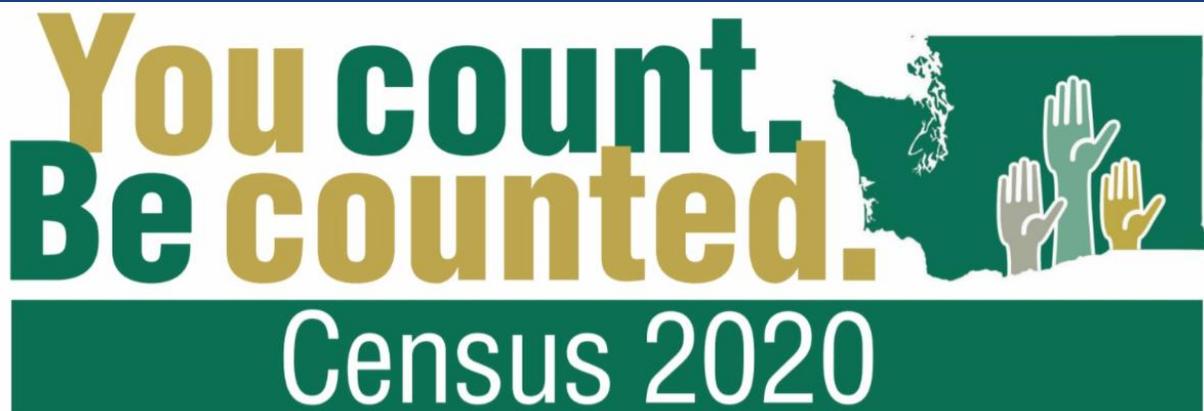




MONROE THIS WEEK

April 17, 2020 • Vol 6/Edition 14



Thank you for reading Monroe This Week.

This week's edition provides details on the 2020 United States Census and how it will benefit Monroe, ways to support the Sky Valley Food Bank, and pending Economic Impact Payments from passage of the CARES Act.



Please contact me with any and all feedback regarding the articles below. I can be reached at gthomas@monroewa.gov.

Yours in Service,

Mayor Geoffrey Thomas

WANT TO HELP BRING MONEY TO MONROE?

This present Stay Home/Stay Healthy period is the perfect opportunity to complete your census form on-line. Nearly half of all Monroe residents have not completed the Census. Completing the Census is quick and easy. The information is used to direct billions of dollars in federal funds to local communities for schools, roads, and other public services. Results are also used to determine the number of seats each state has in Congress. To see how Monroe is doing to respond to the census, visit the Census Bureau's [Response Rates](#) page. You can help raise our response rate by completing the [2020 Census](#).

United States[®]
Census
2020

As we all have in both our personal and professional lives, the United States Census Bureau has adapted its schedule in light of COVID-19. The Census got underway on March 12 with the self-response phase, which can be completed online (at the link above), by phone or by mail; this phase has been extended through August 14. Households that did not self-respond by April 8 were

mailed a paper questionnaire. Field operations, in which Census takers will conduct door-to-door interviews of households which have not completed a self-response, are currently scheduled to begin on June 1.

SKY VALLEY FOOD BANK IN NEED OF DONATIONS

The Sky Valley Food Bank has been serving the needs of Monroe families for over 40 years. On a weekly average, the Food Bank provides food to 487 families; this amounts to more than 85,000 pounds of food distributed every month. To support social distancing efforts, the Food Bank has adjusted its procedures, closing its facility to the public and shifting to delivering packages directly. Despite the shift, the Food Bank continues to provide exemplary support to our community in its time of need. Of the 85,000 pounds of food distributed monthly, approximately 55,000 pounds are donated by the community, and the additional 30,000 pounds is purchased by the Food Bank through monetary donations.



In order to continue to meet the needs of the community, the Food Bank is in need of continued support from members of the community able to do so. Monetary donations can be made [online](#), and there will be two food drives in our community this week where food donations can be made while maintaining social distancing: Big Hearts, Big Smiles is hosting a drive this Sunday, April 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, 14118 Chain Lake Road; and Cascade Community Church is hosting a drive next Thursday, April 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at 14377 Fryelands Blvd.

If you're able to support the Food Bank with a donation, they are in immediate need of the items listed below; monetary donations will be used to purchase these items.

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Juice boxes or pouches• Tuna or chicken kits• Fruit or veggie cups• Shelf-stable cheese or yogurt• Nuts or trail mix• Chips or crackers• Easy-open cans of soup, stew and chili• Shelf-stable milk• Ready-to-eat entrees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Granola or breakfast bars• Cereal or oatmeal• Raisins or dried fruit• Peanut butter and jelly• Diapers and baby wipes• Disposable gloves• Lysol sanitizing wipes• Toilet paper and paper towels• Hand sanitizer |
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LOOKING FOR YOUR STIMULUS CHECK?

On March 27, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Passage of the CARES Act provided Economic Impact Payments to individuals and small businesses. Individual taxpayers making less than \$75,000 annually (\$150,000 for couples filing jointly) will receive \$1,200 (\$2,400 for joint filers), plus \$500 for each dependent child.



For citizens who don't have a tax return filing obligation, the United States Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service have launched an [online tool](#) to allow quick registration for these Economic Impact Payments.

Distribution of Economic Impact Payments began this week. Eligible taxpayers who filed tax returns for 2019 or 2018 will receive the payments automatically. Automatic payments will also go out in the near future to those receiving Social Security retirement, survivors or disability benefits and Railroad Retirement benefits.

CITY PROACTIVELY PLANNING FOR RECOVERY PHASE

While the city continues to focus on delivering essential services, I have asked city staff to begin planning ahead for the recovery phase after the Governor's Stay Home/Stay Healthy order is lifted.



One of the effects of the pandemic is a near-shut down of our economy. Among the many economic issues we are facing as a community is a reduction in sales tax and other city revenues. The city receives our sales tax revenues about two months after a business collects them. As the COVID-19 crisis began to impact our economy in March, the city will begin to get a better idea of where we stand in terms of reductions in revenues in May. The financial forecast anticipates sales tax revenues in June could be lower than in May because June will reflect revenues from April.

At this time it appears that revenues in the General Fund will be reduced by 6%-10% over the budget forecast (about \$900,000-\$1.5 million). The good news is our City Council put measures in place to increase our reserve funds, payoff the North Kelsey debt, and to operate within a conservative estimate of existing revenues. These measures will be a great help as the City Council and I reassess the 2020 Budget and position the city to move into 2021 with as little disruption as possible to essential services.

Over the next couple of weeks, I will be working closely with department directors to identify opportunities to reduce expenditures in the 2020 Budget. Strategies under consideration include strategic program cuts, postponing or delaying planned projects, and leaving current and future vacancies unfilled. Council will consider alternatives in May.

While we are working on identifying and analyzing opportunities to modify the 2020 Budget, this week I issued an [Executive Order](#) to more precisely relay how expenditures will be limited, such as waiting before purchasing any budgeted capital or large ticket (over \$5,000) items until after the 2020 budget amendment discussions in May. This immediate action is intended to ensure that the Council and I have as many options as possible to consider as we re-evaluate and discuss making changes to the 2020 Budget.

TOWN HALL MEETING FOCUSES ON SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

At the recommendation of the city's Economic Development Advisory Board and city staff, I hosted a community Town Hall Meeting alongside Economic Development Specialist James Palmer on Tuesday evening, April 14. Focused on our small businesses, Mr. Palmer



provided information about resources available through federal and state programs offering relief to businesses impacted by COVID-19. Following the presentation, the 48 attendees who joined us on the Zoom meeting platform had the opportunity for a question and answer period, during which Mr. Palmer and Katy Woods from Coastal Community Bank shared valuable additional information. Details on the Town Hall and the resources available to local businesses can be found on the City's [COVID-19 Business Resources page](#); the slide deck presented in the meeting can be accessed directly [here](#).

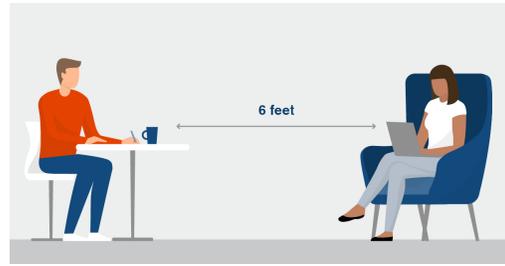
CITY ENCOURAGES CONTINUED SOCIAL DISTANCING, RECOGNIZES ESSENTIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

There has been good news recently regarding the success of our social distancing efforts in flattening the curve

#KeepTheCurveFlat

of COVID-19. Keeping the curve flat is one of the best things we can do collectively to ensure that when people become sick, they will have access to the best available treatment from our healthcare professionals. Several of my fellow city leaders joined me in encouraging us all to [#KeepTheCurveFlat](#).

One of the best ways we can maintain a flattened curve is to continue social distancing efforts when we do need to venture out of our homes. City leaders and staff came together to [share](#) best practice tips for our community's essential businesses that have remained open during Stay Home/Stay Healthy to ensure we all have access to needed supplies for ourselves and our families.



As we all do our part, private citizens and business alike, it's important to remember the dedicated police officers, fire fighters, corrections officers, and healthcare professionals who have kept us safe and cared for us in some of our greatest times of need. The City of Monroe expressed our [sincere thanks](#) to these dedicated professionals for their selfless service.



UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

The April 21, 2020 City Council Study Session has been CANCELLED.

The next regular meeting will be held Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via the Zoom remote meeting platform. Participation information will be posted with the April 28th agenda.

[Council Agendas/Minutes](#)

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS



Councilmember
Kevin Hanford



Councilmember
Patsy Cudaback



Councilmember
Jeff Rasmussen



Councilmember
Heather Rousey



Councilmember
Ed Davis



Councilmember
Jason Gamble



Councilmember
Kirk Scarboro

Have a question for your Councilmembers?
Contact them at councilmembers@monroewa.gov



