



City of Beacon, New York

Office of the Mayor
Lee Kyriacou, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY OF BEACON OPERATIONS CONTINUE UNINTERRUPTED DURING COVID-19 “NYS PAUSE”

Beacon, NY: The City of Beacon continues to provide uninterrupted services to the community during the statewide effort to slow and reverse the spread of COVID-19.

Mayor Lee Kyriacou stated: “I want to thank all city employees during this time of hardship – for maintaining essential services, for adapting to almost daily changes in these uncharted waters, and for assuring residents that city services are always there, no matter what.”

Amid the challenge, the City of Beacon has adapted and remained open, without layoffs and despite a state order for at least 50% of non-essential staff to work from or remain at home. The City and each of its departments are committed to doing its part to “flatten the curve” and protect at-risk residents.

- 1. Police and Fire:** Beacon Police and Fire continue to operate without reduction, with specific safety protocols adapted to COVID-19 procedures, as well as awareness of the potential for domestic violence. Response times as fast, if not faster. In an emergency, dial 911; otherwise you reach Beacon police at (845) 831-4111 and fire at 831-3516.
- 2. Water, Sewer, Trash, Recycling:** The City’s water and sewer services continue without interruption; residents can absolutely rely on quality and safety standards. Curbside trash and recycling pickups occur on the same schedule. However, the city’s recycling facility on Dennings Avenue is at present only open on Saturdays 8 AM to Noon.
- 3. City Hall:** Unlike many other communities, city hall has always remained open, with extensive changes in procedure to keep everyone safe. Residents have been steered to remote methods of bill payment, online application forms, etc. – including a drop box in front of city hall. A remote procedure should be available for every application or bill involving the city. The Building Department is accepting and processing building permit applications remotely. And, with the Governor’s latest order, even marriages can be performed remotely or with appropriate social distancing.
- 4. Parks and Recreation.** City parks are open and afford residents places to be outdoors while social distancing. Large signs on appropriate use went up on playgrounds and courts, combined with active monitoring by police and city staff. However, despite near universal compliance, pursuant to the Governor’s recent order, the city shut playgrounds and courts. State parks on Mt. Beacon and Dennings Point remain open, although the Mt. Beacon trailhead on Route 9D was closed as Scenic Hudson could not staff it. The city’s recreation department head is now the City’s COVID-29 communication director and assists local aid groups.
- 5. City Council and Boards.** Again, unlike other communities, the Beacon City Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board and Conservation Advisory Committee have all continued uninterrupted, including the kick-off meeting for the Main Street Access Committee. Meetings occur at the

usual scheduled times, using video conferencing and phone-ins. Check the city website for specific meetings.

- 6. Accelerated E-Beacon Initiative:** The Mayor had slated an “e-Beacon Initiative” to substantially improve the city’s website, electronic communication, and bill payment. The COVID-19 crisis led the city to immediately implement a number of these changes. The city’s website – www.cityofbeacon.org – has a number of new features, including:
 - A dedicated COVID-19 webpage;
 - The ability to sign up for SWIFT-911 community alerts;
 - A comprehensive communication plan using SWIFT-911, Channel 22, press and internet;
 - Pages of community resources, such as listings for food pantry, free meals, take-out restaurants, Beacon businesses and remote shopping guide;
 - Bill pay by card or checking account (almost 400 have signed up in the first month); and
 - A “Request for Service” button.

- 7. Public Works:** While operating at half-staff, the City continues to maintain streets, parks, city buildings and more. That includes a rapid response to downed trees and wires in the latest storm this past week.

Said Mayor Kyriacou, “Everyone has a part to do to help us safely get through the peak of this pandemic, and to get us to the next phase of prevention and recovery. Thank you all – city workers, healthcare personnel, volunteers providing aid, and residents – for doing your part. Keep social distancing. Be kind and respectful to all.”

About the City of Beacon:

Beacon, New York is located on the eastern shore of the Hudson River 60 miles north of New York City, with a population of 15,000. Originally a Native American settlement, the area was purchased from the Wappinger Tribe in 1683 and settled by Dutch and other Europeans, leading to the riverfront community of Fishkill Landing on the Hudson, and the mill community of Matteawan on Fishkill Creek. The two communities were incorporated together as the City of Beacon in 1913, named for the Revolutionary War signal fires on Mount Beacon. Beacon thrived as a 19th and 20th Century factory city, but as factories closed after WWII and the local economy declined, the city went through a period of hard times. Today, Beacon has successfully reinvented itself as a 21st Century river community centered around tourism, the arts and access to the scenic Hudson River heritage area. A diverse and thriving small city, it is now home to DIA:Beacon (one of the largest exhibition spaces in the country for modern and contemporary art), a network of Hudson River parks connecting to Fishkill Creek and Mount Beacon trails, and a vibrant historic Main Street of art galleries, shops, cultural venues and restaurants.

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