Town of Hilton Head Island
TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

An Update from Town Manager Steve Riley
9/30/2020

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders and Guests,

Here's an update on what's happening around Town:

FEMA Releases Updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Hilton Head Island
The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) has released updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) for Hilton Head Island. The flood hazard maps, which may be accessed through the Town of Hilton Head Island's website, show the extent to which areas throughout Hilton Head Island are at risk for flooding. In June 2017, FEMA released proposed FIRMs based on updated coastal modeling. The updated maps, which show flood hazards more accurately than older maps, will become effective for flood insurance rating on March 23, 2021. FIRMs indicate whether properties are in areas of high, moderate or low flood risk. Property owners may find that their risk is higher or lower than they thought. If the risk level for a property changes, so may the requirement to carry flood insurance. We have included a list of common questions you may have about FIRMS in a news release on our website.

Also, if you own property in the Town of Hilton Head Island, click the link below to look up your new flood zone: hiltonheadislandsc.gov/publicsafety/flood/floodzonesearch.cfm

For more information about flooding in the Town of Hilton Head Island and flood insurance, visit
hiltonheadislandsc.gov/departments/commdev/floodhazreq.cfm?blue_menuheader=1

Eight Hilton Head Island Nonprofits Receive HUD COVID-19 Grants
Eight nonprofits serving the Hilton Head Island community received a total of $155,000 this week as part of the first round of grants made possible by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In early August, HUD, through its Community Development Block Grant Program, awarded the Town of Hilton Head Island $378,000 to assist low- to moderate-income families affected by COVID-19. The Town partnered with Community Foundation of the Lowcountry to grant these funds to nonprofit organizations assisting Hilton Head Island residents with rent, utilities, mortgage, food, transportation, childcare, education and other needs. A task force of Hilton Head Island residents, including representatives from the Town of Hilton Head Island and the Community Foundation, convened to develop funding guidelines and review and approve grant applications.

Recipients include the Boys & Girls Club of Hilton Head, the Children's Center, the Hilton Head Island Deep Well Project, the Hilton Head Island Recreation Association, Neighborhood Outreach Connection, Sandalwood Community Food Pantry, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Holy Family Conference, and Volunteers in Medicine Clinic Hilton Head Island.

Additional grants will be distributed in the future. For more information about the grants and guidelines, visit *cf-lowcountry.org* or call Community Foundation of the Lowcountry at 843.681.9100.

Fitch Ratings Affirms Ratings for the Town of Hilton Head Island
Fitch Ratings has affirmed the following outstanding ratings for the Town.
- The town's Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'AA+'.
- Taxable special obligation refunding bonds (hospitality fee pledge) at 'AA+'.
- Outstanding general obligation bonds (GO) at 'AA+'.

Back in the spring when COVID-19 was ramped up and impacting the economy, Fitch placed many municipalities on a negative watch list. Hilton Head Island, in particular its special obligation hospitality fee backed bond, has been removed from the Rating Watch Negative list. The Rating Outlook on the IDR and all outstanding bonds is Stable.

New Hours, Updated Operating Schedule and Usage Changes for County Convenience Centers Beginning Thursday, October 1
Beaufort County on Tuesday announced a series of changes and updates for its Convenience Center system that starts tomorrow, Thursday, October 1. According to the County, these changes are due to escalating operating costs to County taxpayers and increasing traffic concerns. In case you didn't receive a notice, here is information you need to know:

- Beginning October 1, operating hours at all convenience centers will change to 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. After researching the issue, it was determined that traffic during the final hour of current service equates to only 5.9% of total visits.

- As of January 1, 2021, the County is going to require decals for Convenience Center Usage and those will be issued to County Residential Owners only. The decal system is being introduced to prevent out-of-county abuse of the County's waste collection locations. Starting in mid-October, decal applications will be available at all County Convenience Centers for Beaufort County residents to fill out. One decal will be issued per Beaufort County property owner.

- The Convenience Center on Hilton Head Island will remain open.

If you questions, please call the Beaufort County Solid Waste and Recycling Department at 843-255-2930.

In-Person Absentee Voting Starts Monday, October 5
In-person absentee voting for the statewide general election on November 3, 2020, including local races, will start on Monday, October 5. Absentee precincts will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Hilton Head Island residents may vote at the Beaufort County satellite election office at 539 William Hilton Parkway, located directly across the highway from the First Presbyterian Church and Hilton Head Fire Station #3. Absentee precincts will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 31. The last day for in-person absentee voting is Monday, November 2, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

As voting gets underway, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers these recommendations for voters to slow the spread of COVID-19:
- Wash your hands before entering and after leaving the polling location.
- While in the polling location, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol frequently, especially after touching surfaces frequently touched by multiple people, such as door handles or voting machines.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in lined trash cans. Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear a mask. Children under 2 and anyone who has trouble breathing, is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance should not wear a mask.
- Maintain at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) of distance from others.
- Do not disinfect or wipe down the voting equipment yourself. Electronic voting equipment can be damaged by cleaners and disinfectants. If you use hand sanitizer before touching the voting equipment, ensure your hands are completely dry to avoid damaging the equipment. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after using the voting equipment.
- Avoid crowds. Use early voting, if available in your jurisdiction.
- Check your voting location and requirements in advance because they may have changed due to COVID-19.
- Verify your voter registration information is correct in advance of reporting to the polling location.
- Contact your local or state election office external icon for additional information for voters with disabilities.
- Make sure you have all necessary documents to avoid delays at the polling location.
- Where possible, review or complete a sample ballot at home to speed the process of casting your ballot at the polling location.

- Bring your own black ink pen.
- Bring a stylus or similar object for use with touchscreen voting machines. Check with poll workers before using.

Free COVID-19 Tests and COVID-19 Cases in our Community
We know people are still in need of COVID-19 tests. We are thankful to Hilton Head Hospital and its sister facility, Coastal Carolina Hospital in Hardeeville, for providing free COVID-19 drive-thru testing from 8 a.m. to noon, Monday thru Friday. You do not need an appointment or a physician's order. You can also visit scdhec.gov/covid19testing to find other testing clinics or events near you and what the requirements are for testing at those locations. For the latest figures on the number of cases of COVID-19 on Hilton Head Island, please visit www.scdhec.gov or the Town's COVID-19 hub page at www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19.