



NEWS RELEASE

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The Woodlands Township Board holds videoconference meeting

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (May 1, 2020) – The Woodlands Township Board of Directors discussed opening up the community during its special meeting via videoconference on Thursday, April 30, 2020.

Chairman Gordy Bunch discussed the White House Guidelines for “Opening Up America Again” and The Governor’s Report to Open Texas. His presentation can be found at this [link](#).

“We’re looking forward to getting amenities and facilities opened in the safest manner possible,” Chairman Bunch said. “We want to make sure we’re as safe as can be and also get our residents back to doing the things they love to do in The Woodlands.”

Chairman Bunch mentioned many safety points in opening Texas and The Woodlands. “All vulnerable individuals should consider sheltering in place in the coming weeks,” he said. “It is recommended to practice social distancing in public, self-screen before entering businesses for possible symptoms of COVID-19 and consider wearing a cloth face covering when entering a business or within six feet of another person not in the same household.”

Beginning Friday, May 1, 2020, in-store retail, shopping malls, dine-in restaurants, movie theatres, museums and libraries may operate at up to 25% of listed occupancy. Individuals may engage in outdoor sports with no more than four participants at any time. Sole proprietorships may open. Licensed medical professionals (e.g. physicians, dentists) may open.

Some questions have been raised concerning if bars, gyms, public swimming pools, interactive amusement venues (e.g. bowling alleys), massage establishments, tattoo studios, piercing studios and salons could be opened on Friday. Attorney General Ken Paxton released a guidance letter responding to questions from local governments regarding these businesses and asking whether local governments may allow businesses to reopen as defined under Governor Abbott’s executive order. General Paxton’s guidance indicates that local governments are prohibited from allowing these types of businesses to reopen at this time under the Governor’s order. The full letter can be found [here](#).

The Board approved opening Riva Row Boat House next week as part of the Phase One recreational programming. Reservations would be required and a sanitation plan will be in place. While Northshore Park will be open, the playground equipment will not be.



Governor Abbott may announce additional openings for Phase Two beginning May 18, 2020. Timing is not yet announced for Phase Three.

Additionally, Chairman Bunch also discussed Minimum Standard Health Protocols, overall general bed usage availability and ventilation utilization.

Pursuant to Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-18, The Woodlands Mall will be reopening to the public on May 5, 2020. The operating hours will be Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m. Market Street is reporting that some of its retailers will be opening Friday, May 1, 2020 but not the entire facility. It will be a gradual approach over the next 30 days. Movie theatres in The Woodlands have indicated that they will remain closed and will most likely open around mid summer 2020.

The Board received a presentation from Dr. Chris Nunes, Director of Parks & Recreation, regarding the plan for reopening facilities and amenities in The Woodlands. His presentation can be found at this [link](#).

Township parks are open with limitations, Lake Woodlands and Lake Paloma are open, pathways and trails are open, tennis courts are open with modifications, park restrooms are open and community gardens are open with restricted access. Amenities that are open include: skate spots, the archery range, kayak launches, BMX areas, bocce, horseshoe pits, pavilions, benches, BBQ pits, disc golf at Terramont Park and running/walking tracks.

Facilities and amenities that remain closed through Phase One include: large parks (sports complexes, Rob Fleming Park, Town Green Park), playgrounds, basketball courts, dog parks, volleyball courts, Bear Branch Skate Park, pools, spraygrounds, recreation centers, facility reservations, Lakes Edge Boat House and Texas TreeVentures.

The Board also discussed Dog Parks in The Woodlands, which are located in Bear Branch, Cattail, Terramont, Harper's Landing, Tamarac, and Rob Fleming parks. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), until we learn more about how this virus affects animals, treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a possible infection.

- Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household.
- Keep cats indoors when possible to prevent them from interacting with other animals or people.
- Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet (2 meters) from other people and animals.
- *Avoid dog parks or public places where a large number of people and dogs gather.*



Director Dr. Ann K. Snyder provided an update on various non-profits including Interfaith of The Woodlands, Montgomery County Food Bank, Community Assistance Center, Meals on Wheels, The Woodlands Family YMCA, Children's Safe Harbor, Mosaics of Mercy and Behavioral Health Suicide Prevention. Her presentation can be found at this [link](#).

Interfaith is actively accepting food donations of: cereal, canned meat, dry pasta, vegetables and fruit, snacks for kids, peanut butter, jelly, meal starters, soups, crackers, toiletries, paper goods including toilet paper and cleaning supplies. Donations will be accepted on Wednesdays from 9 to 11 a.m. at Interfaith Central, 4242 Interfaith Way. The Interfaith Food Pantry has drive thru distribution for families in need on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monetary donations are also accepted [online](#). Montgomery County Food Bank is open five days a week with its partner agencies and is also accepting monetary donations [online](#). Community Assistance Center is accepting monetary donations [online](#) as well as donations of non-perishable food, cleaning supplies and hygiene products. Meals on Wheels is accepting monetary donations [online](#) and food donations. The Woodlands Family YMCA is accepting monetary donations [online](#). Mosaics of Mercy is seeking sponsors for their weekly podcast. Please visit www.mosaicsofmercy.com for additional information.

Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs provided an update on the Help Our Heroes campaign. Her presentation can be found at this [link](#).

In early April, The Woodlands Township Board of Directors launched the Help Our Heroes campaign to collect crucial Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs) supplies for local first responders and hospitals. Now, as The Woodlands and Montgomery County plan to re-open, the successful program and its counterpart, Adopt a Healthcare Worker, are transitioning to Interfaith of The Woodlands, where collections will continue.

Beginning next week, donations can be made at Interfaith Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 4242 Interfaith Way in The Woodlands, TX 77381. "The supply chain for most items has caught up, and the hospitals and our first responders appear to have adequate supplies at this time," said Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, who is serving The Woodlands Township as Public Health Liaison. "But there is still a need particularly for face coverings and masks for our residents, and Interfaith will be handling the donations for distribution to the residents it has been serving."

President/General Manager Don Norrell provided an update on Township Operations as of April 30, 2020; the Governor's First Phase beginning May 1, 2020 and the Governor's Future Phases beyond May 15, 2020.

The Township Board deferred a law enforcement report from the Montgomery County Precinct 3 Office regarding cybercrime activity.



THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP
The Woodlands, TX

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