



## *Around Town*

*May 2020*

### *From the Mayor's Desk*

On behalf of the Town, I hope you and your families are safe and healthy. I want to tell you a few stories of amazing residents and a business supporting residents in these unusual times, the status of the Town in this lock down, and what is likely ahead as I know it today.

**First**, so many residents throughout the Town have made, without direction, protective masks for others. Either using You Tube tutorials or mask patterns passed along ... Steilacoom residents have produced hundreds and hundreds of protectives masks for our senior population, Town staff, first responders, our medical heroes, and others. Thanks to all.

The Topside owners, Nikki and John O'Reilly, and staff distributed nearly 2,000 Easter egg baskets and brightly colored bags filled with plastic eggs with candy and toys inside throughout Steilacoom. This effort made Easter a little brighter for children and families. Help with candy donations was provided by the Steilacoom Kiwanis Club. But please note that John/Nikki funded this entire project; they were able to bring in and pay laid off restaurant staff to assist! As you continue to use the

Topside food take out service...I ask you to just say "Thank You" to the Topside family.

Numerous volunteers have modified the Community Center meal site program sponsored by Catholic Community Services to create a drive-thru meal pick up. These volunteers continue service to our valued seniors.

The Steilacoom Food bank has remained open on Saturdays from 9:30 – 11:30 AM with volunteers in the lower floor of the Steilacoom Community Church. Entry is from Wilkes Street. Financial or in-kind donations may be made on-site during the listed hours or at the Public Works building from 8 AM to noon.

**Second**, the Town has not been informed of any residents passing because of or being infected with COVID-19. However, it is likely with approximately 6,300 residents that someone may have been infected but not known it. Our staff members are all well as are their families. Staff is working on a schedule with reduced hours focusing on essential functions to allow the Town to adhere to Gov. Inslee's directives. Financially, the Town will have revenues decrease but with our conservative budgeting, financial reserves, having no debt, and with the support of our Council...we will be fine.

**Third**, in early March, working with Council, we recommended that we defer the "roundabout" project at Union and Rainier St.

and move it to the 2021 construction season. The last two months have supported this early decision. State-wide construction has been disrupted, projects have been delayed, and projects are being renegotiated with ever increasing costs. As I write, I expect the Governor to further extend his directives to "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" until late May or early June .... time will tell.

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) who supplies our electricity has had a major decrease in revenue with the major regional industry and all sized businesses closed. I expect all BPA clients (including us) in the fall will be assessed rate increases to make up the loss.

I expect Steilacoom will receive little to no financial help from any federal program. Currently, the State and Seattle, because of a population over 500K, will receive funding under recently passed relief act programs.

Watch for negative financial news because of closed businesses from most communities including Lakewood, Sumner, Puyallup, Fife, Lacey and Olympia to name a few as they are largely funded by sales tax.

Several events in surrounding communities such as University Place "Duck Daze" in June have been canceled expecting social distancing policy being continued. We are evaluating our summer events and will probably make the final decisions in mid-May.

During the pandemic and every day, we want to remind you that not all paper is created equal. Never flush “flushable” wipes or anything that doesn’t have the work “toilet” in it. Flushable wipes choke pumps in our wastewater facility. Disinfectant wipes should go in the trash.

In the last few weeks, like you ...our time has been spent with the ever expanding house “honey-do” list, working countless puzzles, being taught how to use the “Zoom App” by grandchildren, and taking daily walks thru Steilacoom while saying hello and checking on neighbors.

I ask you to continue to follow state directives and be safe. Support local business when you can!!

**These web sites can be helpful with ongoing information:**

- a. Tacoma Pierce County Health Department  
tpchd.org
- b. Steilacoom Schools -  
Steilacoom.k12.wa.us
- c. Town of Steilacoom –  
Townofsteilacoom.org
- d. 2020 Census -  
2020census.gov

*Ron Lucas, Mayor*

**Council Action**

Minutes to the Town Council meetings once approved are on the Town’s website at: townofsteilacoom.org and located under:  
Town Offices  
Town Council

**BIRTHDAY WISHES**  
*Happy Birthday to Lou Dunkin who will be 104 on May 13<sup>th</sup>.*

**Message from the Superintendent**

I have always been impressed with how our community rallies around one another in times of need. We tackle challenges with optimism, adapt quickly, and most importantly, we take care of each other. This challenging time is no different and we sincerely appreciate our community’s support and patience as we navigate this difficult school closure.

Our district staff continues to put our students first as we have worked to change our brick and mortar learning environment into temporary virtual classrooms. We are serving over 8,500 free meals per week to children age 0 to 18 at meal sites around the district. The Town of Steilacoom stepped up immediately to provide daily childcare services for families who are first responders and healthcare workers. Chromebooks were provided to more than 200 families. We donated our district’s protective personal equipment to Pierce County Emergency Management to distribute where most needed.

We also continue to send out our social emotional learning (SEL) messages with tips on how to stay emotionally healthy during this stay-at-home order. Families have appreciated the SEL challenges we have posed, and the resources provided. Even our littlest learners are benefitting from our district’s emphasis on SEL. Prior to the school closures, we visited our Anderson Island preschool, where our three and four-year

olds receive daily instruction in SEL and emotional regulation. As the morning lesson progressed, the teacher had her preschoolers articulating emotions and had seamlessly infused relationship-building strategies into the curriculum. I came away from the preschool visit with a new favorite story that conveys the joy of working in schools. One of the smiley preschoolers could not remember my last name, so declared he would rename me “Superintendent Sparkles.” After a morning as “Superintendent Sparkles,” I could not help but recognize how lucky I am to be working in schools. We miss our students and cannot wait to have them back with us. I am thankful for being a part of this community and truly appreciate the outpouring of support, encouragement, and kindness shared.

*Dr. Kathi Weight, Superintendent*

**SCHOOL NEWS**

Please visit  
<https://www.steilacoom.k12.wa.us>  
for updates, FAQs, and resources related to the SHSD.

**LET'S PLAY MONOPOLY FOR KIWANIS**

The Steilacoom Kiwanis is again collecting the Safeway/Albertson's Monopoly pieces. If you don't want yours or have ones you don't need, please give them to the Steilacoom Kiwanis or drop them off at the Public Works facility. Last year, the Kiwanis collected over \$100 in gift cards and lots of food stuffs for the Steilacoom Food Bank.

## **GARDEN CLUB**

The Steilacoom Garden Club is pleased to offer our community the annual Plant Sale on May 9th (Saturday before Mother's Day). Rain or shine, we will have plants available for your garden or table. Perhaps we'll have it staffed by volunteers as usual, or depending on public health initiatives, we might have an un-staffed sale, with opportunities to donate to the Garden Club for the civic projects supported by the Plant Sale. In any case, we will have plants for our community - our members have been readying some beauties for you, and your plant donations for the sale will be appreciated as always. See you at the tennis courts across from the Bair Restaurant, 9am-Noon on May 9th. We truly appreciate the community's support of this treasured annual event!

## **WLSA FOOD BANK**

The We Love Steilacoom Association operates the Food Pantry/Bank at Steilacoom Community Church, 1603 Rainier Street, Steilacoom, Washington. Hours of operation are 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM on Saturdays. If you are experiencing temporary or ongoing financial challenges and/or food instability, please avail yourself of this resource.

Steilacoom Troop 45261 is offering a food delivery service from the We Love Steilacoom Food Bank/Pantry to individuals deemed high risk in our local area. Deliveries are on Saturday mid-morning/ early afternoons.

Please contact:  
[troop45261@gmail.com](mailto:troop45261@gmail.com)  
with your name, address, and phone number  
Family Size and number of individuals in each of the following age categories:  
0-2; 3-18; 19-54; 55 and over.

## **STAY HEALTHY**

Governor Jay Inslee issued a Stay at Home warning on March 23 to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). He also let us know that going for a walk, gardening, or going for a bike ride are essential activities. These activities are good for everyone's physical and mental health. As we stay close to home, many residents that live in the Tacoma Smelter Plume area are spending more time outside in the yard and garden.

The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's [blog](#) gives information on how to practice healthy actions. Healthy actions are practices that reduce exposure to soil that may have lead and arsenic. Some quick tips for gardeners and landscapers can be found at <https://dirtalert.info/landscaping-and-gardening/>

While Ecology's program offices are not available for walk-in service, [Ecology](#) and the [Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department](#) are still available by phone and email to answer your questions. Feel free to reach out.

## **PET WASTE**

*Please pick up after your pets  
and dispose of the waste  
appropriately.*

## **TOWN OF STEILACOM CONTACT INFORMATION**

[townofsteilacoom.org](http://townofsteilacoom.org)

### **Mayor**

Ron Lucas.....253 588-6217  
[Ron.lucas@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:Ron.lucas@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

### **Council Members**

Fred Crumley.....253 584-4776  
[fred.crumley@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:fred.crumley@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

Pete Franklin.....253 584-0808  
[pete.franklin@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:pete.franklin@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

Nancy Henderson....253 584-7284  
[nancy.henderson@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:nancy.henderson@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

Marion Smith.....253 589-8534  
[marion.smith@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:marion.smith@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

Roger Neal.....253 691-6120  
[Roger.neal@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:Roger.neal@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

### **Town Administrator**

Paul Loveless.....253 581-1912  
[Paul.loveless@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:Paul.loveless@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

### **Public Works-Administration**

1030 Roe Street.....253 581-1912  
Utility After Hours 253 620-4123

### **Public Safety**

601 Main Street.....253 581-0110  
Emergency.....911  
Non-Emergency ...253 798-4721  
Animal Control... ..253 830-5010  
Anonymous Tips:  
[crimetips@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:crimetips@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

### **Community Center**

2301 Worthington St. 253 581-1076  
Before and After School Prog.  
Meal Site  
Youth and Adult Classes

### **Chamber of Commerce:**

[Steilacoomchamber.com](http://Steilacoomchamber.com)

## **TOWN MEETINGS**

Meetings are held at Town Hall unless otherwise noted.

Town Council:

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 6:30 PM

Planning Commission:

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 6:30 PM

Preservation and Review Board:

4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 6:30 PM

Civil Service Commission:

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday - 2 PM at the

Community Center.

## ***Burn Guidelines***

### **To Burn or Not to Burn?**

It is illegal to use a burn barrel in the state of Washington. It is also illegal to burn the following:

- Garbage or refuse
- Cardboard and paper
- Building materials including paints, vinyl flooring, roofing, and scrap lumber
- Rubber products, including tires
- Plastics or petroleum products
- Material that produces smoke that is offensive or harmful to your neighbors. If your neighbors complain, you are required to put out the fire immediately.

### **Residential Fires:**

There is a permanent burn ban in Steilacoom which has been declared by the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and the Steilacoom Fire Marshal Office. Residential fires are considered as burning natural vegetation consisting of leaves, prunings, and other yard and garden refuse to include grass clippings.

### **An Alternate Approach to Residential Fires:**

- Haul it! Rake up your excess material and haul it to your nearest recycling/ transfer station.
- Compost it! Composting yard and garden waste protects the air, land and water resources while providing a rich garden fertilizer.
- Chip it! Some residents are choosing to chip their debris. Chippers may be rented or a chipping service hired to take care of your materials. Wood chips make excellent mulch around trees and shrubs and can also be used to soften garden paths.
- Mulch it! By mulching, we can easily put nature's recycling system to work in our own backyards. Spread yard and garden debris around shrubs.

### **Recreational Fires are usually allowed:**

Recreational fires do not require a permit as long as the following regulations have been followed and no burn ban is implemented by the Pierce County or Washington State Fire Marshal Offices:

- Limited to burning dry, seasoned wood or charcoal briquettes only (no garbage, yard waste, etc.)
- Not to exceed three-feet in diameter by two-feet in height.
- Must be for the purpose of cooking, pleasure or religious ceremonies.
- Recreational fires must be 25 feet away from any structure.
- The fire pits shall be located not less than 10 feet from adjoining property lines, or near overhead branches.

### **Fire Pit Construction:**

- Fire pits shall be constructed of concrete, stone, or approved non-combustible material.
- The bottom of the pit may be of sand, or mineral earth.
- The fire pits shall not exceed three feet in diameter. The depth of the pit shall be minimum of four inches and capable of containing all burned material. (No limbs or brush should extend beyond the pit area).

### **Fire Pit Maintenance:**

- Recreational Fires should be maintained in good condition at all times.
- Fire extinguishing equipment such as buckets, shovels, or garden hoses shall be readily available for use.

If these rules are not followed you can be fined for causing a nuisance and you may be held financially liable for damages caused by your fire.

The Town contracts with the Pierce County Fire Marshal for enforcement of the fire code.

Additional resources may be found at:

<https://pscleanair.gov/168/Current-Status> or <https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/982/Outdoor-Burning>