



Statement from Mayor John Gregg Announcing Executive Order 2020-01

Earlier today, I issued an executive order imposing regulations on gatherings of groups of people within the Town. That order was effective immediately and will remain in effect for the duration of the State of Emergency declared to address the spread of COVID-19 within the Town.

The order prohibits gatherings of more than ten people while outside their homes and requires people within groups of ten or fewer people to practice “social distancing”, that is maintaining a minimum separation of six feet between individuals. Violations of the order are punishable in accordance with provisions of the Town Code of Ordinances, including imposition of fines of up to \$500. The Town’s Code Enforcement Officers are authorized to enforce the Order and are also authorized to cooperate with State law enforcement officers in their enforcement of the Governor’s Executive Order No. 2020-13 providing for discretionary dispersal of gatherings of three or more people if those officers determine the gathering poses a threat to public health.

I have taken this action to impress on residents of the Town that the practice of social distancing is the one measure that every person can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19. That conclusion has been confirmed by authorities including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the White House Coronavirus Task Force and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (“SCDHEC”).

I acknowledge that many of you have commented to me expressing your concerns regarding access to our community. I have received comments both supporting and opposing restrictions of access and I have shared those comments with all members of Town Council. I assure you that Council is aware of actions taken by other beach communities in the Lowcountry. Shortly after recent announcements of restrictions of access to beaches in other communities, Council published a Public Information Statement emphasizing that access to Seabrook Island beaches was already restricted by the Seabrook Island Property Owners’ security gate. In an effort to better understand the demand for short term rentals within Seabrook Island, Council has reached out to businesses that handle rental bookings in the Town. Information Council has been provided reflects that cancellations far exceeds the number of new bookings. Further, a substantial number of properties are (or will be) occupied not by rental guests, but by non-resident owners and their extended families.

Council has been taking part in daily Charleston County Emergency Management Department conference calls to receive updated information from SCDHEC and other governmental bodies and monitor capabilities of governmental agencies that serve our community including, emergency medical services, law enforcement and fire fighting. While Council is not now effecting restrictions on access, it is recognized that as circumstances change, such restrictions may become necessary.