

Good luck to all the businesses opening back up. We wish you success and perseverance!

From the team at



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Grand Island Central School District

Ballots due June 9

Ballots for the annual school district budget vote and trustee election are due to the school district clerk by 5 p.m. Tuesday, June 9.

All votes are by absentee ballot only this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. This process was developed based on Gov. Andrew Cuomo's executive order 202.26 issued on May 1. Approximately 16,000 absentee ballots were mailed two weeks ago to Islanders.

The district posted a link to a video tutorial describing the absentee ballot process on its website at www.grandislandschools.org. The school website also has details on the \$64,626,568 school budget proposal.

"All registered voters in Erie County will receive an absentee

ballot by U.S. mail. You probably received yours already," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Brian Graham. "To be qualified to vote on your school budget and Board of Education candidates, you must be a citizen of the United States, 18 years of age or older, and a resident within your school district for a period of at least 30 days prior to the vote."

Graham said, "If you did not receive an absentee ballot delivered to your home, or if you are not a registered voter in your county but you are qualified to vote, please contact Jude Kuehne, our district clerk, at 773-8801 or via email at a GICSD.org."

Incumbents Ashli Dreher and Susan Marston are running unopposed to two seats on the Board of Education.

Town of Grand Island

Town Board, Planning Board schedule special Project Olive hearing

The Grand Island Town Board and the Grand Island Planning Board will hold a combined special meeting regarding the Project Olive development at 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 11.

The boards will hold joint public hearings on the application of TC Buffalo Development Associates for Project Olive, the development of approximately 145.4 acres of land at 2780 Long Road for use as an storage and distribution facility rumored to be for e-commerce giant Amazon.

The public hearings will be held remotely via ZOOM, an on-line virtual meeting platform, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and executive orders limiting public gatherings.

The ZOOM public meeting will be conducted will be accessible by computer, smartphone, or tablet with internet connection at a link to be posted on the town's website at <http://www.grand-island.ny.us>.

island.ny.us.

Alternatively, the meeting may be joined by telephone by dialing 646-558-8656 and by entering the passcode 833 6189 1680 when prompted. Instructions on how to access the ZOOM meeting will also be available on the Town's website.

The Town Board will immediately begin accepting written public comments by e-mail at publiccomments@grand-island.ny.us, by fax at 773-9618, and by U.S. mail to the Town Clerk at 2255 Baseline Road, Grand Island, NY 14072.

According to the town, the public hearing "will include all aspects of the Project Olive application and all approvals requested, including, but not limited to, the proposed local law changing the zoning designation for the property, the proposed development plan, the proposed subdivision request, and environmental or other impacts."

Copies of the application materials are available on the town's website and on the website provided by the applicant, www.tcbuffalograndisland.com.

The recording of the meeting will be available on the town's YouTube channel and a transcript of the public hearing will be made available for the public to review on the town's website.

EAT OUTSIDE

Cuomo: Outdoor dining at restaurants permitted in phase two of reopening



Outdoor seating is available on the deck at Casey's Cabana in Ferry Village. (Photo by Larry Austin)

Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Wednesday announced outdoor dining at restaurants will be permitted in phase two of reopening. Restaurants in the seven regions that have already entered phase two – the Capital Region, Central New York, the Finger Lakes, the Mohawk Valley, the North Country, the Southern Tier and Western New York – can reopen for outdoor dining beginning Thursday. Outdoor tables must be spaced six feet apart, all staff must wear face coverings and customers must also wear face coverings when not seated.

"COVID-19 is still a real threat and we're still battling it. I know it's not on the front pages today, but it is still in people and in society," Cuomo said. "But thanks to the people of New York and the nurses, doctors and essential workers, today we have the lowest number of hospitalizations ever and we have the lowest death toll ever. We are continuously evaluating activities that can be safely reopened, and today we are adding outdoor seating at restaurants to phase two."

State Leaders Respond

In response to the restaurant news, New York State Sen. Rob Ortt and Niagara County Legislator Rich Andres urged local governments in Niagara County to help restaurants expand their footprints to be able to host additional patrons.

"Today's announcement by Gov. Cuomo is welcome news, but many restaurants have limited outdoor seating or none at all, so we need to look for creative ways to help them be successful," Ortt said. "That could mean allowing them to use their parking lots to set up tables, perhaps adjacent sidewalks and maybe even look at ways to close some streets down to traffic if that makes sense in areas with several restaurant in close proximity."

Ortt and Andres said the ability to allow for an expanded footprint is a decision that rests with local governments, which would have to temporarily waive certain zoning ordinances.

"This is the time to cut through the red tape and help these local businesses that have been devastated over the last three months begin to get back on their feet," said Andres, who chairs the county economic development committee. "The county Health Department has some oversight of restaurants, but I already checked with them and there is nothing under their purview that would prevent expanded outdoor dining options. So, now it's a matter of zoning and permitting."

Ortt said that, without localities joining the effort to help restaurants expand their capacity, many restaurants simply would not be able to reopen.

"As hopeful as today's announcement is, restaurants need to be able to serve a certain number of customers in order for it to be economically feasible, and they are already well aware that,

when indoor dining resumes in phase three, it will be with a much reduced capacity," Ortt said. "So, relaxing zoning where appropriate is a step we must take if we want to save the local restaurant business in Niagara County."

The Village of Lewiston already opened up its green spaces for restaurant patrons to sit and "picnic in the park."

SLA Guidance - Wear Mask, Social Distance


In response to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's decision to allow restaurants to offer outdoor seating in phase two, the New York State Liquor Authority posted the following:

Effective Thursday, June 4, 2020

Pursuant to the Governor's order, effective Thursday, June 4, 2020, all licensees in regions that have entered phase 2 of reopening and which have on-premises service privileges under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law (ABC Law) may, subject to the guidance below, resume outdoor, on-premises service of alcoholic beverages and/or food. This guidance shall continue until July 3, 2020 but may be extended or reduced depending upon the circumstances.


To aid in prevention of the spread of the coronavirus and assist businesses impacted by the current state of emergency, the Governor has ordered the Chairman of the State Liquor Authority (SLA) to promulgate guidance on

SEE SLA continued on Page 12



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