Palm Bay Announces Phased Re-Opening Details

May 8th, 2020

Palm Bay, FL - In accordance with Governor DeSantis' Plan for Florida's Recovery, the City of Palm Bay will launch a phased re-opening of City facilities. Beginning with a soft re-opening on Monday, May 18th, public access to City facilities will be available by appointment only, where necessary. The City will continue to provide services virtually where possible to limit person-to-person interaction. As outlined in Florida's re-opening guidelines, the City of Palm Bay will limit building occupancy to 25% or less. The Phase 1 reopening plan will remain flexible to allow adjustments to be made based on new developments that may impact the health and safety of the community. During the initial re-opening phase, citizens are encouraged to continue utilizing the City's online service options and contacting staff by telephone or email.

City of Palm Bay facilities will reopen with a slow, steady, and safety-conscious approach to ensure that proper safety and social distancing guidelines are observed. This week, the City's Facilities Department installed new protective measures such as sneeze guards in areas visited regularly by the public as well as and intercoms at the two main entrances on the north and south side of the City Hall Annex building located at 120 Malabar Road SE. Signage and floor markings have also been fitted throughout City buildings to encourage social distancing. The City will also continue enhanced facility cleaning and sanitization protocols put in place during the initial COVID-19 response to include the sanitization of frequently touched surfaces such as door handles and stair rails.

As part of the first phase re-opening efforts, the City of Palm Bay has launched the OUR Palm Bay initiative in support of area businesses. The
OUR Palm Bay campaign, short for "Open Up and Recover," provides resources to assist businesses with resiliency planning, the identification of funding opportunities, and support re-opening of Palm Bay business, to include a Back2Business Directory whereby businesses that are open under the Governor's Executive Orders may register to let residents know that they're open for business. The OUR Palm Bay initiative also includes several local waivers, flexibilities, and temporary relief programs relating to business resumption within the city limits of Palm Bay.

**OUR Palm Bay Waivers and Accommodations**

- Building Permit fees waived for all projects valued at $50,000 or less
  - Valid June 1st through September 31st, 2020

- Code Compliance amnesty for eligible properties with old liens that are now in compliance
  - Valid June 1st through December 31st, 2020

- Penalties waived for delinquent Business Tax Receipts (BTRs)
  - Valid for businesses with 100 or fewer employees at each licensed location
  - Penalties for BTRs not renewed by October 1st, 2020 will be waived through December 31st, 2020

On May 4th, the City released guidelines for outdoor dining. The City has historically not had formal outdoor dining regulations. In the past, requests for outdoor dining have been reviewed on an informal basis by Land Development Division staff. In order to expedite such requests in response to COVID-19, staff has implemented guidelines for restaurants to provide outdoor dining.

Restaurants seeking an outdoor dining certificate will be required to submit a site layout for plan review by Land Development staff. Restaurants will be required to maintain a six-feet separation between tables and meet certain provisions to be met relating to hours of operation, canopies, tents, or awnings and maintaining access to entrances or exits, fire lanes, hydrants or sprinkler connection points, drive aisles and back-up areas, pedestrian and handicap access, etc. Outdoor seating must be on a paved surface and seating capacity will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
Residents and businesses seeking additional information related to the soft reopening of City facilities or business waivers are encouraged to visit the City of Palm Bay's website at www.palmbayflorida.org.