



**DATE:** March 27, 2020  
**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Ryan Mahoney, Town Manager  
**RE:** Weekly Update  
**CC:** Department Heads

Staff has been focusing on our COVID-19 response this week. We have been following the health orders of Eagle and Pitkin Counties and have continued to update our response in alignment with the updated health order from Governor Polis. This means that all non-essential retail have been closed and a stricter “stay at home” order was implemented. An unfortunate but reasonable causality in Governor Polis’ health order was the requirement to close all Basalt playgrounds. While being outside for exercise is still encouraged, playgrounds were seen as an opportunity for congregation which runs counter to the intent of the health order.

We continue to rely on both counties to regularly update their communications and are also participating in various community outreach efforts with them. Yesterday I was able to provide an update to the community during the Pitkin County community meeting which was hosted by Pitkin County. That can be found here:

<https://pitkincounty.ompnetwork.org/embed/sessions/131451/covid-19-public-meeting-3-26-20>

Staff has continued to stay in touch with our school officials as well. The District is working to get on-line learning kicked off and continue to provide food distribution service for their student-families. The food distribution will start next Monday, March 30. Here is a link to the District COVID-19 response: <https://www.rfsd.k12.co.us/coronavirus-96ad1d7f#>

Starting next Thursday, April 2nd, a Pitkin County Department of Health and Human Services food distribution site will be set up at the Basalt Middle School. The distribution site will take place once a week, every Thursday, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. The distribution of food will be conducted by Aspen Ski Company employees. Chief Greg Knott is working with their planning team to create pedestrian and traffic control plans. For the first distribution we are expecting 225 families to be served. There is no pre-qualification required for families to visit the distribution site and pick up prepackaged items.

## **Public Works**

Public Works is still doing clean up from winter. We are using a small tractor with a rotary brush to move the sanding material out of the roadside grass and walkways. We then use the street sweeper to pick up and haul the material away.

The windy weather has been keeping Public Works busy this week. We received a call Tuesday night from a police officer that a tree was blown down on Two Rivers Road. Staff came in that evening to remove the tree and get it safely out of the roadway. It was cleaned up and hauled out the next morning.

## Planning

**Willits Town Center** – The Aspen Skiing Company is installing deep utilities and is working on the foundation for the building. They are in close contact with Staff as we work through safe construction practices related to the Governor’s Health Order. Staff is working through site plan and engineering for Block 11 north which is still proceeding to obtain a building permit on the mixed-use building.

**Green Team** – The Hard to Recycle Event which was originally scheduled for the third week in April is being delayed. We will let you know when we have a better feeling about a new date. Implementation of Electric Cold Climate Heat Pump for Town Hall has been delayed until the Town has a better understanding the economic impacts of COVID – 19. The subcommittee is continuing to discuss the best way of achieving the goals of the project to facilitate implementation if and when a decision is made to move forward.

**Stott’s Mill-** Staff continues to work with the Applicant on the entitlement documents.

**2020 Census** –The Census is available to the public: <https://my2020census.gov/>. In light of COVID-19, the Aspen to Parachute Complete Count Committee (A2PCCC) is focusing its efforts on digital outreach. The A2PCCC has social media presence across various channels and a video featuring RFV locals that can be shared.

**Update on Upcoming Seasonal Events** – The Council approved the two resolutions for the Basalt Sunday Market and Community Garden for Council at its March 24<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Staff is working with the Community Garden managers on some additional guidelines related to physical distancing and use of common tools during the pandemic.

**BACH** - The Commission met via teleconference to discuss providing a recommendation to the Town's Special Housing Evaluation Committee (SHEC) regarding waiving the minimum work hours requirement for those living in the Town's affordable housing units if their inability to meet the required hours is due to the pandemic. BACH also is looking into the process to make an application for DOLA funding for housing assistance. This information will be provided to the Town Manager for further consideration.

**POST** – POST met via ZOOM on Wednesday. Staff reviewed the status of 2020 projects and how COVID-19 may affect planned projects.

**Construction/Development** – The Building and Planning Departments have responded to many questions about the effect of the Pitkin County and Governor’s Health Order and concern with the chain of supplies. Staff discussed the effect of COVID-19 on construction starts and for staff to gauge reductions on building department revenues through 2020. Staff is working on procedures for quasi-judicial hearings for meetings that are held electronically as we are processing a couple applications for accessory dwelling units.

## Police

The police department continues to be in full operation and out in the community assisting our residents. One police officer, who became ill and was placed on a 14 day home quarantine, has been released and will be back to work Friday night.

We are continuing the background investigation for our police officer applicant who was extended a conditional job offer of employment. He has passed his psychological, polygraph and medical examinations. We are contacting personal references and previous employers to finalize our investigation.

Our household medication take-back program continues to be operation. On Thursday the police department safely disposed of another 24.9 pounds of medications. Since we started the take-back program, in May 2018, we have disposed of 206 pounds of unused medications.

## Finance

The Finance Department has been working diligently to create COVID-19 policies for Town employees that create the flexibility needed to keep our employees safe, comply with new legislation, and allow the Town to continue essential functions. The following policies/processes have been implemented with an email distributed to all employees:

- **Governor's Stay at Home Order** - All employees are considered essential to Town functions at this point, and are therefore exempt from the Governor's Stay at Home Order. However, the only way that employees may work on Town premises is if employees adhere to the strict 6 foot physical distancing requirements at all times.
- **Telecommuting Policy** – The Town has created a policy allowing employees to telecommute on a case by case basis when it is in the benefit of the employee and the Town. This allows our employees with children or with other COVID-19 needs to continue to maintain their productivity during this challenging time.
- **Communicable Disease Policy** - The Town has implemented a Communicable Disease Policy that ensures the fair treatment of all employees during this epidemic.
- **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Update** - The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was recently enacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This Act expands FMLA paid leave under certain situations, and applies from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. The Town is geared for full compliance with this unfunded federal requirement. CML is working with legislators in an attempt to change the requirements so that municipal governments may receive reimbursements for expenditures due to compliance with this order.

On the finance side, Jenny and I are busily working on closing the books for the 2019 audit that is coming up in mid-April. The audit will be performed virtually. I'm also working on a spreadsheet of potential financial impacts due to COVID-19 for 2020. Ryan and I are mulling over this spreadsheet to assure the numbers are quantified to the best of our ability, given the number of variables and unknowns at this point.