



Grand Island Town Board

Virtual public hearings planned

BY MICHAEL J. BILLONI
Contributor

The Grand Island Town Board agreed at its workshop Monday evening to conduct 10 virtual public hearings on Thursday at 7 p.m. and has rescheduled the Project Olive public hearing for Thursday, June 11, because of the COVID-19 pandemic and executive order 202.1. The board also agreed to postpone the annual July 4 parade to a date later in the summer.

The public hearings on Thursday will be held remotely via ZOOM with a telephone dial-in component. The ZOOM public meeting at which the public hearings will be conducted will be accessible either with a computer, smartphone, or tablet with internet connection. The link will be available in hyperlink version on the town's website at <http://www.grand-island.ny.us/> so that the meeting may be joined with a simple click. Alternatively, the meeting may be joined by telephone by dialing 646-558-8656 and by entering the passcode 82367177834 when prompted.

The Town Board will immediately begin accepting written public comments on the hearings by email 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. Written public comments will be accepted through to and including June 2. The Town Board asks residents

who wish to speak on any or all of the matters to let the board know in advance by email to publiccomments@grand-island.ny.us and by identifying the matter or matters on which you would like to speak.

Details of the 10 items that will be discussed are on the town's website homepage under Quick Resources, Public Hearings.

"We are trying to be as transparent as we can with these public hearings while moving these much needed projects forward," said Councilmember Jennifer Rimer Baney.

The much-anticipated re-scheduled Project Olive public hearing will actually be held in two parts as the board is interested in hearing resident's comments about the \$300 million e-commerce and distribution facility for consumer products. The June 11 virtual event at 7 p.m. will be a combined Planning Board and Town Board public hearing. The Planning Board will close its meeting that night, but the Town Board will keep its public meeting open for a future meeting. Details of that public hearing will be announced soon and will be on the town website.

Much discussion was held about the annual July 4 parade and the Dick Bessel Road Race held that morning. Town Recreation Director Joe Menter reported the state Department of Transportation was not issuing permits during this pandemic to close streets for parades, and he said managing social distancing for crowds and units in the parade would be nearly impossible.

Rather than cancel the parade, the town has agreed to postpone the parade and road race to a date when it can safely be held using the state's compliance outline as a guide. If it cannot be held this summer they will discuss a virtual road race.

Grand Island Central School District

Election ballots on the way

More than 30 people worked Thursday in the Grand Island High School cafeteria stuffing and labeling approximately 16,000 absentee ballots for mailing Friday.

The Grand Island Central School District budget vote and Board of Education election is June 9 and is taking place only by absentee ballot due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Board of Education trustees Ashli Dreher and Sue Marston are running unopposed for reelection to two open seats on the board. Voters will vote up or down on a \$64,626,568 school budget and a proposition to spend \$685,000 to acquire new



Bins of mail are filled with Grand Island School District absentee ballots heading to the post office for delivery. The work was organized by District Clerk Jude Kuehne, right. (Photos by Larry Austin)

school buses and vehicles.

Graduation

The Grand Island Central School District announced Wednesday that Grand Island

High School graduation will take place at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, June 28, at Beaver Island State Park. Details about the ceremony are to follow, the district said.

Island of Hope

Hope is never cancelled, GI Relay For Life says

In spite of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the Grand Island Relay For Life committee is still planning events in support of the cancer survivors.

The annual Island fundraiser for the American Cancer Society has been cancelled due to the pandemic, but hope is never cancelled, GI Relay organizers said.

"We're disappointed we have to cancel Relay on June 12, but we want cancer survivors to know we're thinking of and still fighting for them," said GI Relay co-chair Lynn Dingey Thursday.

"Relay For Life of Grand Island is tentatively planning a 'Grand Island Fights Cancer Festival' for Aug. 30 (a smaller version of Relay), but it's going to depend on

how reopening goes and when we're able to gather again," she said.

In the meantime, one element of the Relay For Life, the luminaria ceremony at sundown, which honors those lives lost to cancer, will go on in a different way this year. Light the Town Purple, a front porch luminaria event, is scheduled for Friday, June 12, at dusk.

"We'll be selling luminaria kits for a \$5 donation that include a luminaria and purple glow stick for people to make and put out at their house," said Dingey. "Details on where to get luminaria kits or to order luminarias will be available on facebook, by visiting www.relayforlife.org/grandislandny or calling 773-5305."



Relay For Life co-chair Lynn Dingey, foreground, and other volunteers tied purple ribbons in the town center in support of cancer survivors and the American Cancer Society.

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