



**Liberty County Chamber of Commerce
Virtual Meeting with Representative Al Williams
Friday, March 27, 2020**

MINUTES

Leah Poole opened the virtual meeting at 10:12am at the Chamber/CVB Offices. She asked that everyone use their mute buttons unless speaking.

State Representative Al Williams started out by thanking Leah and the Chamber for all the information and updates that have been going out. He pressed the point that the people need to be given the truth.

Representative Williams went on to say that he has had an opportunity to speak with health providers across the State. We are on unplowed ground in regard to the pandemic. He urged everyone to listen to official announcements, stay in touch with their Primary Care Physician, and to follow guidelines as set forth by Federal and State government. "We can get beyond this but, we can't get beyond it individually."

The Legislature went into emergency session for one day during which they authorized the Governor to spend \$100 million from the 'rainy day' fund to fight COVID-19. Representative Williams reported that only one house member has tested positive. Currently there is a shortage of testing products and protective gear for front-line workers. The Coastal Courier asked if Representative Williams had been tested. He responded that he has and that he tested negative. He explained the procedure was done by nasal swab; not comfortable but quick.

Gavin Perryman with delivery.com asked if alcohol delivery was going to be passed into law. Representative Williams said that he didn't know if that would happen.

Liberty County Sheriff Steve Sikes asked if there are any COVID-19 cases on Fort Stewart. Representative Williams stated that he only knows of one person that has tested positive, and that he hasn't seen anything official. He added that if/when he hears anything, he'll be sure to pass it on.

Leigh Smiley, with Coldwell Banker Southern Coast, thanked Representative Williams for everything he is doing. She asked if the Governor should call for a statewide shutdown and if so, would Realtors ® be considered essential. Representative Williams responded that the decisions made so far by the Governor have been tough decisions and not anything he's done has been done lightly. He asked that Realtors ® submit their suggestions to him so that he can take them to the Governor and/or his people.

Luis Malave, with Vida Prints, asked if the State was going to provide help for small businesses. Representative Williams stated that the Federal government will be the one to offer assistance to small business. He added that the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loans are available as well; the SBA has cut out all the red tape typically involved.

Someone raised the question of what would happen if the U.S. Postal Service was shut down. Representative Williams assured the group that would not happen as it is an essential service.

LaQuinta owner Hasit Patel asked if the State was going to ask Georgia Power to help residents/businesses. Rep. Williams responded that Georgia Power has already waived disconnections. He added that this is also covered in the Federal Stimulus package, with help going directly to business owners.

Patty Leon asked if the State shuts down and you're in a different State will you be allowed back into your State. Rep. Williams responded that travel will definitely be impacted.

Leah announced that starting next Tuesday the Chamber be doing virtual calls at 5:30pm, providing members a platform for discussion and sharing of ideas. Wednesday, April 1st at 10am there will be a virtual workshop with Ameris and South Georgia Banks regarding SBA loans hosted by the Chamber.

Rep. Williams thanked everyone that joined in the virtual conversation. He also thanked all first responders, Sheriff's Department, Police an, emergency personnel. He stressed the importance of showing our support for them.