

# Town of Rhinebeck Supervisor's April 2020 Newsletter

## Caring for Rhinebeck During Covid-19

Governor Cuomo has said that we can expect to be in this current state of “remaining at home” and “social distancing” until June 1<sup>st</sup> to mid-June, at the very earliest, with an incremental “return to normal”, over the course of about two months after that. Per the State and County Departments of Public Health :

- Stay at home
- Covid-19 is expected to peak in about 2-3 weeks
- All playgrounds are closed
- No social gatherings; local law enforcement will monitor and can issue violations
- Summer programs will probably be cancelled and the Town pool will most likely be closed
- All non-essential construction projects are halted unless there is a sole worker on the job site.

Please go to our County website: <https://www.dutchessny.gov/> See:

- “COVID-19/Coronavirus Information and Updates”
- “Dutchess Responds”
- “COVID-19 Data Dashboard”

While the Town Hall remains closed to the public, it is partially staffed Monday – Thursday from 11am – 3pm. Our daily business is now conducted by phone calls, mail, email, scheduled drop offs and pick ups, and on-line meetings.

### TOWN OF RHINEBECK – COVID-19 SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS

In addition to their regular duties, our Town of Rhinebeck staff and I have started a program to Support Our Seniors during this crisis.

We have contacted all of our residents who had depended on our Senior Van Service for weekly shopping and to everyone in the Town with a Senior Star Exemption to let them know that we are available to help.

Working with two Rhinebeck Resident Volunteer Coordinators, Graham Hanson and David Ping, we have created a program to help those who have no alternative support system for non-emergency needs by referred each person in need to a small group of vetted community volunteers who can assist with picking up essential items.

We've advised our seniors to call Town Hall. If the request is beyond the scope of what the volunteer group can handle, we will attempt to identify another community resource to address that need. We are very concerned about the health and well-being of all of our community members and are dedicated to assisting all that are in need.

If you are a Rhinebeck Senior, in need of non-emergency support, or know someone who is, please call 876-3409, extension 3, and leave a message. Our Town of Rhinebeck staff will be monitoring the line from Monday – Friday, 9am – 4pm and will return your call to assign you a volunteer who can help.

The follow is a brief status report from our departments:

The TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE is closed to the public except by appointment until further notice. We are not issuing marriage licenses or hunting licenses. Birth and death certificates, dog licenses, and dump stickers, are all available by mail. You can also mail in your property tax payments as usual.

We will be in the office to answer calls at 845-876-3409 and emails at [townclerk@rhinebeckny.gov](mailto:townclerk@rhinebeckny.gov), Monday to Thursday from 11 am to 3 pm, or you can visit our website: <https://www.rhinebeckny.gov/> for further information.

Our ASSESSOR reminds us that the deadline for the department to publish the Tentative 2020 roll is still May 1st, 2020. The Department is working with the NY State Office for Real Property Taxation Services in the likely event that Grievance Day (the Wednesday following the 4th Tuesday in May (this year May 27th) and Board of Assessment Review meetings need to be held remotely via on-line conferencing. Please contact [assessors@rhinebeckny.gov](mailto:assessors@rhinebeckny.gov)

The BUILDING DEPARTMENT is still receiving and reviewing building permit applications and municipal searches through the mail or by appointment to be dropped off at Town Hall. We are following the executive order issued by the governor that all non-essential construction must be shut down by April 1, 2020, except for emergency construction.

The department staff will be working in Town Hall, by appointment, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9am to 1pm, and our Inspector will be out on the road shutting down non-essential projects. Contact [kdiehl@rhinebeckny.gov](mailto:kdiehl@rhinebeckny.gov) for further information.

The CEMETERY grounds are open to the public every day, sunrise to sunset, and will be maintained throughout the course of the pandemic. The cemetery will continue to provide burials, with funerals limited to ten people. All other non-essential cemetery business, including the purchase of pre-need plots, interment searches, and monument installation is suspended. Please contact Cemetery Administrator, Suzanne Kelly with any questions at [skelly@rhinebeckny.gov](mailto:skelly@rhinebeckny.gov)

All Rhinebeck COURT sessions are adjourned to new dates in May and new notices will be mailed. Per the NY Office of Court Administration, new dates could be pushed back further. Please see: <https://www.rhinebeckny.gov/justice-court.html>

For residents needing assistance with any DOG CONTROL issues, as usual, please contact:

6am – 6pm Stephanie Fitzpatrick 845-464-0724  
6pm – 6am Roger Newkirk 845-876-2465

Both deal with stray, unlicensed, troublesome, and lost dogs and patrol the park reminding people to keep their dogs on leash and to pick up after them.

The HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT sends well wishes and reminds everyone that highway garage and office are currently closed to the public. Superintendent, Bob Wyant, is in the office daily and the department secretary is working from home. We have divided our crew of seven employees, into two groups and we are working an alternating schedule, with each group working three days on, and three days off. This, at the recommendation of the Governor so we can maintain our roads and infrastructure, as well as ensure the health of our employees. You can reach Bob and the crew at: [highwaysuperintendent@rhinebeckny.gov](mailto:highwaysuperintendent@rhinebeckny.gov) 845-876-6263 Garage during the day 845-224-8316 Emergency, evenings and weekends

Even though the COVID-19 crisis leaves the 2020 summer RECREATION DEPARTMENT programs in limbo, our staff is still working to hire summer employees at the pool and camp and to prepare for the season. As soon as we have word from the State and/or the County, we will let you know. We figure, it's

better to be ready than unprepared. Please contact recreation Director, Elaine Fernandez at efernandez@rhinebeckny.gov or see <https://rhinebeckny.myrec.com/info/default.aspx> for more info.

Thanks to Councilperson Ed Roberts's hard work, the Town of Rhinebeck has taken back running our TRANSFER STATION. New part time Town employees, John Lamb and Mike Juras will be operating the facility on Thursdays from 1-4pm and Saturdays from 8am-2pm. John wanted to be sure you all know that he, "really likes the folks who come to the transfer station-they are pleasant and very positive people and I really like my job." Yearly permits are required and we ask that you have one in place on the driver's side window by May 1st. Contact the Clerks office for a sticker. All transactions can be completed by mail.

Our ZONING ADMINISTRATOR AND ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, Michelle Turck, is available normal business hours by phone or email, while working remotely, and continues to respond to zoning violation complaints and zoning regulation inquiries at: 845-876-7207 or zoningadministrator@rhinebeckny.gov

The, ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS, PLANNING BOARD, and CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD meetings have been suspended until May 1<sup>st</sup>, though we are discussing an on-line meeting forum for all Boards where a Public Hearing is not mandated. Board Secretaries are working from home and can be contacted:

CAB, Sabrina Van Voorhis	<a href="mailto:cab@rhinebeckny.gov">cab@rhinebeckny.gov</a>
Planning, Gretchen Smith	<a href="mailto:gsmith@rhinebeckny.gov">gsmith@rhinebeckny.gov</a>
Zoning, Chris Hedges	<a href="mailto:chedges@rhinebeckny.gov">chedges@rhinebeckny.gov</a>

### **Rhinebeck Community COVID-19 Update**

I have been participating in an effort that Mayor Bassett has been leading - a COVID-19 Response Committee, bringing together leadership of the Rotary Club and Club Interact, along with local food pantries, and members of the Town and Village government. This committee has been focused on scenario planning for how to scale up food distribution for those who can't leave their homes, and for the increasing number of our community using local food pantries—many for the first time. We'd like to get the word out about food pantry options, open to all:

#### **Church of the Messiah Food Pantry (Jayne Brooks Memorial Food Pantry)**

Saturdays, 10am - 1pm

Food pickup 6436 Montgomery St, 845-876-3533

[www.rhinebeck-episcopal.org](http://www.rhinebeck-episcopal.org), [rhinebeck.episcopal@gmail.com](mailto:rhinebeck.episcopal@gmail.com)

#### **Reformed Church**

Tuesdays, 10am - 12pm

Food pickup - 6368 Mill Street, 845-876-3727

[www.rhinebeckreformed.org](http://www.rhinebeckreformed.org), [rhinebeckreformed@frontiernet.net](mailto:rhinebeckreformed@frontiernet.net)

#### **Red Hook Friendship Center**

To arrange food pickup or delivery, call 845-475-1129

We've heard an outpouring of support from the community, wanting to help.

Because donated food items from the public may be from asymptomatic carriers of the virus, local food pantries prefer financial support. If you have the means to give back, donate via Northeastern NY Regional Food Bank: <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/1415634> To earmark your donation for a Rhinebeck food pantry, scroll down to "Adopt-a-program" (click "Desktop version" on your smartphone), and type *Church of the Messiah Jayne Brooks Food Pantry* or *Rhinebeck Reformed Church*.

REMINDER: The 2020 Census is open. Please take a minute to log on and complete your census information on-line at: [www.my2020census.gov](http://www.my2020census.gov)

Lastly, our deepest gratitude goes out to all of our Fire Departments, Rhinebeck Village, Hillside, and Rhinecliff and our EMS Squads – with a special thanks to Chief Kyle Eighmy and EMS Captain Chrissy Eighmy. Your selfless volunteerism and care of all in our Town is so very evident and very much appreciated. Thank you all.

Please sign up for our email delivery of our Town Board agendas and other information:  
<https://www.rhinebeckny.gov/>

I am in Town Hall daily during the week, return all phone calls, answer my emails promptly, am eager to hear your suggestions, and welcome your involvement in our local government:  
[espinzia@rhinebeckny.gov](mailto:espinzia@rhinebeckny.gov)

Please stay home, stay safe and take care of yourself, your family and of each other. I know we are all looking forward to sunnier times.

With Warmest Regards,

Elizabeth Spinzia  
Supervisor, Town of Rhinebeck