

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

Editor's Note:
Due to information received from the City of Florence and its importance to the community, we are sharing it here in place of our normal Opinion page so that it can be included in its entirety as provided by the City.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)

MESSAGE FROM THE CITY OF FLORENCE

The City of Florence is committed to the safety and well-being of our community and staff. Below is some information about what the City is doing to address the concerns over COVID-19. This information and pertinent links can be found at www.ci.florence.or.us/covid19.

The City's Role:

- As a City, it is our responsibility to maintain essential services and support our public health and public safety partners.
- During a public health emergency, Lane County Public Health in conjunction with the Oregon Health Authority are the lead agencies.
- We have emergency management and operations plans for situations like this, they are in place and working to maintain those critical services, identify community needs, and mobilize coordinated responses.
- The City is taking action to slow the spread and flatten the curve of COVID-19 and amplify the messages, recommendations, and preventative measures of the lead agencies.

What We Are Doing:

- We are collaborating and coordinating with our partners in Florence, the Siuslaw Region, and at the County through the West Lane Emergency Operations Group (WLEOG) to identify community needs and address them as quickly as possible.
- We are making sure our first responders and personnel stay healthy and are prepared to continue serving the community.
- We are suspending meetings, temporarily closing facilities, and modifying some face-to-face services to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Florence and Lane County. See below for specific information.

Why We Are Doing It

- All of these efforts help slow the spread of COVID-19.
- By slowing the spread, it is the goal to preserve our health care capacity which will be critical in the coming weeks.
- These actions also help protect people who may be at higher risk - people over 60 and those with pre-existing respiratory, cardiac conditions, or who are immunocompromised.
- We can all help reduce the impact of COVID-19 in our community.

What Can You Do:

- Follow the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, the Oregon Health Authority, and Lane County Public Health regarding healthy behaviors and social distancing.
- Help each other through

checking on your neighbors, reducing stigma, supporting local organization and businesses.

- Educate yourself through trusted and official resources to reduce the spread of misinformation. (Links are listed below).

Public Meetings, Events and Facilities

In addition to the strategies put in place by Governor Brown and to help slow the spread and protect each other the City has implemented the following:

- Canceled the March 25 Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA) meeting.
- Suspended all City committee meetings until further notice.
- Suspended all programming and gatherings at the Florence Events Center, as well as closed the facility to the public, through April 13, the full length of the governor's closure guidance for gatherings over 25 people.
- The Public Works Operations Facility is closed to the public. City staff continue to operate essential functions from that facility.
- Temporarily closed the Florence Senior Center to the public through April 13.

(For more information about Senior Meals Program, please call 541-682-3353 or 1-800-441-4038 or go online to lcog.org/160/Senior-Meals.)

Full meeting details and a calendar of City events can be found at www.ci.florence.or.us/calendar. Future updates on City actions related to COVID-19 will be located at www.ci.florence.or.us/covid19.

Accessing City Services:

The City of Florence is working to ensure the safety, security, and health of the public and our staff while continuing to offer you the customer service you expect from us.

Consistent with guidance on limiting the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing, we ask you to please communicate with our staff over the telephone and internet as a primary method. Visit the City's website at www.ci.florence.or.us for information on services, forms, or other items you need. Staff email addresses are also available online to conduct business via email.

If you must meet with our staff in person to conduct business, please call for an appointment before coming to our offices so we can make sure we have the right staff available to assist you.

- City Hall – 541-997-3437
- Building Department – 541-997-2141
- Finance/Utility Billing – 541-997-3436
- Florence Events Center – 541-997-1994
- Municipal Court – 541-997-3123
- Planning Department– 541-

- 997-8237
- Police Department – 541-997-3515
 - Public Works – 541-997-4106

Pay your City Services Bill online through Xpress Bill Pay. Details are available at www.ci.florence.or.us/administrative-services/city-services-utility-billing.

We recognize the economic hardship that may impact our community during the current public health emergency due to the COVID-19 virus.

Effective immediately and until further notice, the City will be suspending water disconnections and late fees. Customers who are impacted by the suspension of service shutoffs during this grace period will still owe the City for past due balances and fees related to services provided, and are encouraged to contact us to make payment arrangements or inquire about assistance programs to avoid accruing a large overdue bill.

- Beginning March 18, the City will be limiting its front counter service. The City Hall front counter will be open to the public from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm to receive utility payments and answer questions regarding utility services.

We encourage the public to use the drop box at City Hall or make their payments online at www.ci.florence.or.us/administrative-services/city-services-utility-billing.

If you must meet with staff, please call 541-997-3436 to schedule an appointment.

A public kiosk, to be located in the City Hall lobby, will be available later this week to provide an access point to City services available online for those who do not have internet access.

Municipal Court:

Those with violations or non-criminal proceedings who have COVID-19 concerns should contact the Municipal Court at 541-997-3123 prior to their court date of appearance.

Steps are being taken to sanitize the courtroom prior to and after court days.

Payments can be made over the telephone online at www.ci.florence.or.us/court/pay-your-court-fine-online.

Continue to follow the City of Florence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Vimeo.

We are making these difficult decisions based on the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, the Oregon Health Authority and Lane County Public Health.

The City is working on technology solutions to resume future public meetings while continuing to adhere to social distancing guidance.

'Friends' make health, safety chief concerns at FEC

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

Dear Friends in the Greater Florence Events Center Community:

Thank you for your patience as we the Friends of the Florence Events Center, along with the rest of the world, navigate the uncharted territory of the COVID-19 quarantine.

We've postponed the April 4 Cur-

tis Salgado & Band concert, with rescheduling later in 2020. Salgado concert ticket holders have been given various refund options.

GUEST VIEWPOINT
By Rachel Pearson
President, Friends of the Events Center

That said, beyond our events and volunteering, fundraising and the fun, our Friends members' chief concerns are the health, wellbeing and safety of everyone at the Florence Events Center.

As they said in WWII, we are in this together "For the Duration."

Until the restrictions are lifted, we are adhering carefully to CDC guidelines (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/summary.html), and looking forward to welcoming everyone back to "Florence's Living Room."

Thank you and please stay safe! As you are able, be the person who helps out her or his neighbor.

As Mr. Fred Rogers said, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."

Yours, in the spirit of shared community...

USPS# 497-660 Copyright 2020 © Siuslaw News

Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis

Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Multimedia Sales Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor

DEADLINES:

Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; Display classified ads, Friday 5 p.m.

Saturday Issue—General news, Thursday noon; Budgets, two days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Thursday noon; Display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$79; 6-month in-county, \$56; 10-week subscription, \$25; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$102; 6-month out-of-county, \$69; 10-week subscription, \$35; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$134; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
Website and E-Edition: TheSiuslawNews.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside the Siuslaw News readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) Explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

Email letters to:
nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

WHERE TO WRITE

PRES. DONALD TRUMP
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461
TTY/TDD Comments: 202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

U.S. REP. PETER DEFazio
(4TH DIST.)
2134 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6416
541-269-2609
541-465-6732
www.defazio.house.gov

OREGON GOV. KATE BROWN
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, Ore. 97301-4047
Governor's Citizens' Rep.
Message Line: 503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/gov

STATE SEN. ARNIE ROBLAN
(DIST. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705
FAX: 503-986-1080
Email: Sen.ArnieRoblan@oregonlegislature.gov

U.S. SEN. RON WYDEN
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5244
541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

STATE REP. CADDY MCKEOWN
(DIST. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email: rep.caddymckeown@oregonlegislature.gov

U.S. SEN. JEFF MERKLEY
313 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753
FAX: 202-228-3997
541-465-6750
www.merkley.senate.gov

WEST LANE COUNTY COMMISSIONER JAY BOZIEVICH
125 E. Eighth St.
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4203
FAX: 541-682-4616
Email: Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us