To all Norfolk residents,

As concerns rise over the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Town Officials would like to take this opportunity to update residents on the measures we have taken, as well as our school districts with regard to COVID-19.

Town and School officials are meeting continuously as needed to review our preparedness protocols and communication efforts in light of this evolving situation. While this is a new virus, our protocols in a public health emergency are not, and we as well as our school districts wish to reiterate that we are taking all possible steps and precautions in accordance with advice received by our public health officials as well as the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Both the Town of Norfolk and Norfolk Public Schools facilities staff, led by Director Matt Haffner, continue to be extremely proactive and thorough in developing and implementing a comprehensive cleaning and disinfecting program. The Town is fortunate to have three industrial size electrostatic spray machines and has been spraying and disinfecting buildings on a nightly basis. With regard to our public safety personnel, we have reinforced our safety protocols for our Fire and Police First Responders to ensure they are protecting both the public and themselves when their services are needed. While the risk remains low, our staff in all departments are reviewing procedures so that should it become necessary to work remotely, continuity of operations for our residents is in place. We are confident that we will be able to deliver essential services if the situation evolves to that point.

In order to do our part in limiting the spread of viruses, we have made decisions to cancel or scale back various types of large events in the coming weeks. Users or attendees have been or will be notified as needed to the following changes:

- Norfolk Public Schools have discontinued the following events and activities through April vacation:
  - After-school events and activities
  - Field trips
  - Assemblies
  - Evening meetings
  - Extracurricular activities

- The King Philip School District has canceled all co-curricular events for the immediate future and no decisions have been made about events after the April break. Furthermore, all building rentals have also been canceled.
• The Council on Aging has canceled the St. Patrick’s Day lunch event; however, the center remains open for all other scheduled activities.
• The Library has not canceled any events or programs at this time. They are in the process of evaluating the continued rental of rooms and various programs.
• Recreation has moved and/or canceled adult programming regularly held at the schools. When possible, these programs have been moved to the Town Hall. Children's programs are proceeding as scheduled. Large events such as the Easter Egg Hunt will be assessed closer to the scheduled date. Emails have been sent to participants in pre-school and adult programs about the status of their programs and what steps are being taken to proactively stay on top of cleaning and disinfecting the rooms and equipment being used.
• Town Boards and Committees will continue to hold meetings as scheduled. Residents are reminded that a number of these meetings are streamed live and/or taped and available at http://bit.ly/NCTV-GovPlaylist.
• Many services that residents might need are available online such as the payment of taxes and bills, permit applications, assessor’s data and others. Please visit our website at www.Norfolk.ma.us.

The Town is monitoring the emerging situation closely and is taking all possible steps to protect the health and safety of our residents, students, staff and families. Local, state and federal health officials are encouraging everyone to take the following precautions to prevent infectious diseases, such as the flu and COVID-19, from spreading. These include:

• Take preventive actions to avoid the spread of respiratory viruses such as washing hands frequently, avoiding people who are sick, avoiding touching your eyes or nose, and covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue. People who are sick should stay home and not go to crowded public places or visit hospitals.

• Anyone who is experiencing a fever and respiratory illness and is concerned they have either come into contact with the virus or traveled to an affected country within the last 14 days is advised to contact their primary health care provider.

• Remain at home if you are ill.

For more information, I encourage you to visit the DPH website by clicking here and the CDC’s website by clicking here.

At this time neither school district has plans to close schools. The Town continues to monitor this situation very carefully, and will provide further updates on the Town’s website and Facebook as they become available. We are grateful for your patience and partnership as we work through this situation together.

Sincerely,

Blythe C. Robinson
Town Administrator