



**COVID-19**

**May 8, 2020**

**BELMAR BOROUGH RESCINDING PARKING DECLARATION AND RE-OPENING BOARDWALK**

The Office of Emergency Management, Police Department, Code Enforcement and the Department of Public Works coordinate efforts during this pandemic to ensure the public safety, health and well-being of our residents.

We tried encouraging residents from other areas to stay in their own towns. We had to change direction in our thought process after the beautiful weather last weekend.

No matter how hard we tried to keep people in their own neighborhoods, our town was inundated with non-residents.

The Governor's office made it abundantly clear that it is illegal to restrict non-residents from visiting our town and using our beaches.

The Police Department was overwhelmed trying to handle parking issues in the "Resident Parking Only" areas as well as trying to keep pedestrians and bicycles out of traffic lanes on Ocean Avenue.

Our strategy has changed. We have removed benches and opened the boardwalk for pedestrian traffic only. No bicycles, skateboards, skates, scooters and the like will be allowed on the boardwalk. And as is always the case, no dogs are allowed on the boardwalk. This will be strictly enforced.

We have opened parking on Ocean Avenue to try to keep visitors out of residential areas. Our total concentration now is on social distancing because it is impossible to keep non-residents in their own neighborhoods.

The Police Department is forming a task force for day and night social distancing as summer approaches.

With this pandemic, we will be adjusting as it evolves.

We are in constant contact with the Governor's office, the Monmouth County Freeholders and are coordinating with all the mayors of our shore towns.

We are still taking direction from the Governor's office as to beach openings. We should have a plan in place by May 15, 2020.

I want to thank our residents for abiding by the social distancing rules. I would also like to thank our Police Department, Office of Emergency Management, Department of Public Works, Code Enforcement, Beach Staff and our clerical staff, for working so diligently to help us through this difficult time.