

JOURNAL

SPRINGVILLE



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Ashford board discusses updates during COVID-19 pandemic

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Editor

The Ashford Town Board, at its May 13 meeting via teleconferencing, discussed the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent effects it is having within the town.

Supervisor John Pfeffer announced the town will be extending the state of emergency for another 30 days or until rescinded. Due to COVID-19, the Town of Ashford also announced at its meeting the cancellations of this year's Memorial Day celebration and the youth summer recreation program.

Pfeffer presented a resolution to the board to support federal funding related to the coronavirus pandemic that is directly delivered to all municipalities, regardless of population size. With the federal government passing the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, it would provide a \$150 billion fund for states, tribal governments and units of local government with a population in excess of 500,000 people. According to the resolution, less than one-half of one percent of municipalities in the United States meet the population threshold and of the 933 towns in New York, 931 are not eligible for direct federal funding under the CARES Act, including the Town of Ashford.

With an estimated \$2 billion in sales tax revenue lost, along with the losses of other sources of revenue including permit fees, justice court fines and mortgage recording tax, the coronavirus pandemic has created financial stress for local governments in New York, according to the resolution. After discussion, the board unanimously approved the resolution.

"What this resolution is asking is they make that payment directly to the town rather than going through the state or any other method," Pfeffer said.

Councilman Charlie Davis updated the board on the West Valley Food Pantry. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers for the food pantry have doubled, Davis said. Donations from businesses, organizations and members of the community have been great and Davis thanks everyone for helping those in need. With the increased donations, Davis said a larger location is needed for the food pantry, with the board later discussing options for a possible future expansion or bigger space.

"The town we live in is awesome because we have had more donations than we have ever had," Davis said.

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In other board news:

– Trash dumping has started to become an issue within the town. Pfeffer said he will be contacting New York State Department of Environmental Conservation officers to explore options for the prevention of future dumping and prosecution of offenders.

– Highway Superintendent Tim Engels reported employees within the highway department continue to work according to guidelines from the Centers of Disease Control.

– Communications Manager for CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC Joe Pillittere reported on back to work policies at the **West Valley Demonstration Project**. Employees will have to check in on their arrival, with the process already being tested. Some employees at the site are essential and have continued to work on site, while being compliant with CDC guidelines.

The next Town of Ashford board meeting will be Wednesday, June 10 at 7:30 p.m.

West Valley Demonstration Project Quarterly Public Meeting

Wednesday, May 27, 2020, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Virtual Public Meeting

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) will hold a virtual public meeting to provide information on WVDP activities and progress. NYSERDA and DOE will provide the public with an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

If you would like to participate, please contact Joseph Pillittere at Joseph.Pillittere@chbvw.com or (716) 998-4900.