



HIGHLAND CITY

HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Approved Minutes

Highland City Main Conference Room, 5400 West Civic Center Drive, Highland Utah 84003

Presiding: Mayor Rod Mann

Council Members

Present: Council Member Timothy A. Ball, Council Member Kurt Ostler, Council Member Scott L. Smith

Council Members

Attending Electronically: Council Member Brittney P. Bills, Council Member Kim Rodela

City Staff Present:

City Administrator/ Community Development Director Nathan Crane, AICP, Assistant City Administrator Erin Wells, Fire Chief Reed Thompson, Police Chief Brian Gwilliam, Library Director Donna Cardon, Recorder Stephanie Cottle, Treasurer Candice Linford

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rod Mann as an Emergency Session of the City Council at 6:04 pm. Scott Smith offered the opening prayer.

6:00 PM EMERGENCY SESSION *(Highland City Offices - Main Conference Room)*

Meeting was actually held in Council Chambers

1. DISCUSSION: HIGHLAND CITY’S RESPONSE TO GOVERNOR HERBERT’S RECOMMENDATIONS IN REGARDS TO COVID-19

The City Council discussed contingency plans for Highland City in order to comply with the Governor’s recommendations.

Nathan Crane, City Administrator, distributed a packet of materials about COVID-19. He explained that the governor held a press conference where he asked organizations to (1) encourage sick employees not to come to work and (2) to wash your hands. In additional, it was requested that citizens over the age of 60 not attend mass gatherings over 20 people, limit mass gatherings to groups of less than 100, and if you’re not healthy stay home. He emphasized the need for social distancing and to start working from home. Mr. Crane, provided examples of various organization’s responses: canceling Sunday services, colleges closing and moving classes online, other cities closing rec centers and libraries, etc.

Mr. Crane said that they had begun to draft Highland City's response. The document was provided to the Council. He explained that they have not figured out how to handle court yet. He said that staff would like to address a few situations and get the Council's input on how to proceed.

Reed Thompson, Fire Chief, explained that they placed an order to staff in regards to handling patients given that they would be going into homes with individuals who are potentially immune compromised or otherwise sick. He said that staff needs to be healthy to report to duty. He explained that they have a supply of protective clothing that will last for several weeks. Some additional items are on backorder for hazmat events.

In regards to responding to calls for service, the department has instructed the call center that anything that relates to cardiac pain, chest pain, cardiac arrest, headache or a "sick person" type call will be screened and patients will be asked additional questions from a card that had been created for dispatchers. Patients will also be screened from a distance upon arrival. He explained that although a normal medical call would include a fire truck and ambulance that currently the first arriving unit should send only two people. Following this, the fire department will work with medical control to decide if they will or will not transport the patient, as well as instruct where to take patient to. 911 services will continue as normal. He said fire and police will work collaboratively on medical calls and that personal protective equipment (PPE) will be on hand for both police and fire. In addition, staff have been instructed not to use the transport engine in Alpine for transporting a sick patient, because of the layout of the vehicle will compromise the cab area. Instead they will utilize the backup ambulance. The decontamination will happen outside the fire bay to ensure that any hazardous material is not brought into the living corridors. The department is also working with hospitals for feedback just in case they have a positive case. The department does have emergency food supply for fire department to get by for 30 days.

Nathan Crane, City Administrator, explained the precautions being made in City buildings and offices. They had implemented a plan for cleaning surfaces in the main office, as well as how to isolate the front counter to make sure that customers and employees are comfortable. Tim Ball spent a lot of time on the CDC website trying to figure out what is the truth. As a result, staff will begin taking credit card payments over the phone. In addition, they are considering what events need to be cancelled. Thus far those included the Easter egg hunt, on April 11th. John Hart is looking into videoing essential meetings so that people can attend remotely. Currently they intend to hold Planning Commission and City Council Meetings, but to cancel everything else. In regards to working with residents and developers, staff are trying to work as much as possible on the phone through FaceTime. Staff are also working on instructions on what to do if an employee comes in sick. Public Works was maintaining business as usual. In regards to handling Court, the next court date is March 19th. They usually have 20-25 cases. The Staff intends to look at the docket to see if there was anyone over 60 for whom they needed to make accommodations. He noted that the public defender and prosecutor are both over 60 so we will need to make accommodations. It was the Administrative Office of the Court that is making the decisions on whether to hold court. The Community Center has cancelled classes and will be closed until further notice. The Library has cancelled story time. Reed Thompson, Fire Chief, has recommended total closure. Staff are looking at means for alternative checkout as materials are available online, so that there could be drive-through checkout. In addition, they are trying to provide story time through Facebook live.

Donna Cardon, Library Director, said she would like to stay open. However, if the Council decides against it, will make accommodations.

Council Member Scott L. Smith said it was good that they were thinking ahead to make these accommodations. He felt that the nation was on the verge of panic. He stated that the disease was contagious and that it was the first he had heard that it passed through the eyes, but he felt it was important to help people calm down as opposed to looting stores and selling their stocks. He stated that there had only been six cases in Utah and that they didn't have any positive cases in Utah County.

Council Member Kurt Ostler asked Donna Cardon, Library Director, about e-books so that people could go online to download books to an e-reader. Ms. Cardon said that was true. If the library did close they would invest more in e-books. She said the library currently only has some e-books for children, but that most were for adults. She said there were 625 picture books available to children through Overdrive, compared to their hard copy collection of children's books which totals 8,000. She said she was most concerned about providing books for the kids.

Mayor Rod Mann said that he felt they could do the drive-in check out. Donna Cardon, Library Director, said she would be willing to do that if that was the Council's suggestion. She said they would create an online form for patrons to fill out their name, library card number and the books they wanted. Staff would fill the request, check the books out and have them ready to hand to patrons.

There was concern by the Council that employees might be at risk when checking books back in if the books had been in the home of individuals with COVID-19.

Ms. Cardon explained they had already instituted a policy where employees would use gloves and wipe down books with bleach solution.

Council Member Scott L. Smith said they should try out the drive-up, but if that doesn't work then shut down the library. He cited a news source that said that half of America will contract COVID-19 but countered that had not been the case in China. He stated that there was some hysteria and that it would be better to do things in stages and not assume the worst like everyone else.

Council Member Kim Rodela questioned what American Fork was doing with their library.

Nathan Crane, City Administrator, said Pleasant Grove will close their senior center, rec center and library; Provo did not; Lehi has closed their library, literacy center, and senior center; Springville had not decided yet on their library yet.

Council Member Kurt Ostler said that according to the American Fork website, the library was open to check in and check out materials, however all programs, meetings and events were cancelled until March 28th. They encouraged the use of online resources and to place holds on desired items so that they could be processed and placed on a holds shelf for pick up.

Donna Cardon, Library Director, said that could be an option for the Highland Library. She said the virus doesn't live very long on paper so they could quarantine books for 24 hours before putting back on the shelf.

Council Member Kurt Ostler recommended the books be quarantined for 48 hours.

Council Member Kim Rodela agreed with a 48-hour quarantine.

Council Member Brittney Bills agreed with shutting down the library

The Council agreed to close the doors and all programs, but to have a grab and go book bags, wash books and 48-hour book quarantine, with the intent to purchase more e-books. There was discussion about the value of the service the library could provide given the closure of schools and books.

Mayor Rod Mann talked about a seminar that was cancelled that night, as well as the negative impacts that screen time has on the body, including its impact on sleep.

The Council discussed more of the logistics of how to implement the drive-through pick up for the library.

Council Member Kurt Ostler recommended closing the entire community center for everything, as well as the Main Office and to keep the gates down. He asked about the policy not to take credit card information over the phone.

Nathan Crane, City Administrator, said they currently have a policy against taking credit card information over the phone, but that they would like to temporarily suspend that policy to allow citizens to make utility payments remotely. A council member asked if residents couldn't currently make payments online. A staff member said, that was available, but they wanted to give people an additional option if they were not good at online platforms.

Council Member Kurt Ostler said they have cancelled all events for this week and will revisit the Easter egg hunt in two weeks. He asked about essential meetings, including if City Council Meetings would remain open.

Mayor Rod Mann said meetings would remain open, but that they would encouraged people to use the live streaming. Council Member Ostler asked if there would be a way for people to ask question through the live stream. Nathan Crane, City Administrator, said they would try and have people submit questions through email and that there was a way for people to leave comments during the live stream itself.

Council Member Brittney Bills asked if these restrictions were for the next two weeks, to be revisited at the next City Council Meeting or if they were indefinite.

Council Member Scott L. Smith said they should revisit them every two weeks.

Nathan Crane, City Administrator, said it was an ever-evolving issue. He said that if it lasts eight weeks, then they'll have to have another discussion.

Donna Cardon, Library Director, asked if the changes would be instituted on Monday.

Nathan Crane, City Administrator, said they will have to decide when restrictions will be implemented.

Mayor Rod Mann wanted to know how long it will take to change the library. Donna Cardon, Library Director, said they could figure out the system tomorrow, but that they may need supplies such as book bags to make these changes. She felt she could get the form up by Monday with the first pick up later in the week. She said it will take a little while to figure everything out.

Council Member Scott L. Smith said that the decision as to if they will meet as a Council together will depend on what happens locally. He said if the virus is detected everywhere, they will have to meet from home. However, he said, he felt it was hard to have council meetings on the phone. He felt if you're sick don't come and call in, otherwise, keep your hands washed and come in for meetings.

Erin Wells, Assistant City Administrator, said that work-from-home is a possibility and they are looking into it.

The Council felt this was up to City Administrative Staff to decide. It was stated that while several staff have their own offices, people in shared office spaces would be more vulnerable.

Council Member Brittney Bills asked what they can do to help.

Erin Wells, Assistant City Administrator, had drafted a press release and the Mayor had drafted a letter as well. She asked the Council to re-share on their own social media and to help communicate with residents.

Council Member Kurt Ostler asked if Brian Gwilliam, Police Chief, has other ideas.

Brian Gwilliam, Police Chief, said they are following the same procedures as fire. They are limiting entry to homes and won't be responding to medical calls unless needed. They have cancelled all station tours and fingerprinting until further notice. In addition, they are promoting good hygiene, etc.

Council Member Kurt Ostler asked what can be done as a city if there are residents who don't have enough food, etc.

Brian Gwilliam, Police Chief, said they have very little storage themselves and would have to go to the stores, but they will help where they can. He said that they live in a great community where neighbors are willing to share if someone is truly in need.

Council Member Kurt Ostler, asked to please thank the police officers.

Council Member Kim Rodela asked if they should close the library now or if it was okay to stay open until Monday.

Council Member Scott L. Smith said he felt they could stay open until Monday.

Council Member Kurt Ostler said the Governor said business could stay open till Monday.

Mayor Rod Mann was concerned about budget items that needed to be passed at the next Public Safety Board Meeting.

Nathan Crane, City Administrator, said that the meeting wasn't scheduled until the second week of April so they would decide about if it could be held at the Council's next meeting on March 31st. He said that if the City continues to provide the meetings via live stream they needed to compensate Scott for doing so.

One of the Council Members phoning in asked about the requirements for providing closed captioning. Erin Wells, Assistant City Administrator, said they would investigate technology for live streaming. It was her understanding that YouTube, the service they intended to use, did provide closed captioning. However, the closed captioning doesn't happen live, but afterwards.

Council Member Scott L. Smith said this didn't make sense to him because they don't provide closed captioning, or have someone signing for someone who is hearing impaired currently. Erin Wells, Assistant City Administrator, said she understood that, but she did think there was an accessibility requirement that they should be meeting anyway.

Council Member Kurt Ostler said he has some contacts that could help.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Kurt Ostler MOVED to adjourn the Emergency Session and Council Member Scott L. Smith SECONDED the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

I, Stephannie Cottle, City Recorder of Highland City, hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent a true, accurate and complete record of the meeting held on March 12, 2020. This document constitutes the official minutes for the Highland City Council Meeting.



Stephannie Cottle
City Recorder

