

Report of the 2020 Coronavirus Task Force – May 15, 2020

Summary & Background

The Northport Village Corporation (NVC) Board of Overseers established the 2020 Coronavirus Task Force to recommend to the Board of Overseers specific actions in accordance with [State of Maine requirements and guidelines](#) for addressing the threat posed by the novel coronavirus and COVID-19. The task force conducted six weeks of public meetings, via Zoom video conferencing, that drew upwards of 30-35 people weekly.

The public hearings provided extensive opportunities for input from Bayside residents on the many issues and questions involved in the central challenges of the coronavirus, including:

- How best to minimize exposure and spread of the coronavirus
- How best to balance the responsible use of village common areas with State of Maine regulations
- How best to implement regulations regarding social distancing, limitation on group sizes, etc.

Parallel to the Task Force process, various NVC committees explored coronavirus issues, including the Waterfront Safety Committee and the Personnel Committee, which focused on how best to minimize risk to Village employees. On May 4, the Personnel Committee approved a set of recommendations for the Overseers to consider at the board's May 10 meeting,

The Personnel Committee recommendations aligned with the consensus emerging in the Task Force process for how best to provide for the use/enjoyment of Bayside common areas while also protecting Village residents, visitors, and staff. These common areas include Ruggles Park beach, the wharf, the dinghy dock, the kayak storage area, and the Community Hall and Village office

Board of Overseers Decisions

At its May 10th meeting, the NVC Overseers approved the following recommendations:

Wharf and Docks

The main wharf and dinghy dock will be open only to boaters and people looking to enjoy the view. Swimming, jumping, fishing, and crabbing will be prohibited on the wharf and dinghy dock. Sunbathing and loitering are also prohibited. The swim dock will not be installed for swimming this year. People using the wharf are asked to follow appropriate social distancing guidelines.

Beaches

Swimming will be allowed on the main Ruggles Park beach/north shore and the lifeguard station will be relocated to the beach. Bayside public beaches will be open for walking, swimming, sunbathing and kayaking/paddle boarding. People using the public beaches are asked to follow appropriate guidelines for social distancing and limitations on group size.

Kayak, Paddle Board and Small Watercraft Storage

The Waterfront Safety Committee recommends that storage of kayaks etc. be moved up the slope from the area where they are traditionally stored to the grass bank above the Ruggles beach and across the street in lower Ruggles Park (ditch area). These temporary storage locations will be marked with new signs. *Due to an oversight at the May Overseers meeting, this recommendation will be voted on at the June meeting.*

Basketball Court and Playground Area

Both of these locations will remain closed and no use permitted until further notice.

Community Hall & Village Office

The Community Hall will be closed until further notice. Beginning on June 1, the Village Office will be open for limited hours and will function with a “one-at-a-time” protocol. As such, one member of the staff may be in the office serving one person at a time.

Village Office hours will be:

- Monday 9-12 [Utilities business or questions]
- Tuesday 12-3
- Friday [Hours TBD] [Utilities business or questions]
- Saturday 9-12

Visitors and staff members will be asked to wear face masks in the building and outside if unable to effectively social distance.

A plastic/plexiglass screen will be installed in the Village Office to separate staff from visitors.

The Village Office will be thoroughly disinfected before opening. A disinfection regimen will be developed for day-to-day business.

The large conference room across the hall from the office will serve as a waiting area for residents waiting their turn for service by office staff. People may enter and use that space until the prior person has left the office. If you are entering the building and observe another person in the conference room, please wait outside until that person departs the premises. When your business in the office is concluded, please exit the Community Hall via the hallway and not through the conference room/waiting area.

New Signage

Signs for the 2020 season will be installed to communicate the new rules regarding usage of common areas, as well as to reinforce State of Maine guidelines/requirements to guard against exposure.

Final Note

Please know that every effort is being made to balance the enjoyment of Bayside this year with the responsibilities all feel to minimize risks to each other, to our employees, to Waldo County’s limited healthcare facilities, and to everyone who visits Bayside this summer.

Some of the new prohibitions and limits detailed here may give some folks pause about how different a season this will be; some may raise an objection or two. If so, we respectfully ask that you consider the nature of the threat – as well as the unprecedented challenges inherent in protecting against it.

The many residents who participated in the Task Force process deserve a special *thank you* for raising important questions and concerns. While we could not address every one of them with specific prohibitions or provisions, we hope that the new set of rules and reminders set the right conditions as we move into the 2020 season.

Thank you,
Michael Tirrell
Chair, Coronavirus Task Force