



ELKHART, GOSHEN, NAPPANEE MAYORS SUPPORT NEW COUNTY HEALTH PROTOCOLS WITH ENFORCEMENT

GOSHEN, Ind. (Dec. 3, 2020)—The Mayors of Elkhart, Goshen and Nappanee will each bring a city ordinance to their councils that will support both the Elkhart County Commissioners' Restated Ordinance 2020-38, and the Elkhart County Health Department's new protocols to eliminate COVID-19 from our community.

Mayor Jeremy Stutsman, City Council Majority leader Brett Weddell and Council Minority leader Julia King have called a special meeting to take place Monday, Dec. 7. Elkhart and Nappanee City Councils also will meet on Monday to pass their respective ordinance in support of the countywide effort. The City ordinances will last for the duration of the public health orders.

The ordinances, which recognize and support the adoption of Elkhart County's Public Health Orders 05-2020 and 06-2020, as well as Restated County Ordinance 2020-38, authorize the mayors to designate enforcement teams to help implement the terms of the County ordinance within each city's boundaries.

On Tuesday, Dec. 1, the Elkhart County Commissioners passed Ordinance 2020-38, outlining a countywide incremental fine structure for businesses and individuals who violate the Health Department's new pandemic guidelines.

The purpose of the incremental fine structure is to help better educate the business owners and individuals about the ways in which they can contribute so that our communities can recover faster.

"We all want to emphasize that these measures have been put in place to cultivate an understanding of how this pandemic is affecting those who live in our county and the ways we can help get rid of the virus from our community," Elkhart Mayor Rod Roberson said. "Our focus is to be helpful and informative, not punitive."

The County Ordinance notes that businesses found to be in violation of the Health Orders will be given a written warning, along with informational resources to correct the issue. Elected officials hope that through this incremental fine structure, businesses and residents alike will learn more about how the pandemic has affected Elkhart County and surrounding areas.

"We are concerned for the safety and well-being of our residents, and so we've worked hard to find ways to slow the impact of the pandemic in our communities," Mayor Phil Jenkins said. "Our hope is the residents in our cities and towns will step up and take personal responsibility through their actions to help keep their families, friends and neighbors safe."

The new protocols are the product of a joint effort between all the city and county offices within Elkhart County.

"I am grateful for my colleagues and for the work we have achieved in the weeks leading to the county ordinance and these city ordinances," Mayor Stutsman said. "Our communities have come together as one voice, regardless of political affiliation, to help slow the spread of this pandemic."