

At an Emergency meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on March 16, 2020;

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: George O. (Buster) Steere, Jr., President; Walter M. O. Steere, III, Vice-President; William E. Reichert; Patricia Henry; and Julian (Jay) Forgue.

Also Present: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; Tim Kane, Town Solicitor; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Matt Floor, IT Director; Matt Fague, Police Captain; Judy Branch, Human Services Director; Melissa Bouvier, Senior Center Director; Ken Johnson, Bldg./Zoning Official Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Karen Scott, Town Planner; Jane Steere, Tax Collector; & Gary Treml, Public Works Director

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Covid-19 (Corona virus)

1. Updates/Actions - Discussion and/or Action

Gerry Mosca, EMA, gave updates to all on the state statistics regarding COVID-19 and recommended steps for residents that feel they may have contracted the virus.

G. Mosca discussed a Continuity of Operations Plan explaining that the town has an Emergency Operating Plan but we still need a plan of succession for all departments. G. Mosca asked each department to submit their “chain of command” for their department.

G. Mosca handed out and explained a Tiered Response plan that he has prepared. G. Mosca recommended to Council that the town adopt the Tier 3 level for all departments except for the Transfer Station.

G. Mosca discussed with all the ways to minimize contact with the public while providing services. J. Branch explained how she would operate the Food Pantry.

G. Mosca explained the need for the next tier should it arise and the possibility of screening. G. Mosca suggested all meetings be postponed until March 31, 2020.

G. Mosca stated he feels there should be a document in place to authorize an emergency action without the need for a Council meeting, should it be warranted. G. Mosca stated if the issue can wait for a Council meeting, we certainly will, but this document could handle an imminent situation.

Atty. Kane stated he has the final draft of a Declaration of a State of Emergency which follows all state law and implements the recommendations of G. Mosca. T. Kane stated it recommends a date to of March 31, 2020 with the ability to extend to April 7th, 2020. T. Kane stated if needed to be extended further we can address the issue at that time. G. Mosca stressed the importance of this Declaration and further that they are being adopted statewide. G. Mosca stated we are fighting for supplies statewide and this Declaration shows the State of Rhode Island that Glocester is serious.

G. Mosca also asked all Department Heads to track any expenses they have related to the pandemic for possible reimbursement, including time spent in excess of regular work time.

Discussion followed on emergency spending and policing of state mandates during this time.

2. Town Departments - To discuss and or take Actions necessary to facilitate possible emergency plans and actions for Town/Town Services in light of Corona Virus.

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to ADOPT "Town of Glocester, Rhode Island, Declaration of a State of Emergency, dated March 16, 2020" as follows:

**TOWN OF GLOCESTER, RHODE ISLAND
DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY
MARCH 16, 2020**

WHEREAS, the President of the United States and Governor of Rhode Island have declared a state of emergency due to the Corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the above-described disaster, the Glocester Town Council has determined that there is an imminent threat of, or existing conditions have caused or will cause, widespread or severe injury, or loss of life, and public safety authorities will be unable to maintain public order or afford adequate protection for lives or property; and

WHEREAS, declaring a State of Emergency and imposing the restrictions and prohibitions ordered herein is necessary to maintain order and protect public health, safety, and welfare, and to secure property.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in the Town Council under R.I.G.L. 30-15-12 & R.I.G.L. 30-15-13 as well as the Glocester Town Charter, Sections C 1-3 & C 1-4:

Section 1. A **State of Emergency** is hereby declared within the jurisdiction of the Town of Glocester.

Section 2. The emergency area covered by this state of emergency shall be the entire Town of Glocester, Rhode Island. The state of emergency authorizes the Town Council President or his/her successor, in conjunction with the town's Town Police Chief/Public Safety Director and the Emergency Management Director, to "take whatever actions are deemed necessary to protect public health and safety," in accordance with the General Laws of Rhode Island and the Town of Glocester Town Charter.

Section 3. The following restrictions and prohibitions are imposed:

A. With the exception of the Police Department and the transfer station in Glocester, town-operated facilities will be closed to the public as of March 17th, 2020, and all programs will be suspended. Town staff will report to work for essential business and can continue to accept and process applications for permits, recordings and the like, according to the plans and provisions which will protect the health and safety of town employees, but residents have been asked to submit documents electronically, if possible. Residents with critical or time-sensitive business have been asked to call Town Hall at 401-568-6206 to make arrangements.

Section 4. The Town of Glocester Emergency Management Director and Police Chief are directed to activate the town's emergency operations center and all necessary town emergency response plans, policies, compacts, and agreements, to create and establish mobile support units, and to activate and deploy disaster response teams and disaster response workers to perform disaster response services.

Section 5. All town departments, agencies, or quasi-municipal agencies and boards and commissions performing executive functions shall cooperate fully with the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA), Glocester Emergency Management Director and the Police Chief in all matters concerning this Declaration. Efforts to provide emergency disaster relief to the Town of Glocester should be coordinated by and through the Glocester Emergency Management Director and the Police Chief.

Section 6. Town officials are directed to cancel all town meetings, except for Town Council emergency meetings, limit the travel of town employees, and postpone all public events during the period of this State of Emergency.

Section 7. We hereby order all Glocester law enforcement officers, employees and all other emergency management personnel subject to our control to cooperate in the enforcement and implementation of the provisions of this Declaration, all applicable local ordinances, state and federal laws, and the Glocester Emergency Operations Plan.

Section 8. We hereby order this Declaration: (a) to be distributed to the news media and other organizations calculated to bring its contents to the attention of the general public; (b) to be filed with the Town Clerk and (c) to be distributed to others as necessary to ensure proper implementation of this declaration.

Section 9. This Declaration shall take effect on March 17, 2020 at 12:01 a.m., and shall remain in effect until March 31st, 2020 and, further, with consent of the Town Council may be extended until April 7th, 2020.

DECLARED this the 16th day of March, 2020

George O. Steere, Jr., Town Council President
Town of Glocester, Rhode Island

seconded by Councilor Henry

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere expressed his concerns with this type of Declaration but he understands the need.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to ADOPT the personnel policy entitled “COVID-19 Policy” for consideration, effective upon passage and in effect at March 17, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: Councilor Henry questioned if D. Brennan would circulate and have employees sign tomorrow. D. Brennan answered to the affirmative. Atty. Kane stated the employees would be signing to acknowledge receipt.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor Henry to **ADOPT** a Tier Response Classification and implement **Tier #3** status effective March 17, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere questioned who would have the authority to update the tier status. Discussion followed, the consensus was the EMA Director or Public Safety could make a recommendation to the Town Council President who could make that determination . G. Mosca stated the Resolution is not meant to take “power” away from Council on all decisions, just emergency decisions, and stated if and when time allows for Council to have input that would be done.

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to AUTHORIZE the Tax Assessor to delay reevaluation notifications indefinitely; seconded by Councilor Henry

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to **SUSPEND**: all BV liquor licenses; Entertainment Licenses; Tavern Licenses; and Pool Table Licenses indefinitely; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

V. **MOTION** was made by Councilor W. Steere Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to: - RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(3)) Discussion regarding the matter of security (as it relates to Corona Virus outbreak); seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VI. Reconvene Open Session -

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to Disclose that one vote was taken in Closed Executive Session and to SEAL the minutes of Closed Session; seconded by Councilor Henry

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VII. Town Departments - To discuss and or take Actions necessary to facilitate possible emergency plans and/or action on Town Services in light of Corona Virus

NO ACTION NECESSARY

VIII. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to ADJOURN at 9:20 p.m.; seconded by Councilor Forgue

Discussion: none

VOTE: AYES- G. Steere, W. Steere, Reichert, Henry and Forgue
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

