



COVID-19 Vinalhaven Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

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COVID-19 Daily Update 3-26-20

At the Select Board meeting last night, Town Manager Andy Dorr was able to update the Board on the work of the Emergency Operations Center. The EOC started operations to prepare for and protect the community from the effects of the pandemic to the extent possible. A partial list of accomplishments in the past week include:

- Development and implementation of a communications plan that includes a daily update on Facebook and the town website,
- A gathering of the many resources available to help Vinalhaven citizens cope with reduced services and social isolation. This resource should be posted by the end of the week.
- Work with the governor's office and the Maine State Ferry Service on implementing safe practices on the ferry. Some of the recommendations include prioritizing essential services (freight, fuel oil) over passenger traffic, notices on cars in line requesting anyone returning to the island to self-quarantine (not simply self-isolate) for two weeks, and recommendations to have car passengers remain in their cars. These recommendations are still under consideration.
- Recognizing that we are all finding ourselves increasingly stressed and possibly lonely, Kelly Richards has agreed to assist staff and community members with mindfulness and stress relief activities. Tomorrow's community update will focus on this very important subject.
- Continued planning!

Select Board Chair Eric Gasperini closed the meeting with a statement appreciative of the warm spirited cooperation and participation of Vinalhaven residents, and encouragement to keep it going:

Good Evening and thanks for joining our meeting tonight.

I'd like to start by thanking all of those who have been helping navigate the many changes we are witnessing. From the Wind crew that put out a digital version last week to comply with the recommendations about physical distancing, to the organizations or individuals out there that are providing food and services, and to those who are diligently self-isolating or quarantining themselves, our appreciation of your spirited efforts is tremendous.

A lot has been asked of all of us. We would also like to encourage respect and compassion for everyone during this situation. Isolating or quarantining yourself or family can be challenging. We recognize that, so if you can continue to be calm and kind while supporting those community members who may be experiencing increased anxiety or depression, it will help our community become stronger.

Please show support and gratitude for all the individuals and organizations in our community who are doing their part using safe practices and going above and beyond. You may consider helping someone in need. It can be something as simple as a positive phone call, delivering food, contributing to businesses (pay it forward), or helping organizations provide services.

However, we still strongly urge those who do not have a primary residence on this island, to not come at this time. With the limited resources at hand in this remote community, you are almost certainly in a safer place where you currently are.

If you have questions about or want to see any of the information we have offered, you can find them on the Town's website at www.townofvinalhaven.org or view the resource page in the Wind. You can also call the Town Office to get more information about recommendations or available resources.