



Jeremy P. Stutsman, Mayor
CITY OF GOSHEN
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March 17, 2020

Council President Weddell and Council Members,

COVID-19 is a global pandemic with local impact.

As leaders of Goshen, we need to work together to assure that this virus infects as few people as possible. We need to put our community and its needs first. My Covid-19 Task Force along with other City staff and community partners are preparing for what the community may need when the virus is confirmed to be in our county.

We want people to stay calm and keep their distance from each other physically but at the same time come together as a community.

The virus has already impacted us with a range of cancelled events and people starting to work from home rather than gathering at their usual workplaces. We will need to think differently about how we live our lives. We will need to give up some of our routines to navigate this. As our places of work and schools are changing how they operate, we need to remain flexible and ask that people be understanding and flexible to accommodate people caring for their families.

The impact on our daily lives is already here and the economic impact is beginning. As that happens, we will stay in contact with each other and our community and continue doing all we can to help our community stay strong.

In that vein, we are changing how our local government operates so our employees who serve the public can stay healthy. That is the most important thing - we all work to be healthy and help our friends our neighbors and our community as much as we can.

Goshen Utilities have waived late fees and canceled shut-offs through the end of April.

I issued Executive Order 2020-01 which offers 80 additional hours of sick time to employees who need to self-quarantine. Today I am issuing Executive Order 2020-02 which will allow our employees more protections through the ability to limit in-person access to the public.

I am asking for changes tonight to Ordinance 5037 which will open up the uses of our Emergency Relief Fund and to Ordinance 4897, our council rules. Both of these planned for natural disaster and weather emergencies but never planned for a pandemic.



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In addition, I have asked Clerk Treasurer Scharf to create a new line in the Board of Works Budget. This line is placed in the category of Other Services/Charges. The line will be named, Emergency Supplies and Services.

I am proposing that we budget this line each year but it will only be accessible to the Mayor if the State of Indiana, County of Elkhart or City of Goshen Declares an Emergency that includes Goshen.

Coming back to Covid-19, I will be using this budget line for the known and unknown expenses coming down the road.

Examples:

1. The City will be contracting with some private communications firm/s. We have an extreme amount of information that needs to be going out to the public. This includes updates and new information that continues to come to us. This will give our Communication Coordinator additional support in creating content, managing the multitude of avenues we use to get information out, translations and other needed tasks. This will also create a redundancy in case we need back-up personnel to manage our communications.
2. PPE's (personal protection equipment) and cleaning supplies. These are in high demand at this time and prices on some items are increasing on others we are seeing extreme increases. We will also need more than a normal year. This line would soften the blow we will see to our department budgets.
3. Unknown Expenses – Obviously I cannot list these for you. These types of unexpected disasters can create increased costs, everything from equipment needs to overtime expenses. Back in 2016, Goshen had its first double homicide. This was one of the first things I had to deal with as Mayor. This was a time of increased communication with our community. Our Police Department worked hard and quickly, in 5 days they were able to find the suspects and arrest them putting the affected families and our community at ease. This overtime cost the City nearly \$60,000. I tell you this to show how quickly cost can be incurred.

This line will only be used for internal City of Goshen (government) expenses and will not go to outside agencies or people like our Emergency Management Fund.

Goshen City Council has been discussing a \$500,000 transfer to the Rainy Day Fund to happen sometime this year.



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I would like to offer an idea for funding this new line:

1. If City Council agrees that a \$500,000 additional appropriation to the new line puts us in a good spot to respond over the next month, 3 months or however long this pandemic lasts.
2. Clerk Treasurer Scharf and I would transfer \$500,000 from our BOW line which pays for our trash pick-up. This line has \$1.5 million budgeted.
3. Later in the year when things calm down, I would bring back a request for a \$500,000 additional appropriation to replenish the trash pick-up line.
4. It is my hope and belief that the City will not need the full \$500,000 to respond to this pandemic. However, placing this amount of money allows for quick reaction to needs and will be a great resource to our response. The amount that is not spent at the end of the year we will transfer directly into our rainy day fund. At this time we can look at our city finances and decide if we will transfer the unused amount or add more to it to bring the intended \$500,000 to the Rainy Day Fund.
5. It will be my intent each year from here on to budget money in the new line. If it isn't needed it will revert back to the General Fund.

I apologize if this letter became two convoluted or if I left anything out. I only had 30 minutes to put this together before our meeting tonight. Please also keep in mind this is a first draft and there was no time to check for grammar mistakes. Please ask any questions or for clarification of any point or item.

With Great Respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JP Stutsman".

Mayor Jeremy Stutsman