

MAYOR'S MESSAGE – JUNE 30, 2020

As the City completes its fiscal year, and we citizens complete the first six months of 2020, maybe it's time to reflect – what we have been through and where do we go from here?

The State of Maine and our City remain in States of Emergency. Both the City and State will consider removing that designation in coming weeks, but as of the end of June we remain under Emergency Orders. COVID 19 has caused numerous challenges to public safety, to our routines, and to businesses across the state. Some businesses have yet to re-open under the Governor's rules; and those that have find an entirely different marketplace!

Hallowell has emerged from the Stay at Home orders, but slowly. City Hall has re-opened with reduced services, reduced hours and request for appointments for some services. Our restaurants have re-opened in most cases with new challenges – safe distancing, reservations required, outdoor dining is emphasized, and masks for customers and face shields for employees. Stores and shops have re-opened. Under Governor Mill's Order, bars are not yet able to open.

Monday, July 6, the Res will open to residents and interested parties with COVID guidelines.

The Chairs are back! Though for safe distancing and public safety there are now fewer of them and we urge our visitors to keep the chairs more than 6 feet apart, and return to their original places after use.

The City Council's Finance Committee is preparing our City budget for 2020-2021. Yes, it's a challenge – both from reduced revenue and from uncertainty. We are forced to defer some capital expenditures, but will try to minimize tax increases to our residents.

The business of the City continues – many thanks to all City Staff who have kept working during this pandemic – the front office, our Public Works crews, the Police Department and our City Manager. And my thanks to our Hallowell citizens for their understanding, compassion, and support for whatever is necessary during this pandemic.