



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 18, 2020

### **Murfreesboro encourages public to watch Council remotely**

*Covid-19 Public Information Hotline 877-857-2945, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. daily*

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** — In response to recent guidance issued by the CDC and Tennessee Department of Health, the City of Murfreesboro is strongly discouraging citizens from attending Council meetings in person until further notice to protect public safety. All scheduled public hearings for March 19 will be rescheduled to the end of April.

Instead, the public is strongly encouraged to watch the meeting on CityTV or the City's Facebook Page as in-person attendance by members of the public at this Thursday's Council meeting will be restricted to comply with the CDC's most recent social-distancing guidance. (CityTV is available on Comcast Xfinity and AT&T U-verse, as well as several streaming services and the City's website.)

"The City of Murfreesboro is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens, visitors, and employees, especially with respect to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic," said Mayor Shane McFarland. "City staff developed and are implementing policies and procedures for the conducting of City business that balances the need to continue certain critical government functions with protecting both citizens and City employees from possible exposure."

Mayor McFarland made the decision to cancel public hearings and limit public access to City Council meetings until further notice based on Federal, State and local health guidelines. Signs will notify the public of the temporary change. The essential functions of government, such as Police, Fire, Power and Water Resources, will continue to operate.

This temporary action on public meetings follows the National and State Emergency declarations due to the coronavirus (COVID-19). The City continues to actively monitor Federal, State and County health authority actions and responds accordingly.

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“We understand the seriousness of this situation and we’re concerned about the health and safety of our citizens,” said Mayor Shane McFarland. “You can rest assured, it’s a top priority. We care about the well-being of our residents and employees, especially the elderly and healthcare providers of our City.”

“Our goal is to keep the essential operations of government, public safety and critical staff functions, open and operating as much as possible while following CDC guidelines and limiting exposure to prevent or slow the rate of infection,” added McFarland.

To watch a YouTube PSA released March 16 by Mayor McFarland, click <https://youtu.be/mzX42HTBiyw>.

To follow the latest Coronavirus information from the City of Murfreesboro and our State and Federal partners visit, <https://www.murfreesborotn.gov/1690/Coronavirus-Information>

The following City actions and activities in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) include:

- **City Council** will meet Thursday, March 19, with limited audience capacity under CDC guidelines. As always, the 6 p.m. Council meeting will be aired live on Facebook, CityTV located on Comcast Xfinity channel 3 and 1094, AT&T Uverse channel 99, Roku, YouTube, [www.youtube.com/cityofmurfreesboro](http://www.youtube.com/cityofmurfreesboro), and Apple TV via Cablecast Screenweave app and on the web at [www.murfreesborotn.gov/onlinevideos](http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/onlinevideos) and [www.murfreesborotn.gov/citytv](http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/citytv). Rebroadcasts are also available on YouTube and the City’s website.
- The **Planning Commission** meeting, Wednesday, March 18, will have limited capacity consistent with CDC guidelines. The meeting will be aired live on CityTV and Facebook.
- **Murfreesboro City Schools** have been closed from Monday, March 16-April 3, at this time, in accordance with the Governor’s recommendation. The MCS CHOW Food Service Program is active at approximately 40 locations. Food distribution will also include backpack food for the weekend. Any donations for backpack food should be from the specific outlined list of supplies or financial donations can be made to the City Schools Foundation, To learn more on how to donate and for updates on closings, visit <http://www.cityschools.net/>.
- **Parks and Recreation** facilities currently remain closed thru April 3.
- **City Court** proceedings are suspended by order of the Tennessee Supreme Court from March 13 - March 31, at this time.
- **City Transit (Rover)** has implemented temporary route changes to Memorial Blvd. effective Wednesday, March 18 until further notice to accommodate screening and security measures installed at the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital.

“We will remain vigilant and, as always, we have an Emergency Response Plan developed for this emerging threat.” said Murfreesboro Fire Rescue Chief Mark Foulks.

“Public Safety is our top priority and essential services for our community will continue,” said Murfreesboro Police Chief Mike Bowen.”

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As the City of Murfreesboro battles this threat with the rest of the national community, we continue to urge all citizens to follow CDC practices:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your cough and sneezing.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice social distancing.
- Stay home when you are sick and call your physician or the State Information Hotline: 1-877-857-2945.
- Stay home if you come into contact with someone who is sick.
- Clean and disinfect objects (e.g., cell phone, computer) and high touch surfaces.
- Make sure you continue to have adequate supplies, such as medications, if needed.

For additional City of Murfreesboro closings and cancellations, visit <https://www.murfreesborotn.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2831>.

For information announced daily by the Governor and Tennessee Department of Health, visit <https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19.html>.  
<https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>.

Click here to access the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) COVID-19 webpage for the most up to date information and guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

For City News online, visit [www.Murfreesborotn.gov](http://www.Murfreesborotn.gov).

**Photos, Graphics attached**

1. *City of Murfreesboro Logo.jpg*
2. *Coronavirus State Information Hotline.jpg*
3. *CDC Social Distancing.jpg*

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