



A MESSAGE REGARDING OPERATIONS FROM THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Abington Township takes great pride in the services it provides to its residents and taxpayers. We offer second-to-none Police protection, Fire Services, Public Works operations, Parks to enjoy, and Recreation activities throughout the year. This year, the Township and the residents and taxpayers we serve are experiencing an unwanted circumstance, having to navigate uncharted waters and meeting the challenges presented by the coronavirus, COVID-19.

Recognizing that each of you is sacrificing in your own way to get through these difficult days, we have been working to continuously provide the high-quality of service the people of Abington have come to enjoy. Being ever mindful of our fiscal responsibility to those residents, businesses, taxpayers, and visitors in ordinary times, we are especially focused on fiscal prudence in these extraordinary times. We have been working to offset the projected losses in revenues that will result in our Township's economy contracting as an outcome of the stay at home orders that have been issued to protect the public health.

Please know that we have been taking measured and time appropriate steps to continue providing essential services, while practicing mitigation, in all that we do to watch our expenditures. Essential spending, hiring, and major capital project freeze orders have been issued. We have also reduced our full-time and part-time workforce through a reduction in hours and furlough. We continue to work every day to be good stewards of your money.

Given the current Governor's phasing for reopening, the current number of cases each day in the Township and Montgomery County, and the projections for when we can return to "normal" operations, we must continue to make difficult decisions. Having to close parks and playgrounds has been one of those unwanted difficult decisions. Now, as summer approaches, we are faced with the disappointing reality of having to cancel all in-person, non-virtual programs and activities offered through our Parks and Recreation Department and Briar Bush Nature Center. All advertised programs in our Parks and Recreation Department's Spring and Summer Activities Guide are cancelled.

Briar Bush Nature Center (BBNC) programming scheduled for May and June is cancelled, and we are hoping that we will be able to offer July and August programming. A determination on those programs will be made in mid-June. Please know that BBNC staff is working to develop virtual camps throughout the summer, and program information will be made available on www.briarbush.org.

Any individual who has registered for a cancelled program will be fully reimbursed. For questions related to Spring and Summer Activity Guide reimbursements, please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 215-576-5213 ext. 1003. Individuals already registered for BBNC May and June programming will be fully refunded beginning Friday, May 15, 2020, and questions related to BBNC reimbursements can be directed to Patti Platt at patti@briarbush.org.



Additionally, with the Governor's current guidance, it is highly likely that the Township pools will not open on June 20, if at all. We are waiting as long as we can to make a final decision and will do so when we have a better understanding of the coronavirus trends, as well as Governor Wolf's orders.

Board of Commissioners President John Spiegelman, and Vice-President Tom Hecker have been in regular communication and working with the Office of the Township Manager since the Governor's Emergency Declaration and the Township's Emergency Declaration. Board of Commissioners leadership, including Commissioner Matt Vahey, Chair of the Finance Committee, and Commissioner Stuart Winegrad, Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee, have also been engaged and focused on the financial impact on our budget. A more detailed financial update will be forthcoming as revenues are received and measured.

To those residents who have lost a loved one or suffered as a result of the COVID-19 virus, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, we offer our sympathies during this difficult time. We thank all our Township residents for all that you have done and are doing each day to slow the spread of the coronavirus and wish you good health.

Respectfully,

Richard J. Manfredi
Township Manager