

Community Update  
January 26, 2021

- Good evening and thank you for joining us tonight. We hope everyone is staying safe and warm.
- Before we begin, let me congratulate President Biden and Vice President Harris on their inauguration and for the peaceful transfer of power.

**COVID**

- We start tonight as we have for the last 8 months – with an update on how the COVID-19 virus has impacted our community. Since our last Council meeting on January 12, the number of confirmed COVID cases has gone up from 1,289 to 1,482 – 193 new cases in town.
- While the increase is still unacceptably high, the rate of increase appears to be slowing a little, which we hope is a good sign.
- We are going to talk about how to access the COVID vaccine in a minute. For now, just a reminder that the best way to protect yourself and others from contracting the virus is to continue to socially distance and to use masks.

**Vaccine**

- Last week, Councilman Mark Crowley and others asked how we can reach people – especially our seniors – who do not have computers or internet access to help them get information about registering to receive the vaccine.
- In response and at the direction of the Council, the Township's Health Department has developed a one-page handout that can be distributed

door-to-door, if necessary, to reach people who may have no other way to receive the information.

- First, I want to thank our Health Department and Township Manager John Shepherd for responding so quickly to this need.
- In researching and developing the information sheet, John Shepherd noted that there is no central clearinghouse for scheduling a vaccine. The current system is decentralized. So, our fact sheet provides the known information for sites close to Roxbury Township.
- We have also included the newly established NJ Department of Health phone number that is designed to assist with scheduling vaccinations. NJ Department of Health – 24/7 COVID-19 Vaccine Call Center – which opened this week – can be reached at (855) 568-0545 for scheduling assistance for the vaccine.
- Morris County has a Megasite at the Rockaway Townsquare Mall, 301 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rockaway. A link has been added to the Township’s website. Use the link to check for available appointments and register. Keep checking back since appointments are added when vaccines become available.
- Also, Riverside Medical Group Urgent Care at 501 Route 10 East at Mary Louise Drive, Ledgewood. Call (973) 584-6751 to check for available appointments. Keep checking back since appointments are added when vaccines become available.
- ShopRite: We have posted a link on the Township’s website that can be used to check for available appointments, or you may call the following stores.

Once again, keep checking back since appointments are added when vaccines become available.

- Flanders ShopRite, 90 Flanders-Bartley Rd., Flanders (973) 252-5160.
- Byram ShopRite, 90-80 Route 206 North, Stanhope (201) 400-8180.
- Recently added, information specifically for veterans. Please check the township website for details.
- Also, please note:
  - All these numbers and links are included on the Township's new information sheet and available on the Township's website.
  - Please be patient and understand that Roxbury Township has no control over vaccine scheduling or distribution. This information is being provided to assist residents in obtaining a vaccine.
  - The information on the fact sheet is subject to change. It is based on the most recent information available to us. It is otherwise accurate. Please continue to check for updates because the situation changes frequently.
  - Also, there are many other vaccination locations within New Jersey. We have only provided information concerning the vaccination locations which are in close to Roxbury Township.
  - Finally, please consider pre-registering for the COVID-19 vaccine at the NJ Department of Health via the link, which is posted on the Township's website. This also helps to ensure that New Jersey receives its fair share of vaccines from the Federal Government.

- We plan to use a variety of ways to distribute this information, including phone calls and door-to-door contact for people who may not have access to a computer or internet.
- If anyone would like copies of the vaccine information flyer – paper or digital – or for any other questions, please call the Roxbury Township Manager’s office: (973) 448-2000, or the Roxbury Health Department: (973) 448-2028.

## **OUR PARKS**

- Let us take a turn now to our parks.
- I received a very disturbing email last week from a resident that pointed out that the trails at Horseshoe Lake were littered and dirty and that pet owners were not cleaning up after their pets.
- It was a sad note because the writer said that they always considered Horseshoe Lake Park the “crown jewel of Roxbury,” which is exactly how the members of this Council feel about that facility.
- This is not the first resident to bring the condition of our parks to our attention. And, I assure you, the condition of our parks because of the heavy use during the pandemic is unacceptable to us.
- First, let me thank those of you who took the time to write us a note. I want you to know we appreciate your concern, and we take the condition of our parks seriously.
- The condition of our parks – and in particular, Horseshoe Lake Park -- have certainly taken a beating from overuse during this pandemic.
- Our parks have been the only outlet for many people, who have been forced to stay home during the pandemic. As a result, the condition of the

parks has suffered. Typical maintenance has been difficult to keep up and we are experiencing more than the usual wear and tear on the infrastructure.

- We are currently discussing ways we can repair the damage and maintain the parks at an acceptable level for everyone. But we cannot do this alone.
- That is why tonight I am asking for your help – the residents of Roxbury and specifically, those of you who use our parks. We need your help to keep the parks clean by cleaning up after yourselves and your pets.
- And, if you see some trash, help out and be courteous by bringing it to the nearest waste basket.
- We are working on plans to clean up and repair the parks through the Township but also by utilizing the powerful volunteer network in Roxbury. If anyone would like to participate in this effort, please contact Township Manager John Shepherd.
- The Council will consider other ways we can more aggressively maintain the parks in our current budget deliberations. We know the parks will again be heavily used as the weather begins to improve.
- Hopefully, we can find ways to maintain the parks and not further burden taxpayers, who continue to face serious challenges during this difficult time.
- That is all for this week. Thank you, please stay well. Now, let us return to our agenda.