



Legislative Report

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THE INAUGURATION is scheduled to be held on January 13, 2021 and will mark the beginning of the 102nd General Assembly. In normal circumstances this article would include other important dates. The dates for such things as the deadline for bill introductions, committee hearing deadlines, the deadline for bills to have passed their chamber of origin, or the Governor's budget address, to name a few. However, it seems 2020 is the year that continues to give as at the time of publishing, none of those dates have been set and many more questions remain. Largely due to two reasons; COVID-19 and an uncertainty about who will be elected as the next Speaker of the House of Representatives in Illinois.

By the time Township Perspective reaches you, resolution might have been found or at least a pathway forward may have been established. As it stands now, there is much uncertainty regarding how spring session of 2021 will play out. The race for Speaker has put a hold on the General Assembly releasing a calendar, which guides and dictates what happens in Springfield. This is because the calendar is usually jointly put together by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. With the race for Speaker not yet determined and no real timeline for when that determination will be made, the calendar cannot be finalized. And while this may seem like a trivial detail it is important to also keep in mind that it is the Speaker of the House and only the Speaker of the House that can convene a House session (there is an exception for the Secretary of State to call a session to order but only to vote for a new Speaker). So even though new members of the 102nd General Assembly will be sworn in on January 13th, it is not clear when session will even begin.

Yet even if the Speakers race were determined earlier and a calendar released, it still isn't certain how much use it would be in this age of a pandemic. As you already know veto session was cancelled due to a surge in the number of COVID cases and the potential for it to disrupt spring session is a very real possibility. Before veto session, several members of the General Assembly either tested positive for COVID or had to quarantine due to being in close contact with someone who tested positive. Having 177 legislators, their staff and others in

the Capitol might not be an option if a new surge were to take place or if the current surge continues.

With COVID still such a problem it comes as welcome news that the Governor announced the State's plan for the vaccinations Illinois is to receive. As the FDA was able to approve the Pfizer developed vaccine on December 10, Illinois' plan called for the roughly 109,000 doses of the vaccine to be received by the state between December 13 and December 19. From there 23,000 doses will be shipped to Chicago and 86,000 to the rest of Illinois. The first vaccines will be dedicated to hospital and healthcare workers in the 50 counties in Illinois with the highest death rates per capita. This "Geographic Prioritization" of those 50 hardest hit counties will see the vaccines shipped to ten Regional Hospital Coordinating Centers who will then coordinate distribution to those counties.

In descending order, the counties include: 1. Greene 2. Wayne 3. Carroll 4. Ford 5. Mason 6. Union 7. Pike 8. Clay 9. Jefferson 10. Clinton 11. Whiteside 12. Fayette 13. Marion 14. Monroe 15. Cass 16. Bureau 17. Clark 18. Macon 19. Warren 20. La Salle 21. Williamson 22. Richland 23. Coles 24. Perry 25. Morgan 26. Knox 27. McDonough 28. Shelby 29. Suburban Cook 30. Jasper 31. Jersey 32. Saline 33. Christian 34. Iroquois 35. Saint Clair 36. Dewitt 37. Kankakee 38. Rock Island 39. Madison 40. Lake 41. Winnebago 42. Kane 43. Randolph 44. DuPage 45. Will 46. Ogle 47. Jo Daviess 48. Tazewell 49. Cumberland 50. Stark.

Hopefully, these vaccinations will be a first step towards ending the effect this pandemic has had on all of us and return some normalcy back to the legislative process as there are real challenges the State must be prepared to face, outside of and as a result of COVID. That along with the Speakers race, has caused disruption for much of the normal process for preparing for a spring session. It has created an extremely fluid environment where established procedure is forced to be examined, reconsidered, or changed. TOI will do its utmost to keep you informed through these developing circumstances so you can focus on serving and advocating on behalf of those you represent.

