

June 23, 2020



## A Message from Mayor Rios

I wish I could be starting this letter saying that things are getting better in terms of the coronavirus, but that is not the case. According to *The Texas Tribune*, coronavirus cases and hospitalizations *continue to break records* for a second straight week. As of Monday evening, Texas reported its 11th consecutive day of record-high hospitalizations for the coronavirus.

It went on to report, Gov. Greg Abbott's Monday press conference struck a newly urgent tone about those rising numbers but stopped short of introducing any new policies or pulling back on the reopening of Texas businesses. The governor instead emphasized long-established voluntary guidelines encouraging people to stay home if they can, use hand sanitizer, keep 6 feet of distance with others and, if they cannot, wear a mask.

Locally, we are seeing an increasing number of positive cases – an additional three announced today. But there seems to be a lack of timely communication from the Texas Department of State Health Services and Texas Department of Emergency Management to the County Judge. We have been aware of this issue for several months and continue to address it with the agencies, as well as state elected officials.

Within the City of Rockport's staff, we have three confirmed cases of employees within the Gas Department. They are in quarantine and residents with whom they may have been in contact have been notified. Unfortunately, these three cases are not among the ten we have already been informed about by the State.

We are taking extra precautions within our offices with regular disinfecting, social distancing, masks within the working environment and continuing to keep our lobbies closed to general traffic. Additionally, we are monitoring guests visiting the pool for fever, maintaining social distancing, and continuing the closure of our public lobbies.

You may not be aware, but several government entities throughout Texas have now mandated wearing masks within businesses. This includes, but is not limited to, the greater San Antonio and Austin areas, Harris County (Houston), Hays County (San Marcos) and Port Aransas. Nueces County, which includes Corpus Christi and Port Aransas, will have these protocols in place by Friday. Currently, there are no plans to implement these protocols in Aransas County.

With that said, we encourage you to voluntarily follow the guidelines mentioned above. I saw a Facebook post that says it all:

"I wear my mask while in public for three reasons: 1) Humility - I don't know if I have COVID as people can spread the disease before they have symptoms. 2) Kindness – I do not know if the person I am near has a kid battling cancer, or cares for their elderly parent. While I might be fine, they might not. 3) Community – I want my community to thrive, businesses to stay open, employees to stay healthy. Keeping a lid on COVID helps us all!!