

TOWN OF OTISFIELD

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To our residents and neighbors,

We're writing in hopes of informing you all regarding the Board of Selectmen's actions due to the recent coronavirus pandemic. The health of our employees and Otisfield residents has always been and will continue to be our top priority. Over the past few weeks, we've all seen what's happening around the world, around the nation, around our state and most recently around our neighboring towns.

As the situation has unfolded, we've been closely watching how the Maine CDC has updated its citizenry, fire departments, EMA organizations and local governments. Our concerns are that if there are positive testing results in Turner and Bridgton, then at what point will it be here in Otisfield? Our population more than doubles as summer residents arrive from throughout New England and beyond.

Because of this, we called an emergency meeting with the Select Board (Hal Ferguson, Lenny Adler and Rick Micklon), Fire Chief Kyle Jordan, EMA Director Jesse Cottingham, Health Officer Fred Collins and our Administrative Assistant Anne Pastore. The purpose of the meeting was to share perspectives and input regarding what we're hearing, being advised and start a substantive plan of action regarding how this could affect Otisfield. We all agreed that it's wiser to become proactive rather than reactive. As the CDC is advising, "plan rather than panic". Our plan will be to ensure we're doing all we can for our employees and our residents to remain protected, while continuing to update and serve them as best as possible.

The results of the meeting were as follows:

1. After very careful consideration, we have made the difficult decision to temporarily close our Town Office until March 30th, with a plan to reassess the situation prior to that projected date. This doesn't mean that the office will reopen on the 30th. We'll regroup, reassess and a decision will be made accordingly. While we brainstormed other options, we felt this was the safest one for our staff, their families and anyone who comes into contact with them. We followed Maine CDC advice regarding "limited exposure by social distancing".
2. We are cancelling all board and committee meeting until further notice.

NOTES:

- A. The Board of Selectman's meetings will continue at the moment so we can pay our warrants and conduct as little business as needed. These meetings will be "limited in scope and we request that people NOT attend". They are open to the public by State statute but we ask that people not attend and ask questions regarding the status of the situation before us. Those questions can be answered by phone or email or by seeing one of us individually. We'd prefer people to stay home and not risk their health or ours.

- B. Special cleaning and chair spacing will be utilized for these meetings.
- C. Department Heads, Board/Committee Chairs and others are not needed to attend and we ask that they postpone updating or requesting answers from the Selectmen that could be done by phone or email.

- 3. We are cancelling all use of the Community Hall until further notice.
- 4. We will be in direct contact with our County EMA office. This includes updates from the Maine CDC Office. This information will be communicated to all team members.
- 5. Both the Oxford County Sheriff's Dept. and the County Dispatch Center will be notified.
- 6. We will update Otisfield residents through our website, as information becomes available. This will be the primary means of communicating with the public and will focus on facts and information as communicated by the Maine CDC.
- 7. We will continue to monitor those in need of food, fuel and special assistance.
- 8. We will work closely with the churches and food banks as needs may arise.

Thank you all for your understanding and we ask that you please be safe, healthy and be on the lookout for neighbors who may need assistance. We stand ready to help in any means possible.

From our families to yours,

Hal Ferguson, Rick Micklon, Lenny Adler