

Message from the Mayor, June 13, 2020

Outdoor dining, haircuts, Colony Pool,

mark cautious start of summer season

This is going to be the start of a great week!

I don't know what I'm looking forward to more – outdoor dining at a reopened restaurant starting Monday, June 15, or my first haircut since February, starting Monday, June 22.

Luckily nobody has to choose. We can do both, and in the process support local businesses as they work to reopen. It's a win, win, win, scenario.

The Township Committee on Thursday night adopted a resolution to encourage local restaurants to expand outdoor dining onto the sidewalks and, if desired, into the parking lots at Hickory Square and The Chatham Mall. Parking restrictions will be relaxed if restaurants and landlords submit plans for safe seating areas that comply with social distance requirements.

And the list of local openings doesn't end there.

Gov. Phil Murphy this past week finally gave the green light to allow municipal pools to open this summer with large enough gatherings to be feasible. Chatham Township's Colony Pool is currently mapping out a grid system that will allow up to 190 members to maintain social distancing while escaping the heat of summer. The pool staff is gearing up and DPW crews are on site, all working toward a target opening date of July 1.

Membership fees are being pro-rated to reflect the delay from what would have been the normal opening date of June 22. And in response to reports that municipal pools in nearby towns may not open, the Colony Pool will waive its normal surcharge for out-of-town family memberships from Chatham Borough, to encourage borough residents to come and beat the heat.

For more information or to register, go to the Colony Pool website at colonypoolclub.org or click on the Colony Pool Club button at the bottom of the Chatham Township website at Chathamtownship.org

Late Friday the Library of the Chathams received word they can begin to prepare for curbside and walkup/takeout services. An actual start date is expected to be announced by the library later this week.

Religious services, with reduced attendance and social distancing, will be allowed to resume starting this weekend.

All of this is the result of good progress in flattening the curve of new cases of Covid-19 both locally and across the state. For the one week from Friday, June 5 through Friday, June 12, new confirmed cases in Chatham Township increased from 145 to 149. Deaths over the past week increased from 30 to 31. One month ago on May 12, the respective tallies stood at 30 and 29.

The actual numbers fluctuated a bit during the past month as state officials first assigned some cases to Chatham Township and then reassigned some previously Township cases to other towns based on further information.

As the reopening continues and more people are leaving their homes, it becomes even more important to take reasonable safety precautions. Wear masks, maintain six feet of social distance, wash hands frequently, cover coughs and continue to avoid unnecessary trips. Chatham Township is doing its part to control the spread of Covid-19. We can't let down our guard.

Be careful, use good judgment and stay safe.

Michael Kelly

Mayor, Chatham Township