

## MEMORANDUM

To: Residents of Lower Merion Township, Ward 3

From: Michael McKeon, Ward 3 Commissioner (email: mmckeon@lowermerion.org)

Re: Lower Merion Township, Ward 3 Report #45

Date: March 30, 2020

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### CURRENT EVENTS

### **CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 UPDATE**

#### **CURRENT RESTRICTIONS**

- Governor Tom Wolf ordered all non-life sustaining businesses in Pennsylvania to close physical operations. Restaurants and bars can remain open for curbside pick-up or delivery.
- Montco schools are closed until at least April 6. Lower Merion public schools will be closed until at least April 13 due to spring break.
- Governor Wolf issued a stay-at-home order to be in effect in Montgomery County (and 21 other PA counties) until at least April 6. If you are not involved in a life-sustaining business, you should only be leaving your home for necessities (i.e. purchase food or medicine) or for socially distant exercise (i.e. walking a dog/jogging staying 6 ft from others).
- President Trump ordered social distancing guidelines to continue until **April 30**.

### CASES

- As of March 29, there were 3,394 COVID-19 cases in Pennsylvania, including 34 deaths. Testing options have increased and more than 30,000 Pennsylvanians have tested negative for the virus.
- As of March 29, Montco has 431 positive cases and ranks 36<sup>th</sup> in the nation in cases per county (per Johns Hopkins Univ. of Medicine).
- A 72-year old man from Abington passed away on March 21, 2020. He was the first Montgomery County resident to die from the virus. He was hospitalized for a head injury following a fall at home and was diagnosed with COVID-19 while treating in the hospital.
- A total of five Montgomery County residents have died from the disease. The other deaths consist of an 84-year old Abington man, a 62-year old Whitmarsh man, a 95-year old Cheltenham man and a 61-year old Norristown woman.

- As of March 29, there were 79 cases in Lower Merion and 2 in Narberth (no deaths). Lower Merion has more than twice as many cases as any other Township in Montco. The good news is that Lower Merion's cases have been increasing moderately each day, but not by the factor (doubling every 2-3 days) feared by many experts. Also, the Cynwyd Elementary School teacher and her husband who had tested positive for COVID-19 have reportedly recovered fully.

### **ISSUES GOING FORWARD**

- Safety is the primary concern. Please practice social distancing because we cannot allow our medical facilities to be overwhelmed. We need healthy doctors with available personal protective equipment, ICU beds and ventilators.
- The economic damage from some restrictions will be severe. Please try to support local restaurants and bars by ordering take out or delivery, using drive-throughs or by purchasing gift cards (buy now/use later), as we continue to practice social distancing.
- The **CARES Act** allocated \$350 billion in loans to businesses of 500 persons or less (maximum value of a loan is \$10 million). The goal is to keep businesses going and keep people employed. The principal of the loan can potentially be forgiven if a business is able to avoid layoffs for an 8-week period and pay the 4% interest. Businesses should look into the CARES Act because the loan could be critical to the survival of many companies.
- A COVID-19 drive-in testing site is available at Temple University's Upper Dublin campus, but testing is by appointment only from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., for people who meet certain criteria. For more information, visit [montcopa.org](http://montcopa.org). The telephone number for the County's COVID-19 information line is 610-631-3000 and you can also email [covid19@montcopa.org](mailto:covid19@montcopa.org) with questions about COVID-19. Registration has been capped at 270 per day.
- Most upcoming Civic and Township events have been canceled. The Belmont Hills Civic Association has cancelled its annual Easter Egg Hunt (April 4) and its next civic meeting (April 6) due to the virus.

### **TAX RELIEF**

- The deadline to pay Township/County real estate taxes at a discount has been extended to June 1, 2020.
- The IRS extended Tax Day from April 15 to July 15, 2020.
- The Lower Merion Board of Commissioners voted to extend the deadline to pay the Township business privilege tax so that it is also July 15, 2020.
- Complete your Census (due April 1, 2020) to help keep your taxes down. You can complete the Census here: [My2020census.gov](http://My2020census.gov)

## ESSENTIAL TOWNSHIP SERVICES



The essential Township services (police, fire and refuse collection) will keep working to keep the community as safe and healthy as possible. Collection of trash, recycling and leaves will continue. Public works has limited staffing and will prioritize issues.

Township parks and trails are open provided everyone practices social distancing (6 feet apart).

Basketball courts, tennis courts, playgrounds and hockey rinks are CLOSED.

The Township dump (Koegel complex- 1300 Woodbine Ave) is closed until further notice and rear-yard collection has been suspended. Residents have been cleaning out their homes and producing 30% more waste than normal during the outbreak, which has been overwhelming refuse collection and the staff at the Koegel complex.



## CENSUS

Please do not forget about the U.S. census. The census response is due by **April 1, 2020** and it can be completed via the mail, telephone or on-line. Households received a letter with a special code. If you go to the site [My2020census.gov](http://My2020census.gov) and enter your code, you should be able to complete the Census in about 10 minutes. The Census count will affect the allocation of federal and state funding for years and every person who is not counted will cost Township, County and State funding. An incomplete Census count will result in higher local, county and state taxes. Additionally, the Census count will affect the representation at each level of government so an incomplete count means less of a national voice for our area.

## PRIMARY ELECTION NEW DATE JUNE 2, 2020

The primary election was postponed from April 28 to **June 2, 2020** due to coronavirus concerns. If you would like to avoid the crowd at the polls, you can follow the below link to obtain a **mail-in ballot**; it can be a little confusing because absentee ballots are also an option. Make sure you follow links for the **mail-in ballot**. If you have your driver's license available, the entire process should take 5 minutes or less.

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/OnlineAbsenteeApplication/#/OnlineAbsenteeBegin>

## CRIME & POLICE ACTIVITY REPORT Below is a summary of recent police activity in Ward 3:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Comments</u>
3/18/20	Crime of Violence	Pencoyd Ave	Simple Assault
3/19/20	Theft	260 Rock Hill Rd (CVS)	Retail theft over \$200

- There were more than 20 reported instances of theft from a vehicle and attempted theft from a vehicle on the evening of March 23 at the Royal Athena apartment complex, located at 600 Righters Ferry Rd, Bala Cynwyd (Ward 9).

**PLEASE LOCK YOUR CAR DOORS! Theft from unlocked vehicles is a big issue in the Township.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PAM DELISSIO IS HOSTING HER 93<sup>RD</sup> TOWN HALL AT 7:00 P.M. ON MONDAY MARCH 30 ON FACEBOOK.** TO PARTICIPATE, VISIT [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/REPDELISSIO](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/REPDELISSIO) AT 7 P.M.

*Public meetings have been limited and the next Board of Commissioners meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2020 (it may occur remotely).*

*I maintain a Facebook page to spread information. To "like" or "follow" the page, click here: <https://www.facebook.com/LowerMerionWard3Commissioner/>*