



# NEWS Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TROPICAL CHRISTMAS TO BE DOWNSIZED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS**

ROCKPORT, TX – Following considerable deliberation, which included conversations with the Texas Department of Emergency Management, Texas Department of State Health Services, past and prospective vendors; in-house meetings; and review of current COVID-19 statistical data, the City of Rockport has decided to cancel the day-time activities and night parade associated with Tropical Christmas as a safety precaution for residents and visitors. The annual tree lighting ceremony and fireworks display will take place at dusk on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, as originally planned.

“This was a very difficult decision for us,” noted Rick Martinez, the City’s Parks and Leisure Services Director. “In sixteen years, this will only be the second time that we’ve cancelled the event and the last time was based on a bad weather forecast.

“There are many components that go into planning an event of this size from signing up vendors to scheduling entertainment and other special events associated with this annual celebration,” he declared. “For us to proceed and then cancel a month from now or a few days beforehand would be unfair and result in economic hardship for the vendors and entertainers who had planned to attend and turned down other opportunities.

“While we truly hope that the coronavirus situation is more under control by that time, we’re seeing signs of increased positivity locally, state-wide and nationally and felt that we couldn’t implement the social distancing and sanitizing precautions to ensure everyone’s safety. We truly believe this is in the best interest of the community,” he added.

According to Martinez, the only expenditures thus far have been for the contract and permitting associated with the fireworks. “So, we’ll be able to make next year’s event bigger and better,” he declared.