



## WRITTEN REPORT

**To:** Honorable Mayor Clark and Ridgway Town Council  
**From:** Preston Neill, Town Manager  
**Date:** April 3, 2020  
**RE:** **Town Manager's Report**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

This report serves as an update to Council on key projects, activities and community issues.

### **COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATE**

As we work together to navigate the disruptions to our lives brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that our community stay home as much as possible and practice social distancing protocols recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to slow the spread of COVID-19. This is not only for our individual health and safety, but for the wellbeing of our loved ones – young and old.

A social distance of six feet from other people must be maintained at all times. The CDC has reported that 25% of people infected with COVID-19 may not even know they have the virus but are capable of transmitting it to others. According to the CDC, people who do develop symptoms may be capable of transmitting the disease at least 48 hours before the onset of any symptoms.

As of this morning, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Ouray County now has two confirmed cases of COVID-19. The following message is from Tanner Kingery, Ouray County Public Health Director:

*“Everyone should consider themselves at risk from exposure to COVID-19 and should adhere to the Governor’s Order to Stay-at-Home as much as possible. While at home, everyone should monitor themselves for fever and remain alert for cough, shortness of breath or sore throat. Testing is not indicated for persons who are mildly ill or are not showing signs of illness. This helps conserve personal protective equipment and reduce possible exposures to healthcare workers. Testing priority is given to hospitalized patients with severe acute lower respiratory illness, for example pneumonia.*

*The Ouray County Unified Command and all community partners are working diligently on our community-level response to COVID-19. Your adherence to public health guidance is imperative to keeping you, your family, our healthcare providers, first responders and other essential staff, safe.”*

The Town continues to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and take the appropriate precautions recommended by Ouray County Public Health and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). For County-specific questions, please call the Ouray County COVID-19 Hotline at 970-626-5484.

It goes without saying that these are difficult times. People and businesses are experiencing hardships that many of us could not have envisioned only three weeks ago. Together as a community, I trust we’ll take the necessary actions to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and begin the recovery process.



### **CLERK'S DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

From Pam Kraft, Town Clerk/Treasurer:

#### **Liquor and Marijuana Enforcement**

Due to COVID-19, the Colorado Liquor Enforcement Division has temporarily suspended enforcement on the sale, delivery and take out of alcohol for existing liquor license holders. License holders are now allowed to deliver alcohol, and to also sell to customers who have proven to be over the age of 21, alcohol beverages when they order takeout food. Additionally, the state Marijuana Enforcement Division has changed regulations pertaining to conduct of sales for medical and retail marijuana stores. Medical facilities may allow both inside and curbside sales, and retail stores may only provide curbside service.

#### **Recycle Services**

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, staff received a letter from Bruin Waste Management advising customers being provided with refuse and recycling services that due to COVID-19, recycling will be placed into the landfill. They explained recycling is hand sorted and the practice must be curtailed. Bruin also noted that all fees will still apply because the volume and act of service will not change. The sorting cost will now cover the tipping fees to dispose of the waste.

### **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

From Chase Jones, Public Works Services Administrator:

#### **TCW Emergency Interconnection**

Tri-County Water (TCW) recently installed a tap on their main to accommodate a water system interconnection between our entities. This will allow Ridgway to receive limited water from TCW during emergency situations. The Town is working with suppliers to secure materials for the remainder of the needed infrastructure. The project will be completed by the end of summer 2020.

#### **Chlorine Dioxide Machine**

The Town utilizes chlorine dioxide during water treatment to reach secondary taste, odor and color regulations. The current generation unit is roughly a decade old and at the end of its expected lifespan. A compatible replacement unit is being researched so the Town can continue to supply high quality water to its residents.

#### **Water Treatment**

The Town continues to produce potable water that meets or exceeds regulations. Various supplies have been purchased to ensure safe water can be produced for many months into the future. It should be known that COVID-19 is susceptible to typical water treatment and disinfection techniques which are utilized by Ridgway and throughout the United States. There have not been any recorded cases of COVID-19 being transmitted through a water distribution system.

#### **Public Works Services**

The Public Works staff will continue to maintain and respond to our community's essential service needs. However, to help protect our crew and ensure continuous staffing, a rotating staff schedule has been



developed. With reduced staff, non-essential services and various projects are limited and/or have been delayed. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

### **PLANNING UPDATE**

From Shay Coburn, Town Planner:

#### **Master Plan Implementation - Land Use Code Updates, Phase 1 Address Housing**

After the Joint Town Council and Planning Commission Workshop on February 10, comments from the public were received and incorporated into a third draft that was presented at the March 31 Planning Commission meeting. As a result of the meeting, there were two small changes requested by the Commission. In addition, written comments on the draft will be received until April 14 at which time they will be reviewed and incorporated in a fourth draft. This fourth draft will be reviewed once more at the April 28 Planning Commission meeting. At that point, it is likely to be forwarded on to Town Council for their consideration and introduction of the ordinance at the regular May Council meeting.

#### **2020 Census**

By April 1, every home should have received an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. If you did not, don't worry, you can still complete it! Every home should respond in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail. To respond online go to: <https://my2020census.gov/> and click "Start Questionnaire." It should take less than 10 minutes. If you haven't done it yet, go do it!

#### **Habitat for Humanity Triplex Project**

Erica Madison, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of the San Juans, notified staff in late March that Habitat will be temporarily delaying the build out of their triplex in Ridgway due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Habitat had to make this decision for the sustainability of their organization, and they hope to resume the project as soon as possible.

### **COMMUNITY INITIATIVES UPDATE**

From Diedra Silbert, Community Initiatives Facilitator:

#### **New Website Platform**

The State Internet Portal Authority (SIPA) which hosts the Town's website required that all SIPA websites upgrade to a newer platform. Staff began to work on this in late December and has focused on transferring all webpages from the current website without much change. This has taken much more time than had been estimated by SIPA originally. The new platform will allow for additional creativity in the future. Rollout of the new website is still anticipated in late April, though the current situation may allow for flexibility with this timeline.

#### **Collaboration with Ridgway Area Chamber to Assist Businesses**

Since the COVID emergency began, Chamber and Town staff have worked together to identify resources that could be helpful to businesses and to highlight the ways our businesses have been adapting. Together, three informative emails about resources were distributed to all businesses for which Chamber and Town have emails, as well as additional emails sent this week to all Creative District supporters (600 email addresses) and many nonprofits.



### **Heritage Park Improvements**

Last month an application was made and granted for the 2020 Project and Technical Assistance grant from Colorado Creative Industries for \$10,000 (with a \$10,000 match, existing in the budget's funds for Heritage Park improvements). These funds would supplement what was budgeted for Heritage Park improvements along with the Colorado Main Street mini-grants for 2019 and 2020, another \$10,000 with 25% match. A Request for Bid was publicized to find a contractor to do the irrigation and landscaping work around the Visitor Center and along the frontage of Highway 62. The Chamber will be responsible for the signage to be placed on the Visitor Center's south wall, highlighting the 5 Chamber themes which align with RCD and the Creative Corridor, originally planned for 2020 but now not expected until 2021. Town staff will collaborate with Chamber staff on this. (These improvements were to be the first phases of implementation of the Heritage Park/Visitor Center Strategic Master Plan - 2019.) See separate memo on this project.

### **First Fridays**

This is the third year the C.A.T. has taken the lead on organizing First Friday events, June through September this year, assuming the stay-at-home order lifts by then. The C.A.T.'s desire has been to encourage business/organizational leadership for these events, and discussions about this began but will likely be sidelined until next year, given the current emergency, especially for businesses.

### **Treehouse Studio**

Through the generosity of property owner Sue Gustafson, the C.A.T. has programmed events at the Treehouse Studio the past two years. This summer Sue will rent the Treehouse to a local photographer, and the C.A.T. will not be responsible for programming that space.

### **Ridgway Old West Fest**

The C.A.T. will participate in this year's event, Sept. 25-27, though to a lesser degree than last year (no art show). The C.A.T. plans to contribute music and dance connected with Hispanic and/or Ute cultural heritage.

### **National Main Street Conference**

Councilor Russ Meyer planned to represent the Town in Dallas at this annual required conference. Due to COVID-19, the conference will not be required this year, though it had not been cancelled at the time of this writing.

### **Space to Create**

A public meeting is in the works to further inform the community about the latest application to the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority and changes to the design. However, a date for an Artspace visit is on hold at this time.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

- **Regular Municipal Election** – April 7, 2020
- **Regular Town Council Meeting** – April 8, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom



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- **New Town Council Member Training/Elected Officials 101 Workshop** – TBD
- **Planning Commission Regular Meeting** – April 28, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Regular Town Council Meeting** – May 13, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

**JOKE OF THE DAY**

What do you call a fake noodle?

An impasta