

ORDINANCE NO. 1439

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON, SUSPENDING UTILITY DELINQUENCY INTEREST AND NOTICE CHARGES IMPOSED UNDER GHMC TITLE 13 UNTIL SIX MONTHS FOLLOWING THE TERMINATION OF THE EMERGENCY PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY AND PROVIDING FOR AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, GHMC Title 13 establishes water utility service fees as well as sewer utility service fees for all customers which connect to the City's water and sewer utilities; and

WHEREAS, both water and sewer utility fees, if not paid within 30 days following the billing date are considered delinquent and subject to both interest as well as notice charges; and

WHEREAS, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and its rapid progression in Washington state and throughout the United States continues to threaten life and health of people as well as the economy; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, United States Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public emergency for COVID-19 beginning January 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee proclaimed a State of Emergency in Washington state due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, Governor Inslee issued a proclamation closing restaurants, bars, entertainment and recreation venues, and certain service businesses

in order to promote social distancing and self-isolation and thereby slow the spread of COVID-19. The closure does not affect grocery stores, pharmacies, gas stations, convenience stores, and libraries, as long as no food services is provided; and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020 I, Kit Kuhn, as Mayor of the City of Gig Harbor, issued a proclamation declaring that a civil emergency exists in the City due to the outbreak of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 outbreak and associated mandated limitations on individuals' ability to work and businesses abilities to operate have created serious economic impacts on the residents of Gig Harbor; and

WHEREAS, the Gig Harbor City Council finds that it is necessary to take action to ensure that all residents do not incur delinquent utility interest and charges when they are forced to not work and stay home to combat the outbreak; and

WHEREAS, the Gig Harbor City Council finds that stopping such delinquent interest and charges for a period of time will help residents be able to stay home, which is essential to slow the outbreak and to keep residents healthy; NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON,
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:


Section 1. Delinquent Utility Interest and Charges Suspended. The provisions of GHMC 13.32.050 (Sewer service account delinquencies) and GHMC 13.04.050 (water service account delinquencies) imposing both interest as well as notice charges on delinquent utility accounts are hereby suspended until six months following the termination of the civil emergency proclaimed by the Mayor of the City of Gig Harbor on March 23, 2020. Utility customers shall not be charged interest or notice charges on

delinquent utility accounts during this period, but all utility service charges for water and sewer usage incurred during that time remain valid and owing to the City of Gig Harbor. Any utility service charges remaining delinquent as of six months following the date of termination of the civil emergency will be treated as delinquent consistent with the Code and subject to all interest and notice charges that may accrue from that day forward.

Section 2. Duration of Suspension. The suspension provided for in this ordinance shall remain in effect until six months following the termination of the civil emergency proclaimed by the Mayor of the City of Gig Harbor on March 23, 2020.

Section 4. Declaration of Emergency – Immediate Effective Date. For the reasons set forth in this ordinance and in the emergency proclamations of Governor Inslee, King County Executive Constantine, Mayor Kuhn, and President Trump, the Gig Harbor City Council finds and declares that a public emergency exists due to the outbreak of COVID-19 that makes this ordinance necessary for the immediate protection of the public health, public safety, public property, and public peace. This ordinance, having been declared an emergency and having received the affirmative votes of at least a majority plus one of the whole membership of the Gig Harbor City Council, is not subject to referendum and shall become effective immediately upon adoption. The City Clerk shall publish this ordinance or a summary thereof in the ordinary course of business.

Passed by the City Council of the City of Gig Harbor, the 23rd day of March, 2020. Approved by the Mayor of the City of Gig Harbor, the 23rd day of March, 2020.




KIT KUHN, MAYOR

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:



MOLLY TOWSLEE, CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



DANIEL P. KENNY, CITY ATTORNEY

ADOPTED: 03/23/2020
PUBLISHED: 04/02/2020
EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/23/2020
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