



NEWS RELEASE

For media inquiries, contact: Nick Wolda
nwolda@thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov

The Woodlands Township Board holds Emergency Meeting today; makes several changes in operations

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (March 16, 2020) – The Woodlands Township Board of Directors took several steps today to help slow the world-wide spread of COVID-19 through a series of decisions regarding facilities, including parks and sports fields, meetings, and transportation services.

The Emergency Meeting was held at 4 p.m. Monday, March 16, 2020 at The Woodlands Township’s Board Chambers to discuss matters related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic.

All seven (7) members of The Woodlands Township Board were present and authorized the President/General Manager Don Norrell to cancel all Township events; close all Township parks, including dog parks, park restrooms, spraygrounds, pools, boathouses, recreation centers and Texas TreeVentures; suspend Sportsfield reservations; suspend Town Center Trolley service and restrict use of public meeting rooms through May 10, 2020.

The Woodlands Township suspended in-person intake of property improvement applications at Town Hall, suspending property inspections, and suspending staff attendance at meetings outside of the Township organization.

The Woodlands Township Board of Directors authorized staff to analyze The Woodlands Express Park and Ride service and make recommendations to revise and/or eliminate routes as needed.

The Woodlands Township Board authorized the President/General Manager to redirect, reduce or eliminate hours for Alpha & Omega Mounted Patrol.

The Woodlands Township Board of Directors will proceed with the Thursday, March 19, 2020 Board meeting and is looking into options of how it meets.

“Although we had to close and make changes to many Township programs and services today, it’s done so to do our local part to slow down and prevent the spread of COVID-19 throughout Montgomery County, Harris County and beyond,” said Township Chairman Gordy Bunch.



Chairman Bunch announced the Township Emergency Operations Center is engaged with a collection of public safety organizations and health/human service partners. He said communication from this group to the general public would begin tomorrow. The Township has created a Coronavirus page on its website with updates from partner agencies, links to local health authorities and an archive with Township communications related to Coronavirus. Please visit www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/covid19 for more information.

Additionally, the Township also encourages residents to stay connected by following Township social media accounts at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/stayinformed and signing up for the Talk of the Township e-newsletter and other emergency notifications at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/notifyme.

“The elected seven (7) of the Township Board of Directors will continue to meet during this very difficult time,” Chairman Bunch said. “We all need to pull together, heed restrictions made by Montgomery and Harris counties, and follow national Center of Disease Control recommendations. Additionally, it is imperative that our residents help neighbors, and this includes residents acting with care with regards to the purchasing of groceries and supplies.”

The Township encourages residents to act with care with regards to the purchasing of groceries and supplies. There are no anticipated grocery shortages and the food supply chain in the U.S. is well-established. Local grocers are restocking as quickly as possible from their warehouses. Please shop responsibly, purchase what your family needs as you would normally and leave goods on the shelf for your neighbor and fellow residents, Bunch said.

Residents that are symptomatic or are concerned that they may be Coronavirus positive are encouraged to contact local public health districts. Residents of Montgomery County may call 936-523-5040 and Harris County residents may call 713-634-1110.

Residents have been inquiring about taking items and dinners to first responders at all eight (8) of The Woodlands Township fire stations, but at this time, The Woodlands Fire Department has to respectfully decline. “We greatly appreciate the care and concern of our residents,” Chairman Bunch said. “But at this time, we are not accepting visitors and/or donations at this time in an effort to keep our first responders and paramedics are safe as possible.”

Earlier today at the federal level, the “15 Days Slow to Spread” campaign was launched. Over the next 15 days, Americans should avoid social gatherings of more than 10 people, eating or drinking at bars and restaurants, and discretionary travel.

Today, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo announced for the next 15 days, starting at 8 a.m. March 17, 2020, that there would be an indefinite closure of all bars and night clubs in Houston and Harris County. This includes unincorporated areas which includes the Village of Creekside Park in The Woodlands.



On Monday, March 15, 2020, Montgomery County amended an Order affecting the occupancy of premises throughout Montgomery County. Effective 5 p.m. March 16, 2020 and continuing until April 12, 2020, the County Judge of Montgomery County deems it in the public interest to issue the following orders:

1. Any event sponsored or permitted by a political subdivision in Montgomery County shall cease.
2. Events greater than 50 persons at all publicly held facilities across Montgomery County shall cease.
3. Any event greater than 50 persons held at private facilities is urged to cancel but should make those determinations within their organizations and with staff of those facilities.
4. Events of 50 persons or more that would include any population at severe risk of severe illness should cease. The population at the greatest risk is anyone over the age of 65 and/or those with severe medical conditions as defined by CDC guidelines.
5. Nursing homes and senior living centers should limit visitation of the public within their facilities.
6. Restaurants, retail stores, private businesses, clubs or civic organizations and religious organizations to include churches, synagogues, mosques or other public places of worship are urged to comply with the CDC guidelines related to 50 persons gathering in any one place or at one time. Retail stores who sell groceries or medical supplies are exempt.

For more information on The Woodlands Township, or to view the meeting in its entirety, please visit www.thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov, or call 281-210-3800.