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March 26, 2020

Greetings:

As you know, Governor Charlie Baker declared a State of Emergency in Massachusetts on March 10, 2020. As the COVID19 crisis continues to unfold, the Select Board and I want to be sure you are staying up to date on the situation and getting your information from reliable sources. Therefore, we encourage you to visit www.Mass.gov/COVID19 and do so frequently. The site has the latest information and links to other State-vetted sites.

The Select Board commends our Police, Fire, Ambulance Staff, and Board of Health Agents for all they are doing to keep our community safe at this challenging time. These individuals and many other Hinsdale residents work on the front lines, and we are so very grateful for their efforts. We also are grateful to all of you for doing your part by complying with the Governor's directives to limit exposure by staying home.

We also want to do a shout-out to Transfer Station Agent Barry O'Keefe for his tireless efforts running the Transfer Station. Right now, Barry needs all our cooperation, as the State DEP just suspended the bottle bill due to Safety Concerns of redemption center employees. So, please DO NOT bring your bottles and cans to the Transfer Station either. Wash them out, dry them out, and stockpile them for redemption at a later date – we do not want to put Barry or anyone else at risk. For more on the State DEP's recent action, see <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-environmental-protection>.

The Town's Department Heads, Staff, Committee Chairs, and I are doing our best to keep things running, spending limited time in the Town Hall, and working remotely via our IT connections to the Town's system from our homes. Our IT Contractor John Shannon also deserves our thanks. John has been helping many of us get our remote connects functioning while maintaining the integrity of the Town's systems.

Below there is some repetitive information and some new material:

Police/Emergency Services

- The Hinsdale Police and Emergency Services remain open and operational 24/7.
 - **Call 911 for Emergency Service**
 - Call 413-655-0201 for non-emergency service

Town Hall

- The Town Hall is closed to the public until further notice.
- Staff members are working in the building periodically, but mostly from home, checking email, voicemail, and US mail.
- Please address your questions or concerns to the specific department via email addresses found here: <https://www.hinsdalemass.com/directory>. If you are unsure of where to address an inquiry, feel free to contact me and I will forward the question to the appropriate staff member, and copy you so staff members may respond directly to you.

Meetings

- All meetings are suspended until Monday, April 6, 2020, at which time the Select Board will adjust this suspension based on recommendations of the Governor's Office.
 - Exceptions to the meeting suspension – The Select Board is holding teleconference business meetings without public comment, in accordance with the Governor's adjustment to the Open Meeting Law during the crisis.
 - The public is allowed to listen in via conference call-in, but space is limited to 40 call participants (which has not been a problem to date). We will share information on how to call-in with each agenda posting.
- The Open Meeting guidelines have been altered due to COVID State of Emergency, and are available on www.Mass.gov/COVID site.
- In consultation with the Select Board Chair or Town Administrator, a committee chair may choose to hold a specific meeting(s) via conference call, if the Select Board believes the meeting is essential to the functioning of the Town. These meetings must be held on the Town's system, so please contact Lynne Baumgartner or me if you need assistance setting-up

- Minutes of any meeting(s) during this period will be kept and posted accordingly.

Staff and the Ongoing Business

- We have installed a “drop-box” at the Town Hall for your convenience. The drop-box is located on the driveway side entrance from the Town Hall’s second floor (at the back of the building). We will check for items each business day.

Transfer Station

- The Transfer Station is remaining open on the regular schedule, but the Select Board has suspended the bag-tag requirement until further notice.

The Town will continue to post Town-information and updates on the website and please frequent www.Mass.gov/COVID for the latest from the State, with links to other vetted resources.

Thank you in advance for your on-going patience, support, and cooperation. Stay well.

Sincerely,

Bob Graves
Town Administrator

For more information about COVID19 and the on-going State of Emergency:

The Center for Disease Control - [click here](#) - updated daily

Mass.gov [click here](#) - updated daily

Memorandum From the Hinsdale Board of Health - [click here](#)

Massachusetts Public Health Fact Sheet - [click here](#)

Massachusetts State of Emergency - updated 3/12/20 - [click here](#)

Family Emergency Action Plan - [click here](#)

Emergency Order Modifying the State’s Open Meeting Law - updated on 3/13/20 [click here](#)



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