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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 25, 2020

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PRESS RELEASE

BEDFORD BOROUGH DECLARES LOCAL EMERGENCY, ADOPTS PROCEDURES

Bedford Borough Council has declared a state of emergency, allowing borough staff to implement temporary special procedures for the conduct of borough business during the Coronavirus outbreak.

All borough employees are continuing to work during the emergency; however, the borough office is closed to the public. Payments for utility bills, permits and other purposes can be made at a drop box at the office door (new temporary office location in Ambulance Building/Lower Level/Vondersmith Avenue), and on-line, through the mail or by telephone. All contact with the borough staff is to be done by telephone or email.

The Declaration curtails the established practices for public attendance and participation at meetings. Future meetings of Borough Council and all boards and commissions will be done by teleconference. Access to each teleconference will be provided to all media outlets, and residents can also join the teleconference by utilizing the telephone number and access code published on the borough's website for each meeting.

Bedford Borough is approximately fifty percent (50%) through the large water and sewer replacement project. All work being done through Kukurin Contracting and Continental Construction has been suspended.

"It is impossible to predict how long this emergency will last. We urge all residents to abide by the directives issued by state and Federal governments, and to follow the borough's website and Facebook page for changing local conditions. The borough's website, www.bedboro.com, contains a wealth of information about borough operations during this emergency" said Council President Weaverling.

POSTED ON THE BOROUGH'S WEBSITE & FACEBOOK PAGE

EMAILED TO:

- BEDFORD GAZETTE (News Department): Please print in "Top of th' Morning" at your earliest convenience.
- BEDFORD COUNTY FREE PRESS
- DOWNTOWN BEDFORD, INC.
- BEDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT
- BEDFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- BEDFORD COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU
- BEDFORD AREA AMBULANCE SERVICE & FIRE DEPARTMENT
- BOROUGH COUNCIL & MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
- MAYOR, SOLICITOR & EMPLOYEES

FAXED TO:

- CESSNA COMMUNICATIONS: Please air periodically.
- WSKE RADIO: Please air periodically.
- BEDFORD COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

BOROUGH OF BEDFORD DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, a novel coronavirus known as 'COVID-19' has been declared a "public health emergency of international concern" by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, has declared a National Emergency under the Stafford Act; and

WHEREAS, through a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf, the Pennsylvania Department of Health declared COVID-19 a public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has the potential to place Bedford Borough in a significant public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has the potential to endanger the health, safety and welfare of a substantial number of persons residing in Bedford Borough and threatens to create problems greater in scope than Bedford Borough may be able to resolve; and

WHEREAS, emergency management measures are required to reduce the severity of such disaster and to protect the health, safety and welfare of affected residents and businesses in Bedford Borough; and

WHEREAS, this threat of imminent disaster and emergency has the potential to cause significant adverse impacts upon the population, schools, businesses, local government services and others throughout Bedford Borough.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Members of the Council of the Borough of Bedford, pursuant to the provisions of Section 7501 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, (35 PA C.S., Section 7501), as amended, do hereby declare the existence of an emergency in Bedford Borough; and

FURTHER, we direct the Borough Manager or her designee to coordinate the activities of the emergency response, to take all appropriate actions needed to alleviate the effects of this emergency, to aid in the restoration of normal daily proceedings, and to take any other emergency response action deemed necessary to respond to this emergency.

STILL FURTHER, we authorize officials of Bedford Borough to act as necessary to meet the current exigencies of this emergency, namely: by the employment of temporary workers, by the rental of equipment, by the purchase of supplies and materials, by entering into such contracts and agreements for the performance of public work as may be required to meet the emergency, all without regard to those time-consuming procedures and formalities normally prescribed by law, mandatory constitutional requirements excepted; and to curtail as necessary certain established practices for public attendance and participation in meetings and other gatherings at municipal facilities. This Declaration shall take effect immediately.

This Proclamation shall be retroactive to March 6, 2020.

Duly adopted this 25th day of March, 2020, by the Council of the Borough of Bedford, in lawful Session duly assembled.

(SEAL)

Borough of Bedford

By: _____


Timothy Weaverling, President of Council

I hereby certify that this Proclamation was adopted by the Council of the Borough of Bedford on the 25th day of March, 2020

ATTEST: _____


Beverly J. Geller, Borough Secretary

Coronavirus Information

TEMPORARY OPERATIONAL CHANGES DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

The Borough's focus is to work with county, state and Federal officials to limit the spread of this virus. This being the case, the Borough of Bedford is modifying its operations to protect our residents and employees as a response to the current Coronavirus outbreak. All interaction between the public and borough staff will now be conducted by telephone or email.

BOROUGH (OPERATED & OWNED) BUILDINGS ARE ALL NOW CLOSED TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, PAYMENTS FOR BOROUGH WATER/SEWER, PERMITS AND PARKING TICKETS WILL BE ACCEPTED IN A DROP BOX AT THE OFFICE DOOR (NEW TEMPORARY OFFICE LOCATION IN AMBULANCE BUILDING/LOWER LEVEL/VONDERSMITH AVENUE), ON-LINE, THROUGH THE MAIL OR BY TELPHONE.

We are striving to provide a welcoming environment in our Municipal offices. At this time, our offices will remain open for essential Borough business. We are promoting the practice of social distancing. Visitors are not permitted in the building for any purpose. No meetings with visitors will be scheduled at this time, and it is requested that residents call our office, or email Borough staff, to discuss concerns or ask questions before coming to the Borough offices. By working together to limit social contact, we all can aid in protecting the most vulnerable residents in our community.

In order to ensure the safety of all its residents and staff, the following operational changes for the following Borough departments have been implemented until further notice:

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

The Administrative Offices are working under normal office hours, with the exception of in-person meetings. Any emails, telephone calls, as well as comments through the Borough's website will be responded to as soon as possible.

Contacting the Borough Departments:

Borough Manager Barbara Diehl	814-623-8192	bdiehl@bedboro.com
Borough Front Office	814-623-8192	bedfordborough@bedboro.com
Tax Collector - Cathy Jones	814-623-9371	cajones7971@comcast.net
Police Department	814-623-1105	bedfordpd@bedboro.com
Building Codes & Permits (PMCA)	814-310-2326	pmca@pacodealliance.com

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police emergency operations will not be limited, however, the method of communication and service for non-life-threatening calls will be altered. Police Officers may limit their own access to confined areas including homes and businesses. Officers may be requesting callers to meet outside and will maintain a social distance. If and when possible, Officers will be requesting phone numbers to take reports by phone or may request emails for detailed information.

We strongly request that you be honest about any illnesses when requesting assistance from police, fire, and EMS. Our first responders cannot provide the necessary services if they have been exposed to a potential virus. If you believe you are experiencing the symptoms of the Coronavirus, follow the directives of the CDC and communicate with your doctor to determine the best measures.

The police, fire and EMS services are here and will continue to provide the services you need. It may look and feel much different, but they will provide the service regardless.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT (RECREATION & PUBLIC WORKS):

Community Parks

The Community parks and playgrounds are still open at this time. Parks are not cleaned on a regular basis, and the public uses those at your own risk. Please take the appropriate steps to social distance and no gatherings more than 10 are recommended.

LAND USE ZONING OPINIONS, LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS, SUBDIVISIONS

Contact the Borough Manager's office above.

MEETINGS OF BOROUGH COUNCIL AND ALL BOARDS, AUTHORITIES AND COMMISSIONS

Meetings are being held as scheduled, but only by teleconference. If the public wishes to submit issues or questions to Borough Council or any board, authority or commission, it must be submitted to the Borough Manager by mail, email or telephone prior to the meeting. If it is desired or necessary for any person to speak or actually participate during the meeting, arrangements can be made through the Borough Manager's office for joining the teleconference.

APPLICATIONS

All applications relating to borough business can be found on-line at www.bedboro.com.

PLEASE MONITOR THE BOROUGH'S WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE CORONAVIRUS, CDC AND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AS WELL AS BOROUGH OPERATIONS AS WE MOVE THROUGH THIS CRISIS TOGETHER. THANK YOU!