

Public Notices – Non–Emergency Town Services CLOSED; phone & email services available

April 3, 2020

A Message from the Select Board

Benton Residents and Businesses,

We know that many of you are balancing the Governor's order to shelter in place and to practice social distancing, while also caring for your families. Many of us are meeting these needs while also adjusting to working remotely. Your sacrifices and flexibility are appreciated as we work together to shift to remote meetings for the various Town Boards.

Recently the Secretary of State stated that all motor vehicle and trailer registrations that expire during the current state of emergency will be extended indefinitely. Gov. Janet Mills added to that to declare that registrations issued by a city or town, including temporary registrations, will be extended 30 days following the termination of the state emergency. Our Treasurer / Tax Collector is validating if there will be any adjustments to running real estate and property tax bills for the upcoming year.

In these unsettling and stressful times and given our incoming revenues may be now impacted, we need to address financial and other impacts on Town operations. In the interests of transparency, we are committed to communicating with you as the financial challenges become clearer and as we adapt to a rapidly evolving situation.

Given this reality, we have made the following decisions which will be effective immediately and until further notice:

Town Office Operating Hours: Town Office remains closed to public.

Starting April 6, 2020 our offices hours to support phone, email and other needs are modified to:

Monday – Friday four (4) hours a day, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The contact information is [207-453-7191](tel:207-453-7191) or bentonstaff@gmail.com.

Select Board Contact Information:

Douglas Dixon – 207-314-4646 or dpdixonsb52@gmail.com
Robin Cyr – 207-649-0111 or robincyr.benton@gmail.com
Brandy Sloan – 207-649-8051 or brandysloan.benton@gmail.com

General Assistance: All applications for general assistance will be done by phone. Persons seeking general assistance should call [207-453-7191](tel:207-453-7191) from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Outside of these hours and for emergency only please call [207-649-8051](tel:207-649-8051).

Code Enforcement – For building permits and questions concerning projects, please call David Savage at [207-649-4760](tel:207-649-4760). We will process these via phone, email and regular mail.

Select Board, Planning Board and other Committees: The Select Board and Planning Board will operate any meetings via web conference call. Conference call connection information will be posted with the meeting announcement.

Financial Expenditures

Discretionary Spending:

- Only mission-critical expenditures will be approved. Examples of mission-critical expenditures are as follows:
 - Payroll
 - Payments required to meet our current contractual obligations.
 - Utilities and required routine maintenance (lawn care, repairs, etc.).
 - Approved - Article 20 – Lawn Care
 - Savings and/or efficiencies approved by the Select Board.
 - Approved - Article 39 - Street light project
 - Approved - Article 25 – Efficiencies for TRIO System (cloud hosting)
 - Improvements to online customer services.

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- Approved - Article 29 – Website upgrade (TIF Revenue)
- Expenditures that support health and safety for citizens and staff.
 - Approved - Article 42 & 43 - Transfer Station payments for solid waste and recyclables.
 - Approved - Articles 24 – 38 – Protection of Persons & Property
- Expenditures Requiring Select Board Approval
 - Expenditures which require Excise Tax revenues including road maintenance.
 - On Hold - Article 50 - Road paving projects.
 - Cemetery Management
 - On Hold - Articles 51 & 52
 - Expenditures for travel, training, supplies. Only exception will be to provide the necessary web classes for our Treasurer/Tax Collector and the Deputy Clerk to ensure she can support the Town Clerk position until someone can be appointed by the Select Board.

Credit Cards:

- All credit card purchases will be restricted other than through the Town Treasurer.

New Contracts:

- All new contracts or renewals for existing agreements will require review and Select Board approval. Town Treasurer will complete an initial review to verify that the Town has ability to pay.

We recognize that all these adjustments will require additional sacrifices from everyone. With the unpredictability of this pandemic, the road ahead will continue to be challenging for our community with the likelihood of other difficult decisions ahead. Please know that we truly appreciate everyone's partnership in this effort.

Thank you in advance for your continued patience.

Best Regards,

Town of Benton, Select Board