

**CITY OF
ISLE
OF
PALMS
South Carolina**



Mayor:
Jimmy Carroll

City Council:
Randy Bell
Ryan Buckhannon
John Moye
Kevin Popson
Phillip Pounds
Susan Hill Smith
Rusty Streetman
Jimmy Ward

April 30, 2020

Mayor and Members of Mount Pleasant Town Council,

We, as elected officials, are tasked with making difficult decisions to protect the public health of those who elected us. Rather than using political platforms to stir controversy, I ask that our fellow elected officials read our minutes or watch our meetings to understand the rationale behind our decision to implement our safety measures. Listen to the medical expertise provided by Dr. Edward O'Bryan, the Director of Business for Telemedicine Services for Business Health at MUSC, who has been in charge of implementing the telehealth platforms and algorithms for Coronavirus screenings, testings, referrals, and treatments for the state of South Carolina. Listen to the recommendations from Raymond Barteet, the director of the office of Public Health Preparedness for the Lowcountry. They have both supported the City's efforts to control access to our Island as a mechanism to reduce the spread of a deadly virus to staff, residents and any beachgoer on our island.¹

Yes, Governor McMaster, eased restrictions to public beach access in Executive Order 2020-28, but he also entrusted to and authorized municipalities having jurisdiction or control over beach access points to close or restrict their access if it is determined that those actions are necessary to protect public health.

We do not make these decisions lightly as their ramifications could be life or death for someone you may know and love. The City has implemented best practices to protect those who live and work on the island, as well as potential visitors and their communities, including taking measures to initiative serology testing for all our first responders and staff.

Our police department typically responds to 3,000 to 4,000 calls during the spring months when beach activity heats up. By controlling access, the number of calls and related exposure for our first responders has been significantly reduced, and police face less public interaction on the beaches related to crowd control than they would if we removed the checkpoints entirely. These measures also give the City the chance to adapt in the event that a first responder falls ill.

¹ City Council Emergency Mtg. Apr. 20, 2020

Controlling crowding on the beach protects neighboring communities from the spread of the disease as much as it protects our own community. A gathering of friends congregating at the beach, before our officers can disperse them, could include residents from different neighborhoods in Mount Pleasant, Charleston, North Charleston, Daniel Island, West Ashley, Summerville, for example. Those folks return to their homes and potentially expose families and others in their communities if they are infected.

Case in point, California Governor Newsom is now ordering the closure of all beaches and state parks after thousands of people flocked the beaches this past weekend and did not practice social distancing. That is exactly what we are trying to avoid.

This crisis has affected us all. We are all being called to make small sacrifices by staying home to save lives. This is a time to encourage and help one another, support our front-line workers and make some sacrifices for the greater good. We all want to get back to the new normal where we can all enjoy the coast. However, our own medical expert confirmed that he would not take his family to the beach until the medical data in this State supports it.² We will not disregard the medical evidence and put our residents, staff, and any beachgoer, regardless of where they call home, at risk. The beaches we all love will still be here when this crisis is over, until then, all are welcome to exercise on the beach before 8:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m.

Mayor Carroll

² City Council Emergency Mtg. Apr. 28, 2020