

**A RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ADOPT
EMERGENCY LEGISLATION TO AUTHORIZE ABSENTEE-ONLY VOTING AT
THE UPCOMING MAY ELECTION AND JUNE PRIMARY FOR THE
TOWN OF WARRENTON**

WHEREAS, The COVID 19 pandemic has been declared a national and state emergency; and

WHEREAS, COVID 19 is highly contagious and potentially fatal; and

WHEREAS, there is a national shortage of medical resources to address the COVID 19 pandemic;
and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia and particularly Northern Virginia are similarly
threatened with a shortage of medical resources to address the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, many volunteers at polling places are in the age group which tends to be most at risk
from the virus; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of Virginia has urged all Virginians to vote absentee in the May 5th
elections and the Town of Warrenton has urged all residents to do the same through printed
messages on all Town water bills; and

WHEREAS, in recent primary elections in Florida, poll workers failed in a number of instances to
show up on election day and caused polling places to be unexpectedly closed; and

WHEREAS, in-person voting creates significant risk of the transmission of COVID 19 among
voters and risks the health of polling place workers; and

WHEREAS, Governor Northam has proposed to postpone the June, 2020 primary to June 23 and
to request legislation re-scheduling the May 5th election to the November election date; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Warrenton Town Council must move forward as planned on May 5th
due to the late nature of the General Assembly meeting just prior to the Town Council Ward
elections and without clear instructions or authority by the Governor's proposal; and

WHEREAS, absentee voting for the May 5th is underway and many absentee ballots have already
been cast in the election in Fauquier County and most likely throughout the Commonwealth of
Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the postponement of the May 5th election until the regular election in November has
no clear authority under the current Virginia Code and would create a disruptive process without
clear authority or details; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety and welfare of the voters of the Commonwealth, and the integrity
of the upcoming May 5 election and June 23 primary can be adequately protected through an
absentee-only balloting process

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Warrenton this 14th Day of April, 2020 that the Town Council hereby respectfully requests that its legislative delegation propose emergency legislation which authorizes the Registrars of each jurisdiction in Virginia to mail absentee ballots to all registered voters forthwith after the adoption of the legislation; and

BE IT FURHTER RESOLVED, that such legislation authorize each locality in the Commonwealth to conduct absentee-only voting, and also permit in-person absentee voting at the central absentee polling place or Registrar's Office of each such locality, up to and through the date of the May 5 election and June 23 primary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the witness requirement for absentee ballots be dispensed with for the purpose of mailed ballots because many voters are likely to be self-quarantining; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council respectfully request that in the event the General Assembly chooses instead to postpone the May 5 election, it reschedule this election to August in order to avoid the splitting of precincts which would occur in the event the election is rescheduled to the November election date; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, finally that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Office of the Governor, the legislative delegation for Fauquier County, the speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, and the Sergeant at Arms for the Virginia Senate.



Elizabeth Gillie
Town Clerk