MAYOR'S UPDATE – FACEBOOK LIVE

April 13, 2020

OPENING

Good evening. What a rainy blustery, day that has turned out to be beautiful!

For those who have been joining me regularly, tonight's set up looks a little bit different. I was able to track down a tripod for my phone, which means I'm no longer balancing an ipad on a stack of books. I also now have an assistant who can start and stop the live stream.

Actually, he doesn't really like that title – so let me introduce you to my camera man, my dear sweet husband Christian who is pitching in to help.

Now to the main topic, COVID-19.

There are now 828 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lancaster County, up from 648 on Friday. The County's Coroner office is reporting 50 deaths in the County.

Tomorrow at 11:00 AM, the Lancaster County Commissioners are holding a press conference to provide a County COVID-19 update. Dr. Michael Ripchinski, Chief Clinical Officer at Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health will provide an update on where we stand as a county and where their internal models show the county going. The Commissioners, Congressman Smucker, and I will also be on hand to make comments.

UPDATES

PROPERTY TAXES

There will be a special meeting of Council on Thursday at 2:30 p.m. One of the items on the agenda will be a resolution before Council to approve changes to the City property tax due dates as follows:

Installment payers: (only those who paid first installment by 3/13)

- 2nd installment due date moves from 6/12 to 8/31
- 3rd installment due date moves from 9/11 to 11/30

We will do a mailing to these taxpayers (roughly 1,000) to inform them of the new installment due dates.

Regular payers:

- Extend the 2% discount period from 4/17 to 8/31
- Move base payment period to 9/1 through 12/31
- Eliminate 10% penalty period completely

If any taxpayer pays at the base amount during the extended discount period, we will refund the over-payment amount.

CITY WEBSITE & COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Reminder to check out www.cityoflancasterpa.com regularly for information about COVID-19, including state, county data, information about City resources, etc. The URL is www.cityoflancasterpa.com/covid-19.

Also, you can sign up for text alerts directly to your phone! Just **text LANCASTER to 57838**. We are working on getting a Spanish language list going as well – stay tuned for that in the coming days.

ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENT FOR NON-FILERS

Most people will have their Economic Impact Payments -- money from the CARES act -- automatically calculated and deposited into the account they used for their 2018 or 2019 federal tax filing.

But even if you did not file, you may still be eligible. If you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident who had gross income that did not exceed $12,200 ($24,400 for married couples) in 2019 or were not otherwise required to file a federal income tax return for 2019 and didn't plan to.

For more information or to submit your payment information, go to www.irs.gov/coronavirus/non-filers-enter-payment-info-here.

Be vigilant when entering this information online so that you don't fall victim to a scam – double check URLs and only use links directly from IRS.gov pages. The URL of the payment information submission is freefilefillableforms.com.

JOBS PORTAL

Pennsylvanians looking for work can now find life-sustaining businesses that are hiring through a new online COVID-19 job portal the Department of Labor & Industry is launching today.

People seeking employment can visit www.PAcareerlink.pa.gov and select the green "PA COVID-19 Jobs – Hiring Immediately" job portal banner to see active job openings. Selecting the "Apply Now" button for a listed position will redirect individuals to the employer's website or email where they can apply directly with the employer and speed up the hiring process.

Life-sustaining businesses can feature their job openings on the portal through an easy to use online form. Businesses must meet the criteria of a life-sustaining business and must have more than 10 job openings. www.expressforms.pa.gov/apps/pa/dli/covid-19-pa-job-portal

The PA COVID-19 job portal is updated daily so businesses in need are spotlighted and people searching for employment have the latest job information.

SDOL FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Food distribution days this week (and moving forward) are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to noon at Carter & MacRae, Hamilton, Hand, Reynolds and J.P. McCaskey. Power Packs Project will be distributed on Thursdays. There's still time to sign up for Power Packs!

www.sdlancaster.org/news/power-packs-to-resume-distribution-on-thursday

CALL TO ACTION

MAKE SOME NOISE WITH LNP

At 5:55 p.m. Thursday, April 16, please step outside your homes in Lancaster city, being careful to maintain safe social distance from your neighbors.

Bring a musical instrument outside. Or just bring some pots and pans. And at precisely 6 p.m., make some joyful noise! Cheer, sing, sound some musical notes.

Join what we're calling The Community Clamor to thank the health care providers putting their lives on the line to care for those who are suffering from COVID-19. To thank the cleaners sanitizing health care spaces. To thank other essential workers. To shake off some of our sadness and anxiety. And to connect as a community, to remind us all that we're in this together.

This effort is being led by LNP | LancasterOnline, Music For Everyone and the City of Lancaster.
We hope that this will be the first Community Clamor event among many throughout Lancaster County.

SEND A LETTER

Oak Leaf Manor, a personal care home in Lancaster, is asking for cards and letters to help brighten their residents' day! Due to local, state and federal guidelines, they can no longer accept visitors and would like to do a "card shower" for their residents with greetings from others, including kids! Please send cards or letters to: Oak Leaf Manor, 2901 Harrisburg Pike, Landisville, PA 17538.

CLOSING

We are now at the start of our 5th week of all things COVID-19. In some ways, these weeks have been long, and in other ways they have gone very quickly.

Take heart Lancaster. Stay well. Stay safe. Stay home. You are saving lives.

See you again tomorrow at 5 p.m.