

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
RE-SCHEDULED REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2020**

Mayor Beagle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Mayor: P. Beagle
Deputy Mayor: T. Rzeznik
Councilmembers: P. Behrmann
K. Gottschall
T. Gronlund-Fox
P. Sharpe
R. Smiley

AGENDA CHANGES: (None)

MINUTES:

The minutes for the March 11, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting will be approved at the next Regular City Council Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1.) Resolution to Declare a Local State of Emergency

CM-03-37-20: Moved and seconded by Councilmembers Gottschall and Smiley to adopt the following Resolution declaring a local state of emergency and authorizing the City Manager to take appropriate measures in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic:

**RESOLUTION 2020-08 DECLARING LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY
(COVID-19)**

RECITALS:

- A. The President of the United States, the Governor of the State of Michigan, and the Oakland County Executive have all declared a State of Emergency, and federal, state, and county orders, directives, guidelines, and recommendations, including from the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC"), have been issued in an effort to control the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic declared by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- B. These federal, state, and county orders, directives, guidelines, and recommendations have included closing business establishments; cancelling, postponing, and limiting the numbers at gatherings of people; postponing or limiting the number of persons required to physically attend public meetings; and calling for appropriate steps to be taken by local governments in an effort to control the spread of COVID-19.
- C. These federal, state, and county orders, directives, guidelines, and recommendations have been changed or updated on a frequent basis, and further changes or updates are expected.
- D. COVID-19, and the possible exposure to persons afflicted with it, constitutes a clear and present danger to the health, safety, and welfare of City personnel and persons doing business with or residing in the City.
- E. Under the authority and responsibilities provided in the State of Michigan's Emergency Management Act, MCL 30.410, and Chapter 2.36, Emergency Management and Disaster Control, of the Wixom City Code, the Mayor has declared a Local State of Emergency due to COVID-19.

- F. Under the Emergency Management Act, the Mayor's Declaration of a Local State of Emergency is limited to seven (7) days without City Council consent.
- G. The City Council agrees with the Mayor's Declaration and finds it appropriate to extend such Declaration until its termination as set forth herein and has further determined that emergency certain additional measures and actions should be taken or authorized.

IT IS THEREFORE DECLARED by the City Council of the City of Wixom, Oakland County, Michigan, that there is a Local State of Emergency in the City due COVID-19, on the basis of the States of Emergency already declared by the President of the United States, the Governor of the State of Michigan, and the Oakland County Executive.

IT IS FURTHER DECLARED THAT:

1. Except for legally required meetings and necessary exceptions that absolutely require physical presence, and subject to restrictions approved by the Mayor, City owned or occupied buildings are closed to the public, with the City Manager authorized and directed to determine and provide public notice of this closure and the manner in which the public may communicate with City offices, which shall continue to be staffed by City personnel in a manner and at a level determined by the City Manager.
2. The City Council authorizes the City Manager to take appropriate measures, in his discretion, to respond to or protect City citizens, businesses, and personnel from the declared State of Emergency by adopting and enforcing all appropriate measures, including but not limited to:
 - a. Taking actions necessary to comply with a federal, state, or county order or directive that is binding on the City.
 - b. Limiting City meetings and functions to those required by law.
 - c. Extending deadlines for City responses to submissions and applications for City approvals, permits, and inspections and authorizing administrative review approval of same when necessary and appropriate.
 - d. Temporarily releasing all non-essential City personnel from reporting to the City offices for work.
 - e. Approving the payment of bills after additional approval of the City Treasurer as necessary to avoid interest, penalties, or delinquency.
 - f. Establishing appropriate measures for the payment and collection of City taxes and bills for City services while assuring the safety of the City taxpayers;
 - g. Authorizing temporary employees or contractors, equipment rental, supply and material purchases, and necessary contracts.
 - h. Cancelling, postponing, or establishing emergency rules for any public meeting of a City board, commission, or committee (not including City Council).
3. For public meetings that are subject to the Open Meetings Act, the number of persons physically attending should be documented and limited, to the extent possible and legal, to protect the health and safety of persons that do attend by the following measures:
 - a. Persons that do physically attend a meeting shall be required to provide their name, address, and an email address or phone number for follow-up contact in the event someone at that meeting tests positive for COVID-19.
 - b. Members of the public desiring to attend a meeting shall be encouraged to refrain from doing so in person, in favor of attending remotely by viewing and participating in one of the ways approved by the City Manager and described on the City website and in the Notice of the Meeting.
 - c. Members of the public that attend a meeting in person shall refrain from all physical contact with, and maintain a minimum distance of six (6') feet from, other persons in attendance at the meeting or in the building in which it is held.
 - d. Members of the public that attend and speak at a meeting shall as much as possible refrain from touching the microphones, podium, and tables and from approaching the members or support staff for the board/commission/committee.
 - e. Public comment as required by the Open Meetings Act shall be at the beginning of the Agenda, only.

- f. Measures shall be taken as necessary to comply with the maximum number of persons at a gathering as ordered, directed, or recommended by the President, the CDC, the Governor, or the County Executive.
4. Public meetings may be conducted virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 2020-15 issued on March 18, 2020.
5. This Declaration shall remain in effect until the Governor's declared State of Emergency is terminated or the Mayor determines that the COVID-19 emergency upon which this Declaration is based no longer exists in the City.

Mayor Beagle stated that on March 19, 2020, he signed a Declaration of a Local State of Emergency. This allows City Manager Steve Brown to assume the responsibilities of the Emergency Manager Coordinator for all purposes under that Ordinance including the coordination with any and all federal, state, county and local government entities.

Mr. Brown indicated that this resolution to declare the local emergency was drafted by our City Attorney as result of the COVID-19 that goes back to the end of December in all areas of the globe. This required action on his part, like the closing of City Hall on Monday, March 16th, because of health concerns. He thought there could be a variety of other actions that may be necessary. This proposed resolution would acknowledge the other Declarations of Emergencies that were done by the federal, state and county levels. It gives Council approval to the Mayoral Local Emergency Declaration that was done on March 19th, as well as other items such as conducting a virtual meeting with members of the public present like this. He said it provided him the authority to take special measures that would normally be outside of the bounds, like closing City Hall and sending non-essential employee's home.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik asked if this was a necessary step to be eligible for certain federal aids and programs. Mr. Brown replied no, it was not necessary. The federal declaration, the state declaration and the county declaration covered that. Our City Attorney recommended that we do this local declaration.

Councilmember Gottschall said he and the City Manager spoke earlier today regarding the need for the public to sign in and provide identifying information at meetings. He wondered if Mr. Brown was able to do any more research to determine if that was needed. Mr. Brown said that the initial thought was when we were going to proceed with the meeting on March 24th (meeting in-person) to cover things like social distancing and other requirements that would be in play. We were going to provide people the opportunity to provide comments electronically so they could avoid appearing at the meeting physically. It was done originally to provide for that particular eventuality but we moved away from that and went to this virtual meeting two days later after cancelling the meeting on the 24th. Also, we decided to leave it in on the off chance we got to a transition where the concern was less and we still wanted to have those restrictions and guidelines.

**Roll Call Vote: (7) AYES – Beagle, Behrmann, Gottschall, Gronlund-Fox,
Rzeznik, Sharp, Smiley**

(0)NAYS

Motion Carried

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Brown explained for those attending this virtual meeting as an attendee, there was a "raise hand" button at the bottom of the screen for those wishing to speak.

Sheryl Lucas, 3301 Bennington, said that she was testing this system. To explain the "raise hand" feature a little bit more, she said that if you take your cursor and scroll down to the bottom of the screen, there was a black bar at the bottom. There was an option at the lower left to leave the meeting. In the center of that bar, there was a hand. By clicking that button, your hand was raised. When you click it again, your hand comes down.

Caleb Sheng thanked everyone. He knew everyone was burning the candle at both ends. It was very reassuring to everybody who was dealing with this.

Steve Mather said he can't attend the regular meetings so he appreciated this opportunity.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:

Mr. Brown appreciated the cooperation of the Council regarding this resolution.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilmember Smiley thanked everyone for all they are doing in the City to keep us all as safe as possible. Always remember that this too shall pass. God bless.

Councilmember Sharpe thanked City Manager Brown for organizing this real good use of our technologies. Thank goodness we have them and are supporting our Governor's directives.

Councilmember Gronlund-Fox thanked City Manager Brown for all that he had done to get this working. She appreciated all he has done in the past two weeks to keep the City going and to keep everybody safe.

Councilmember Gottschall thanked the City Manager and his staff for researching this and making this a reality. He was hoping for this, rather than an in-person meeting, especially for those who are home with others who are at-risk. He thanked all of the City staff for their adaptability during this crisis and for their hard work, especially our first responders. He hoped everyone could stay home as much as possible. He added that he read an article about the Secretary of State not being able to extend expiring drivers licenses. He hoped the Police Department would consider not issuing tickets for folks that might get pulled over with drivers licenses that expired between March 23rd through the time that the Secretary of State's office was open again. Stay safe.

Councilmember Behrmann thanked City Manager Brown for everything he had done. He enjoyed the updates that our Police Chief was doing to let the residents know what was going on. He thought the feedback showed people appreciated that. He did see a lot of negative comments regarding the yard waste not being picked up at the normal April 1 start date. He understood why. He said that there were a

lot of people home and a lot of people out on the trail. He witnessed a car accident today near the HAWK crosswalk on Beck Road. One car stopped for a pedestrian crossing, but the car behind did not stop and hit the back of that vehicle. He cautioned people to be careful now because there were a lot of people riding their bikes or walking than what we are used to. He hoped everyone would stay safe.

Deputy Mayor Rzeznik thanked City Manager Brown. He knew it was a difficult thing as a Chief Executive Officer to navigate us through this crisis. He wished him strength. Our hats are off to our first responders. They still have to be on the road and respond. Last weekend, he was involved in a couple of grassroots efforts to collect masks and distribute them. One of our local businesses collected hundreds of them and he was able to distribute them in Oakland County. He distributed over 1,800 of them to Ascension Providence and 750 to University of Michigan Health Center and various surgery centers. If people have these kinds of supplies in their garages, he pleaded that they take them to our first responders or hospitals. He wanted our residents to look in our elderly neighbors. Our safety paths are very crowded with lots of walkers and bicyclists. He hoped they would remember this when it comes up for a millage renewal. He hoped people would patronize our local businesses. The fabric of our community is made up of these small businesses and they are going through a real tough time right now.

Mayor Beagle echoed Deputy Mayor Rzeznik's comments regarding supporting our local businesses. He thanked Mr. Brown for his hard work during the past two weeks, as well as helping him with this virtual meeting. He reminded people to check on their neighbors. He thought now was a good time for residents to complete their Census forms. The City will receive money based on the number of residents in our community so the Census was very important. We know that the past two weeks have been concerning for everybody. He hoped the Wixom residents would remain calm and take the advice of our health experts. We have a plan in place and we can continue to provide the critical essential services. We will get through this situation together and come out stronger as a community. He thanked our first responders.

Mr. Brown added that our staff has been fantastic throughout this period. Our Director of Public Safety Ron Moore, Fire Chief Jeff Roberts, and the City Hall staff have been coming in to get as much done as possible. Everyone has really taken a great "all hands on deck" approach to this. We have a lot of remote resources with employees who are working from home to get things done. They take pride in serving the Wixom community and he was very proud of them. He thanked them all for the wonderful job they were doing.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Catherine Buck
City Clerk

Approved 4-14-2020
