Restaurants (Gravy, Stripe 9 and the Oaks) have currently been approved with more in the pipeline.
- **Permits through the Drive- thru:** Has been very successful for both building related permits (building, electrical, plumbing mechanical) and Land Use Board permits, (Planning Board, ZBA, Con Com and HDC).
- **Virtual Land Use Board Meetings:** In the month of May we have held successful Conservation Commission, Planning Boards and Historic District Commission meetings virtually, via Zoom. This allows for only staff and the Chairperson to be here in City Hall, while all Board Members and Applicants video conference into the meeting.
- **Parks:** We will be placing signs at our parks to remind the public to adhere to CDC guidelines. The signs are ordered and placement very soon.

Public Works & Utilities Operations

- All City facilities have been closed to the public. Only City staff has been allowed to go to any of the City facilities. We have centralized the pickup and distribution of inter office mail to reduce the number of employees that need to enter/exit City facilities.
- DPW facility is using a set of signs on the main entrance door that directs visitors to a make shift "drive up window", where residents/citizens knock on the window and staff provides assistance. All residents must first check in with Department staff before being allowed to enter into the back of the facility to drop off metal item or seek access to the waste oil tank. Other request at the window involve day passes to the Malley Farm Brush Pile, dropping off completed Public Works related permits, including trench opening, obstruction and driveway permit applications, or dropping off an electronic waste or metal waste item. Overall, the access restrictions have gone well and the public has been responsive.
- Staff is seeing an uptick in the number of driveway permits being submitted during this time. Something I had not expected. Trench and obstruction permits are running about the same if not a bit lower than in past years at this time.
- Participation at the Community Gardens at Malley Farm is at an all-time high, with virtually every garden plot "adopted" and worked on by a garden volunteer. Volunteer Garden Stewards are doing a good job of reminding other gardeners to practice social distancing and using other CDC recommended protection while working at the garden when others are present.
- Department staff report to have adequate supplies of PPE; we did obtain face coverings several weeks ago from the Fire Chief and reordered hand sanitizer for Highway personnel. Other Divisions report having adequate supplies at this time. I did reach out to the Fire Chief and the EMT Director on obtaining two (2) N-95 Face Masks for our Water Distribution staff that occasionally must do utility inspections at new construction sites.

- Divisions are practicing social distancing at work; Highway personnel are no longer holding briefings together in the break room in the morning; instead get their instructions from the General Foreman in the open vehicle storage area and employee gatherings are kept to a minimum. The General Foreman has kept some pairs of employees together during this time, employees' assignments facilitate keeping at a distance from each other.
- We added standard messaging around practicing social distancing with our announcement notices that the Malley Farm was opening for the spring.
- Department staff meetings are now conducted remotely; use of zoom technology is the current platform used for holding weekly staff meetings with all Supervisors and the Director.

Police Department Operations

- When possible, calls for service are now conducted telephonically.
- Access to the Police Department has been restricted to the lobby area unless necessary. We are not fingerprinting individuals for employment during Governor's Stay at Home directives.
- We are responding to calls that are in progress. These include disturbances, domestics, thefts and motor vehicle incidents. We are also responding to calls that may require evidence processing at the scene. Officers, when able, are practicing social distancing, and are utilizing protective gear when needed. When it is appropriate, we try to meet people outside of their homes.
- Whenever possible, arrestees are being released on summonses in lieu of bail. This is done to further reduce our contact and potential exposure to infected individuals.
- We have limited our response to medical calls to life threatening calls only, unless asked by EMS to respond.

Fire Department Operations

- The Fire Station remains closed to the public. Burn permits available on-line.
- We minimize the number of personnel who enter a residence or have close contact with the patient on an EMS call.
- Whenever possible, we have the patient on a medical call meet the first responders outside to minimize inside exposure.
- The FD has increased cleaning and has extensive COVID-19 protocols in place.