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SOUTHERN PINES LIFTS MOST COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS, INCLUDING VIRTUAL MEETINGS

The Town of Southern Pines has lifted most restrictions that have been in place for the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Town's decision follows Executive Order #215, issued by North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper on May 14, and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicating that fully vaccinated individuals can safely do most activities without a mask or the need to socially distance from others.

The Town no longer requires masks for employees and visitors to the Town's buildings and other facilities. In order to comply with state mandates of masks for indoor activities centered around children, the Town will require masks for participation in youth camps and indoor programs offered by the Southern Pines Public Library and Recreation & Parks department; summer day camps for children ages 5-13 begin on June 7. Town staff and legal counsel will continue to monitor state requirements surrounding youth activities and will announce any updates when it is clear as to what, if any, requirements may be eased.

Effective June 1, the Town Council and volunteer boards will resume meetings in-person. Since April 2020, Southern Pines has used web-based technology, most notably GoToWebinar, to hold meetings virtually. The Town Council will meet virtually for the final time on Monday, May 24 to conduct the monthly work session.

The Council holds its 6pm business meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at the Douglass Community Center, 1185 W. Pennsylvania Ave. On the Wednesday prior to the business meeting, Council reviews and confirms its upcoming agenda in a 6pm meeting at the C. Michael Haney Community Room, Southern Pines Police Department, 450 W. Pennsylvania Ave.

The Council also holds a monthly work session on the fourth Monday of each month at 3pm. These sessions are also at the Community Room of the Police Department.

The Council will meet for the first time again in-person on Wednesday, June 2 to review the agenda for the June business meeting. A second public hearing on the FY 21-22 budget will occur during the June 8th business meeting, at the Douglass Community Center. The Council will then hold its first in-person work session on Monday, June 28.

The Town's six volunteer boards meet at various Town facilities, including the Boyd Room at 180 SW Broad Street, the Haney Community Room, and the Southern Pines Public Library. Meeting schedules for the boards are posted on the Town's website, southernpines.net.

Mayor Carol Haney shares, "Our Council is eager to resume traditional meetings and welcome our community members in-person again. I'm proud of my fellow Councilmembers and Town staff for all of their efforts over the past thirteen months as we navigated this new virtual world together. While it is never our preference to meet virtually, we made the best of it with a powerful platform that allowed us to continue having public hearings, vote on important decisions, and engage in dialogue with our participants. Our citizens also deserve accolades for patiently navigating the unknown and taking advantage of opportunities to provide meaningful feedback."

June Meetings for the Southern Pines Town Council:

- Wednesday, June 2, 6pm – agenda meeting: C. Michael Haney Community Room, Southern Pines Police Department, 450 W. Pennsylvania Ave
- Tuesday, June 8, 6pm – business meeting: Douglass Community Center, 1185 W. Pennsylvania Ave.
- Monday, June 28, 3pm – work session: C. Michael Haney Community Room, Southern Pines Police Department, 450 W. Pennsylvania Ave