

**Town of Brattleboro**  
**COVID-19 Response Status**  
**March 16, 2020**  
**4:30pm**

**An Update to the Community from Brattleboro Town Manager Peter Elwell:**

The United States Government and the State of Vermont are operating under State of Emergency declarations issued by President Trump and Governor Scott related to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. The Town of Brattleboro, as a subdivision of the State of Vermont, is taking emergency actions in accordance with Governor Scott's declaration of a State of Emergency for all of Vermont.

Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, who also is the Town's Emergency Management Director, is in close ongoing communication with Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, Rescue Inc., and other emergency health service providers. Chief Bucossi and Town Manager Peter Elwell are in daily communication with the Vermont Department of Health and Vermont Emergency Management. Through this coordination, they are not only ensuring the preparedness of Brattleboro town government but also assisting in the preparedness of first responders throughout southeastern Vermont. All other members of the Town's senior management team are maintaining similarly close contact with their colleagues in State government and others to ensure that the Town's actions are taken in concert with similar actions to protect the public throughout Vermont and beyond.

**WHAT IS NEW TODAY**

- All Town facilities will be closed to the public beginning Wednesday, March 18.
- All Town departments will continue to be available to the public via telephone and email.
- Some employees will work from home. Other employees will continue to report to work.
- All regularly scheduled Town board, committee, and commission meetings are cancelled until further notice.
- All reservations for use of Town facilities by non-Town organizations are cancelled until further notice.
- The Planning Services Department will be accepting zoning permit and development applications by mail or email. Any application that can be administratively issued will be processed. Any application requiring a hearing will be delayed until such time as public meetings resume.
- Police Officers will be responding to medical calls only when there is an in-progress safety concern (e.g. a situation in which someone is threatening to hurt themselves or other people).
- The Police Department is not performing Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) verifications until further notice.
- The Police Department is not receiving parking fines until further notice.
- The Town Clerk's Office has extended the deadline for dog licensing until further notice.
- The Recreation and Parks Department is taking mail-in registration for Spring Youth Sports. Participants will receive a credit on their account for program cancellations.
- Water+Sewer crews will not enter private buildings until further notice. People who experience service problems should call the Department of Public Works, as usual. A DPW crew will address the situation on the outside of the building. If that does not resolve the issue, then the owner/customer will need to hire a private plumber to address the issue on the interior of the building.
- Due to the Governor's order prohibiting gatherings of more than 50 people, Town staff is recommending to the Selectboard that the Representative Town Meeting scheduled for March 21 be canceled and that it be re-called when it becomes legal and prudent to do so. The Selectboard will consider that matter at its meeting tomorrow, March 17, at 6:15pm at the Municipal Center.

The following information has previously been announced by the Town to the community, although some of the items have been modified to update the details. These sections continue to be separated into “Emergency Services,” “Non-Emergency and Administrative Support Services,” and “Representative Town Meeting and Other Meetings”:

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

- Dispatch is screening for COVID-19 on all calls.
- All emergency services are conducting “doorway assessments” for COVID-19 before entering into buildings.
- Inter-agency protocols for handling potential COVID-19 patients are in place, including details such as how this type of response will differ from normal EMS protocols, what special protective equipment will be used, how affected equipment will be cleaned after the call, etc.
- Both BPD and BFD have implemented best practices for more rigorous than normal cleaning of facilities and equipment, for the use of personal protective equipment, and for decontamination (when needed) after calls.
- Only essential personnel will be allowed inside the fire stations until further notice.
- Both BPD and BFD have plans in place for how additional special procedures will be implemented if our area experiences increased impacts from COVID-19.
- Contingency plans include coordination with other emergency service providers in our region for mutual aid coverage of essential services, as needed.

### **NON-EMERGENCY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES**

- All departments have implemented best practices for more rigorous than normal cleaning of facilities and equipment.
- Employees are being cross-trained to keep as much of Town government as possible functioning normally if we experience future staffing shortages due to quarantine requirements or other factors.
- Special procedures are being implemented at the Water Treatment Plant and Wastewater Treatment Facilities in close coordination with the Vermont Department of Health and other authorities.
- Fire Safety and Rental Housing inspections have been canceled until further notice.
- Brooks Memorial Library is closed until further notice, but is offering “take out” services for people who reserve books and other materials to pick-up at the front door.
- All Recreation and Parks facilities are closed until further notice and all Recreation programming has been canceled until further notice.
- Town officials are coordinating with a variety of community organizations regarding emerging community needs that extend beyond the scope of our normal Town government services.

### **REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING (RTM) AND OTHER PUBLIC MEETINGS**

- The Selectboard is being kept informed about the actions Town staff is taking to prepare for and respond to COVID-19.
- The Selectboard will consider possible additional Town actions at its meeting this coming Tuesday, March 17, at 6:15pm, at the Municipal Center.
- The Selectboard also may hold special meetings (in addition to its twice-per-month regularly scheduled meetings) if it becomes necessary for the Selectboard to take urgent action(s) as the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve.
- As previously stated ... Due to the Governor’s order prohibiting gatherings of more than 50 people, Town staff is recommending to the Selectboard that the Representative Town Meeting scheduled for March 21 be canceled and that it be re-warned when it becomes legal and prudent to do so. The Selectboard will consider that matter at its meeting tomorrow, March 17, at 6:15pm at the Municipal Center.