

THE TOWN OF ALBION
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Gateway To The Chain O' Lakes State Park

March 24, 2020

Photo – Attorney Steve Clouse, Town Council President Vicki Jellison and Clerk-Treasurer Carol Selby participated in person for a teleconference with Albion town council members and employees at the regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday.

PRESS RELEASE

ALBION TOWN COUNCIL ENACTS STATE DIRECTIVES

Albion, IN— The Albion Town Council enacted policies ordered by the Governor of Indiana to combat the spread of the Covid-19 virus at the regular meeting on Tuesday, March 24. The meeting was held by teleconference with Council members calling in to the meeting through a GoToMeeting app.

In implementing plans for handling the pandemic, the Town of Albion is working in partnership with Noble County Emergency Management and is following directives issued by Governor Holcomb, including the Executive Orders issued this week compelling residents and employees to stay at home as much as possible.

The following policies were adopted during the town council meeting.

- 1) Under Executive Order 20-09, the Council and all Town boards/commissions will meet via teleconference until the Governor's directives are lifted or the Town Council deems it safe to conduct in-person meetings.
- 2) The Town Council President is designated to approve claims/bills during the duration of the pandemic emergency;
- 3) Late fees will be waived and utility customers will not be disconnected during this time of public health emergency, per the Governor's Executive Order 20-05, which prohibits the discontinuation of water and wastewater services to any customer in the state. (However, residents should understand that their bills are still due and must be paid. These measures have been implemented to help those who fall behind on payments because they may be off work unpaid or have medical bills that could cause them to struggle. Residents are still responsible for payment for all the utilities they use.)
- 4) Should there be other national or state orders released, the Town will continue to follow the directives contained in the government orders.

The Town Council also passed a Pandemic Leave Policy which will pay employees who are sent home from work due to the Covid-19 virus or executive orders. The majority of services will continue uninterrupted but Albion is operating with limited staff on duty.

In order to reduce the number of employees at work, per the Governor's order, essential employees to the safety of the public were determined by the Albion Town Council as follows: Police and Fire departments will operate as usual with some adjustments to minimize contact and exposure to the public. The Town Manager, Clerk-Treasurer & staff, sewer/water employees will stagger their schedules to reduce overlapping and improve social distancing. There will be someone in the office during regular hours every day but the public can do business at town hall by appointment only. Applications for the 50/50 Sidewalk program, building permits and payments can all be processed by the drop box, email, or internet; forms are on the town website.

The Street, Park and Cemetery departments are deemed not "essential" to the safety of the public and performance of critical functions so they will not come in on a daily basis during the declared emergency, but will only report to work when called during the two-week Shelter in Place order. After that, they will return on staggered schedules. The Superintendents are on call for any emerging situations, such as preparing for a burial, and may call in other employees for assistance when needed. Part-time and seasonal employees were also put on leave temporarily.

Other things to note in Albion due to the pandemic include:

- Free WiFi hotspots have been installed in each Noble County community by Ligtel, These locations have been setup specifically for students and teachers of area schools to do eLearning. The sites are open from 8 a.m. – 9 p.m. Contact the school for the password.
- Restaurants and shops in Albion are open for carryout (some have delivery) and all need support. The Pillbox Pharmacy drive-through is open. Look for a new Shop Noble website in the very near future to help identify what businesses are open or delivering. This is being coordinated by all the Noble County Chambers of Commerce, Noble Convention and Visitor's Bureau and Noble County Economic Development Corp.
- Per the Governor's orders, public events with more than 10 people are not permitted so there will not be a Bunny Breakfast or an Easter Egg hunt this year. Other events, including the town-wide garage sales and Spring Clean may also be postponed or cancelled but are TBD at this point.
- Residents are encouraged to stay home but can still exercise, take walks and use the parks or trails while practicing "social distancing"--staying at least six feet apart. Playgrounds are closed per the Executive Orders.
- As a reminder, the following products are NOT flushable, dispose in a waste basket: Paper towels, Napkins, Kleenex and other tissues, Wet wipes/baby wipes (even those labeled as "flushable" wipes), Diapers, Feminine hygiene products, Gauze/Band-Aids. Any product but toilet paper can damage the Town's system and cause our employees to be called in for extra unnecessary work. Don't do it.
- Residents are reminded that the "Stay At Home" order is for everyone who can comply. There are limited activities permitted at this time, such as caring for others, obtaining necessary supplies, leaving home for health and safety (doctor appointments) and work, if the job is deemed essential to health, safety, supply chains and important products.

- Everyone should practice social distancing along with frequent hand washing to reduce the spread of illness.

For more information about the pandemic, the Noble County Health Department has created a Covid-19 Hotline. Call (260) 636-4024 to receive up to date information.

Questions regarding the Albion policies may be directed to the Town Manager, albionmanager@frontier.com.