



JOINT STATEMENT BY MAYOR JOE PITT AND TOWN MANAGER TROY LEWIS ON THE TOWN OF TARBORO'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

The citizens of Tarboro once again find themselves in the midst of a difficult and challenging situation. And just like with Hurricane Floyd, Hurricane Matthew, and other storm events, this community will persevere, look out for one another, and as a community come out of the other side of this emergency stronger than before.

In order to get through this pandemic quickly and safely as possible, it is imperative that citizens continue to strictly adhere to directives regarding social distancing, hand washing, and especially staying at home if you are sick. The Town of Tarboro has not issued a "stay-at-home" or "shelter-in-place" order, but we do encourage individuals and businesses to follow North Carolina mandates and Centers for Disease Control recommendations to stay home unless absolutely necessary.

The Town of Tarboro is currently under a local "State of Emergency". This designation gives the Town access to certain Federal and State assistance during this time, as well as the ability to move more swiftly to address concerns as they arise. Other actions that the Town has taken so far include the following:

- Suspended all nonessential town events, gatherings, and meetings until further notice
- Closed all Town buildings to the public until further notice
- Closed all Town fitness facilities, playgrounds, and picnic shelters to the public until further notice
- Suspended the disconnection of utilities and charging of late payment and delinquent fees during the local State of Emergency

The closing of our facilities to the public has not diminished the commitment of our Town employees to meet the needs of our citizens. Town operations proceed without interruption. However, you will notice attempts to conduct business in ways that minimize public contact in order to protect citizens and Town employees. Many of the services we provide such as Public Safety, Water and Sewer services, Electricity, and Solid Waste collection are critical to the health and safety of our community. Town

officials are keenly aware that providing these services often puts our employees at risk. As such, employee health and safety remains a top priority and we ask that the public we serve, support and understand any changes you may notice in service delivery in the coming days.

The Tarboro Town Council recognizes this situation is causing financial hardships in the community. This is primarily the reason that Council has suspended disconnection of utilities for non-payment and charging of late payments and delinquent fees during this trying time. This is not a waiver of charges, so we encourage those that can to keep current on their bills to avoid a much larger bill later. For those that have significant difficulties and cannot pay, we ask that payment arrangements be made within an allotted six month period to bring bills current.

As we proceed through this difficult time, we ask that you continue to support and care for each other in this community. Help local small businesses where possible and seek ways to help vulnerable individuals in whatever way you can. Tarboro has always been a resilient community that shines brightest when times are tough. This resilience comes from caring for one another and working together. Now is the time to come together and do what it takes to minimize the effects of the COVID-19 on our wonderful Town. Take care of yourselves and each other. Thank you for your patience and support during this crisis.