

Memorandum

To: Village Board of Trustees

From: Matthew G. Schuenke, Village Administrator

matt.schuenke@mcfarland.wi.us

(608) 838-3153

Cc: Department Heads

Residents of McFarland

Date: March 26, 2020

Re: Bi-Monthly Village Administrator Staff Report

Recent Meetings Held

- March 16th – Plan Commission
- March 17th – Library Board (Special)
- March 17th – Village Board (Special)
- March 23rd – Committee of the Whole
- March 23rd – Village Board

Current Events

The following is a list of issues, projects, or activities that have transpired recently:

- Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) – Obviously significant changes have been made to our world since my last report and new orders in place that impact all of us. The Village as a result has adjusted accordingly while recognizing the need to continue to provide essential services such as voting, police protections, ambulance service, senior meals, water service, and many more items we need. Staff continues to be committed to providing these services in a time of unparalleled crisis and I can't think them enough for what they have been doing to rise to the occasion and what they will need to do in order to sustain this response. Attached to this message is a Press Release issued recently that provides an update by Department of all the adjustments we are making.

- Recruitment Update – The Public Works Department has finally completed its recruitment for the position of Streets/Utilities Superintendent. This position will oversee the day to day delivery of key Village services affecting our streets and utility operations. Together with the Parks Superintendent, these two positions reporting to the Director make up the leadership and supervision of the Department. The individual hired into this position is Lee Igl who most recently served as Director of Public Works for the City of Sun Prairie. He worked for the City for just over 10 years with about half of that time as Streets/Parks Supervisor and the remainder as Director. He also has a Finance/Accounting Degree and has previously worked as a store manager within the private sector prior to his time with the City. Lee brings a wealth of knowledge to the Village and a wide skill set covering fleet management, public works operations, finance/budgeting, supervision, and customer service. Welcome Lee, to the Public Works Department and the Village of McFarland. His first day will be on April 6th.
- 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Plan – The Village Board accepted the next five year Capital Improvement Plan at its meeting on March 23rd. This plan attempts to project our capital needs across all Departments for the next 5 years while also estimating the debt service impact. It is aligned also with the newly accepted Strategic Plan that was also accepted at the preceding meeting. There are road projects, equipment purchases, plan development, Public Safety Center construction, and Community Center construction to name a few. The average tax rate per year is estimated at \$0.19 per thousand which would cost approximately \$52.15 per year for those owning a home with a value of \$275,000. This is identical to the tax impact estimate from the previous year plan and continues to create a balance with our borrowing needs over time while still accomplishing some large capital initiatives.

Upcoming Schedule

Please note the following schedule of upcoming meetings:

- April 1st at 7:00 pm – Community Development Authority (in process of being rescheduled).
- April 6th at 5:15 pm – Library Board
- April 13th at 5:30 pm – Committee of the Whole
- April 13th at 7:00 pm – Village Board
- April 20th at 7:00 pm – Plan Commission
- April 21st at 6:00 pm – Village Board (Organizational Meeting)
- April 27th at 7:00 pm – Village Board

All meetings listed are for the entire month of April and their schedule is tentative and subject to change. All Committee meetings in April have now been cancelled and will restart in May pending new/revised orders from the State. Staff is also evaluating video conferencing as an option for remote meetings that may be an outlet to restart the schedule. You can always stay up to date with meeting schedule through www.mcfarland.wi.us/agendas.



www.mcfarland.wi.us | 5915 Milwaukee St, McFarland, WI 53558 | 608.838.3153

March 26, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Matt Schuenke, Village Administrator

matt.schuenke@mcfarland.wi.us

(608) 838-3153

Update Regarding McFarland Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

McFarland, WI – The Village of McFarland has taken several steps to continue to keep the public and its employee's safe while continuing to deliver essential services within our Community. On Tuesday, March 17, 2020 the Village Board declared a local emergency following suit from the Federal, State, and County governments. On Wednesday, March 25, 2020, Emergency Health Order #12 referred to as "Safer at Home Order" was implemented creating further adjustments to our operations. This release is meant to summarize our response thus far and provide information on the provision of services by Village Staff:

- **Administration** – The Administration Office at the Municipal Center will remain closed to the public through at least April 24th. Facilitating the April 7th election is a priority for Village Staff and they will continue to take in person absentee voting and registration in the Community Room only. Residents are highly encouraged to vote absentee by mail at www.myvote.wi.gov. All other tasks for licensing, permits, etc. facilitated by this Department will be processed as time allows but not likely until after the Election. All late fees and interest penalties have, and will, be waived. All fees for online payments through GovPayNet and Payment Service Network have been waived and making payments online is at no cost to the user. Furthermore, all room rentals and public use of the Municipal Center has been discontinued until at least April 24th.

- **Communications and Technology** – The Department continues to assist internally with technology needs by helping to expand working remotely, video conferencing, and other logistical issues. They are also integral in the collection and delivery of information to the Public through the mediums listed below. In person access to the Department shall remain closed until at least through April 24th.
- **Community Development** – Operations within this Department will continue as available through email and telephone only. The Department will continue to accept permits for all items and make arrangements to have the work inspected remotely to the extent possible. Individuals are encouraged to contact the Building Inspector at buildinginspector@mcfarland.wi.us or (608) 838-2314 in order to make arrangements ahead of time for this portion of the process.
- **Fire & Rescue** – Fire and EMS services continue as needed but with many new directives and precautions to protect the First Responders. Those in need of emergency response are still encouraged to contact 911 and Dispatch will route crews appropriately. Individuals may notice EMS crews responding to medical incidents more often in full protective apparel. This is a precaution that we want to ensure the health and well-being of our Staff. They may also have personnel standing by at a safe distance while a single EMT administers care in order to conserve equipment and limit exposure. Additionally, they are sending a Department Duty Officer in a separate vehicle to provide oversight and guidance to crews for most incidents. Furthermore, they continue to take steps to clean all equipment and in particular the ambulance in more detail after each use to limit the spread of the virus.
- **Library** – The Library is presently closed under previous emergency orders from the State. This will likely continue through at least April 24th based on the need for future orders. However, they are still working to provide enrichment and materials remotely. You can visit their website at www.mcfarland.wi.us/library or their Facebook page via [@mcfarlandpubliclibrary](https://www.facebook.com/mcfarlandpubliclibrary) for information about downloadable e-books, e-audiobooks, and digital magazines. Story times are still being held through the Facebook Live feature and a great activity for kids! From the website, you can still apply for a library card if you do not already have one in order to utilize these remote services.

- **Municipal Court** – Court operations are suspended until at least May 1st with various in person functions beginning in early May depending on the need for future adjustments. Some work will continue during this time but will not involve in person contact via trials, and other functions of the Court.

 - **Police Department** – All shifts continue as assigned and scheduled within this Department. Adjustments have been made to limit in person contact and provide additional direction to utilize protective equipment when possible. They have also suspended all direct contact on medical calls for the duration of the emergency to limit exposure. The Department is aware of and required to enforce all Emergency Orders issued by the State to the extent it is feasible. The Police Chief has posted a number of updates through their Facebook page that can be found [@McfarlandPoliceDepartment](#).

 - **Public Works** – The Department has shifted to a staggered schedule whereby the Crew will be split into two platoons. Each platoon will be partnered with a supervisor and work one week while being off the next, then switch. This is to ensure we minimize their exposure within the Department as well as ensure the continuity of operations to deliver essential services including drinking water and sanitary sewer. All other Staff have been released home as non-essential or reassigned within the organization to limit use of the facility.
 - **Park System** – Many different amenities within our Park System are now closed for use following the implementation of Emergency Order #12. All playgrounds are now closed as well as shelters, bathroom facilities, athletic fields, and other areas that attract group gatherings. Parks themselves remain open and can continue to allow people to use general open space including trails, bird/nature watching, general walkways, and the dog park. Remember in all cases to practice social distancing and be respectful of the space of others. Please take precautions against common touch points such as gates, waste bag dispensers, and trash receptacles. Maintenance within the system as a whole will be deferred or delayed in some respects due to the staggered schedule of the Public Works Crew and delayed arrival of seasonal employees.
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- **Utility Billing** – We still encourage customers to stay current on their utility bills so as not to fall too far behind. However, no late fees or interest penalties will be applied during the period of the Emergency Order. This was initially decided by the Village Board at its meeting on March 17th and confirmed by the Public Service Commission upon direction of the Governor on March 20th. Earlier this year the Village Board also adopted a rate increase within our Sanitary Sewer Utility. Implementation of this increase will not be applied until after the emergency order has been lifted. You are encouraged to contact the Department at (608) 838-7287 if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.
- **Yard Waste Site** – The yard waste drop site will be closed for the duration of Emergency Order #12 which is through April 24th. Typically, it is scheduled to open near the end of March. Village Staff is working with its contractor to expand curbside collection during this time period as an alternative to the drop site to allow for disposal of yard waste. More information to come on this as we continue to put together the details of this service adjustment.
- **Senior Outreach** – The main focus for this Department has been focused on providing meals to clients through our delivery system. This has been a large effort from the preparation of the meals for delivery, to the volunteers to transport the meals, and drivers to bring the meals to the clients. Additional food has been provided for all involved in case deliveries for some reason cannot continue but for the time being all orders are being filled as requested. Staff continues to stay in contact with many of our at-risk seniors to make sure to the extent possible they are provided necessary care. They are also in contact with County agencies to ensure they follow best practices to the extent they are available.

All Standing Committee meetings through the end of April have been cancelled. All decisions needed by Committees during this time period will be addressed by the Village Board. All items not requiring a decision by Committees will be deferred to a future meeting. Village Staff is working to implement video conferencing to continue to hold meetings for all statutory committees (i.e. – Village Board, Plan Commission, CDA) that will allow for members to participate remotely and still include the public. Meeting management will continue to be evaluated and adjusted throughout the course of the next month as appropriate to ensure all participants remain safe and operations continue to the extent necessary.

There is likely more information needed to be conveyed than this news release can provide. For more information and continued updates we encourage everyone to go to www.mcfarland.wi.us/news, follow us on Facebook via [@villageofmcfarlandwi](https://www.facebook.com/villageofmcfarlandwi), or on Instagram via [@villageofmcfarland](https://www.instagram.com/villageofmcfarland). You can also receive email updates when information is released through The Lookout. [Click on this link](#) in order to receive information from our e-newsletter.

Further questions about this release should be directed to the Village Administrator, Matt Schuenke at (608) 838-3153 or matt.schuenke@mcfarland.wi.us.

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