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MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
RE: Town Manager's Report
DT: April 21, 2020

COVID-19 Update: Health Agent Deb Vondal, Fire Chief Joe Guarnera and Police Chief Craig Lundgren are expected to be available for the virtual meeting. In terms of general government operations, we continue to operate with bare-bones staffing and following health protocols to include screening before entering the workplace.

Today, in consultation with the Health Agent, the Town reinforced its continuing advisory that the general public should wear a face covering when in public when social distancing is not feasible. This is the exact guidance and recommendation issued by the Governor and reinforced by the Mass. Dept. of Public Health. It also remains a directive to Town staff when they must provide necessary services in a public venue.

In conjunction with the Health Agent I continue to keep the Town's Web site (www.athol-ma.gov) current with health tips, community updates and the operational status and best contact methods for all Town departments among other information.

Town Election and Town Meeting Schedule: The Board has been provided a memorandum prepared by Town Counsel following consultation with the Town Clerk and Town Moderator. Given the uncertainty surrounding operations, revenues and fiscal impacts upon the Town it is recommended that the Board consider scheduling the annual town election for June 22 and the Annual Town Meeting for June 29.

My opinion is that these dates offer the most flexibility in that we will have time to craft and approve a 1/12th budget through the Board of Selectmen which can be put forward in the event Town Meeting does not occur prior to June 30, or, if in consultation with the Finance and Warrant Advisory Committee, it is determined that state revenue projects remain unsettled we can further defer formal action on the final FY21 budget to the fall meeting. Town Counsel, the Moderator and Clerk are anticipated to be part of the virtual meeting for further discussion.

Exchange Street Bridge: As you are aware, the Exchange Street Bridge has reached substantial completion and was opened to the public last weekend. It is expected that there will be partial lane closures on two days this week as the painting crew wraps up their above-deck work. I am advised by the resident engineer that the bridge will be permanently open by end of day on Friday.

1128 Main Street: Demolition was deferred to allow the bridge reopening and new detours to be established, and due to temporary staffing constraints. Work should be completed by the end of May.
