April 28, 2020

RE: Massachusetts Emergency Order extended until May 18th

To our Valued Customers:

Governor Baker has officially extended his emergency Order requiring non-essential services to close. **This Order will now stay in force until May 18, 2020. This means we will be continuing our “limited access” services through the next few weeks.** We appreciate your understanding and patience as we try to protect both you and our staff to stop the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the coming weeks. We all know this is a difficult situation, but with your help, all of us WILL get through this.

Remember, financial services are “Essential Services” so we are not being asked to close. We are being asked to take prudent steps to protect our staff and the public. We will be here to ensure the financial system (i.e. wire transfers, electronic banking, loan processing) is working. During this extended Order, we will continue to restrict public access to our branches. This will prevent unnecessary public contact and to help stop the progress of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Our offices will provide for your banking business (withdrawals, deposits, check cashing) using our Drive-up tellers, ATM and online/mobile banking.

As a reminder,

**All Offices:** There will be **no public lobby access** in our branches at this time. All our Drive thru-teller, ATM services, and Night depository services will be open during normal hours. (Please note that Shelburne Falls only has a walk-up ATM and a Night Depository in the vestibule). People or businesses needing to obtain change and cash should call their branch and we will prepare a package and exchange at an agreed upon time. Mobile and online banking, including remote deposit, remains available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Telephone banking is available during normal business hours and 24 hour telephone transfers are available at no charge to you. I sincerely hope you understand that we have tried to make your banking as safe as possible during this pandemic. Right now we plan on re-opening on or about Monday, May 18th (subject of course, to any further governmental actions), but before we do, we will have all of our safeguards in place. **Staff will continue to wear masks, and we have ordered portable plexiglass panels at every teller window, CSR desk and lender desk.** We expect to have all of this in place before we will re-open fully.

**Mortgage Loan Applications:** You may apply for a loan online at [www.BestLocalBank.com](http://www.BestLocalBank.com) or with our licensed mortgage originators. Please note that until May 18th, loan originators WILL NOT engage in any face to face appointments. Only telephone appointments and online applications will be accepted by them. Our back-room loan servicing department continues to
work on processing of loans in process, but we are seeing more delays due to the inability to get different verifications (job verifications, deposit verifications, appraisals) returned to us in our normal timeframes. **Please know that we will prioritize closings on purchase transactions, then do re-financings. We will continue to honor any rate lock that we had given that expired solely because of these delays.**

**Loan Closings:** Since there are differing opinions from the various Registries of Deeds, most loan closings will continue if they can be done safely and at the discretion of the closing attorneys provided they can properly record (physically or electronically) our mortgage and the appropriate security instrument (mortgages, UCC-1’s, etc.) and obtain any certificates, appraisals or other items required by the bank. Otherwise, closings may be postponed until after May 18th if closing attorneys can re-schedule. The exceptions will be on a case by case basis in consultation with the closing attorney. **Please note that if you locked in your mortgage rate, the bank will continue to honor all rate locks through at least May 25th to allow time for closings to occur.**

**Masks in branches:** Normally, for safety reasons, we ask all customers to remove sunglasses and hats before entering our branches. Because of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will allow safety breathing masks in the lobby, **BUT we will ask every customer to briefly lower their mask and smile into the camera behind the teller window.** This allows us to verify it is you and also provides additional security for everyone.

I sincerely hope you understand that we have tried to make your banking as safe as possible during this pandemic. Right now we plan on re-opening on Monday, May 18th subject to any further governmental actions. Thank you again for your patience and for banking with us!!

Michael Tucker
President & CEO