

RESOLUTION NO. 20-44

A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Whitefish, Montana, urging individuals to follow public health guidance and directives and expressing support for the Whitefish COVID-19 Task Force.

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic due to the spread of Novel Coronavirus "COVID -19"; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, Governor Steve Bullock declared a state of emergency related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2020, the Flathead County Board of Commissioners declared a state of emergency related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, Mayor John Muhlfeld declared a state of emergency related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2020, Governor Steve Bullock issued a directive establishing the phased reopening of Montana which provided that his previous directives remain in effect; and

WHEREAS, on May 19, 2020, Governor Steve Bullock issued a directive establishing the conditions for Phase II of the reopening of Montana which provided that gatherings of 50 individuals or more should be cancelled if social distancing cannot be maintained, all vulnerable individuals should continue to adhere to stay at home guidance, and further provided that his previous directives remain in effect; and

WHEREAS, on July 15, 2020, Governor Steve Bullock issued a directive requiring that face coverings be worn in indoor spaces open to the public in every county with four or more confirmed and active cases of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, in October 2020, the Whitefish COVID-19 Task Force was formed by representatives from various organizations and businesses in Whitefish to encourage community-wide implementation of recommended health measures to slow the spread COVID-19, support our hospitals and clinics, keep our businesses and schools open, and support our front-line workers by developing consistent communication; and

WHEREAS, on November 17, 2020, Governor Steve Bullock issued a directive requiring face coverings be worn in indoor spaces open to the public in all counties regardless of active cases, limiting gathering sizes to 25 or less when social distancing is not possible or not observed, and placing additional restrictions on bars, restaurants, breweries, distilleries, and casinos, including capacity limits of 50% and closing to later than 10:00 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, as of December 14, 2020, the Flathead City-County Health Department has reported 8,011 cases of COVID-19, 23 active hospitalizations, and the death of 44 Flathead County residents due to complications from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the City Council was requested by the Whitefish COVID-19 Task Force to support its mission by urging individuals to follow public health directives and recommendations, to reimagine their holiday traditions especially those that include large gatherings, and to take the pledge to be a

'Friend of the Fish' at www.whitefishcovidcares.com, all to protect our vulnerable population and ensure our healthcare system does not face undue stress.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Whitefish, Montana, as follows:

Section 1: All of the recitals set forth above are hereby adopted as Findings of Fact.

Section 2: The City Council supports the mission of the Whitefish COVID-19 Task Force to provide consistent messaging that encourages community-wide implementation of recommended health measures to slow the spread COVID-19 so that we may ensure our hospitals and clinics are not overburdened, keep our businesses and schools open, and support our front-line workers.

Section 3: The City is committed to its partnership with the Whitefish School District, North Valley Hospital, and the Whitefish Convention & Visitors Bureau to fund the messaging campaign of the Whitefish COVID-19 Task Force through the local government reimbursement program funded by the State of Montana through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Section 4: The City implores all individuals to follow all of Governor Bullock's directives and the recommendations of the Flathead City-County Health Department to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect our most vulnerable population. Individuals should stay home when sick, wear a face covering when visiting indoor spaces open to the public, limit gatherings to no more than 25 people, preferably no more than 15 people, in situations where social distancing is impossible to maintain, and continue to practice proper hand washing and sanitization protocols. Schools and places of worship are exempt from gathering limitations in Governor Bullocks' recent directive. Places of worship should strongly consider the use of virtual services if social distancing is not possible or practiced.

Section 5: The City encourages both residents and visitors of Whitefish to take the pledge to be a 'Friend of the Fish' at www.whitefishcovidcares.com.

Section 6: The City urges all businesses to comply with the Governor's directives, including the reduced capacity limits of 50% and closure no later than 10:00 p.m. that apply to all restaurants, bars, breweries, distilleries, and casinos, the requirement of the use of face coverings while indoors and the mandatory notice of such requirement, and the proper social distancing of employees and customers.

Section 7: This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption by the City Council and signing by the Mayor thereof.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEFISH, MONTANA, THIS 14TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2020.

/s/John Muhlfeld

John M. Muhlfeld, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/Michelle Howke

Michelle Howke, City Clerk