

April 9, 2020

MEETING HELD TELEPHONICALLY DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

City Attorney Leif Johnson discussed that several aspects of the open public meetings act have been suspended due to COVID-19. Remote meetings are allowed, and the public should be able to call in via phone, but no physical location is required for the time being. Council meetings may be conducted remotely, but Council should vote to approve remote meetings.

L. Johnson discussed that due technical limitations, it will not be clear until after the conclusion of the meetings, whether a satisfactory audio recording can be captured, and asked that Council carefully review the minutes of the meeting. **We won't know this until after the meeting concludes. With that in mind, it is more important than ever that Council review the clerk's minutes before approval at the next meeting, as those may be the only record of this meeting.** **L. Johnson** discussed the requirements for conducting the meeting verbally, including identification of speakers, and aspect Council votes and motions, wherein the Mayor will poll Council for responses. **L. Johnson** stated that is possible to hold an executive session remotely if Council deems it necessary.

L. Johnson suggested that Council move to allow tonight's regular Council meeting to occur remotely, either by telephone or internet access, and that if a Councilmember wishes, they may make such a motion by saying "so moved."

A motion was made by **Councilors Chaplin/Stavig** to allow Council meetings to occur remotely, either by telephone or internet access. All in favor; motion carried.

L. Johnson stated that it is possible for Council to revoke the allowing of Council meetings to occur remotely, at any time.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Steve Sexton called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members present: Bill Aslett, Keith Chaplin, J. DeGloria, R. DeGloria, Scott Green, Chris Loving, and James Stavig. Staff present: Kelly Blaine, Janice Burwash, Geoff Hawes, Leif Johnson, Mike Luvera, Kristen Morrison, Marv Pulst, Joe Stewart, Rob Toth, and Greg Young.

April 9, 2020

MINUTES:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2020 Council meeting by **Councilors Stavig/R. DeGloria. Councilors Aslett, Chaplin, J. DeGloria, Green** in favor. **Councilor Loving** sited a correction regarding his comment on the Council Chambers meetings, wherein he would like for the City's computer equipment to allow the public to watch or refer back to the meetings as they're recorded in the Council Chambers, versus what is recorded in the minutes, which state that he would like for the meetings to be viewable on television. **Councilor Loving** stated that he votes in favor of approving the minutes of the March 13, 2020 meeting with the correction as discussed. With corrections as described by **Councilor Loving**, all in favor; motion carried.

AUDIT OF BILLS:

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/Green** to approve Accounts Payable invoices to be paid as of March 26, 2020 in the amount of \$449,271.17, and April 9, 2020 in the amount of \$183,536.20 and Payroll Expenses for Pay Period Ending March 25, 2020 in the amount of \$676,636.93 and March 31, 2020 in the amount of \$445,298.81. All in favor; motion carried.

Councilor Aslett discussed the pay period adjustment wherein the new City pay dates will be the 10th and 25th date of each month, in order for payroll staff to process payroll more efficiently, and that the unions and employees have been informed of these changes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No Public Comments.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilor Chaplin stated that he wishes everyone well, hopes they're safe and healthy at home, and thanked City staff for "holding down the ship" during the pandemic.

Councilor Aslett discussed emails he has sent to Councilmembers with information from the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) regarding the potential levels of State and federal funding and revenue resources which may be available to the City.

MAYOR'S UPDATE:

Mayor Sexton reviewed the status of City staff, in terms of some working remotely, some availing themselves to the federal leave programs, some working limited hours for required operations including street sweeping, and payroll and payables staff continuing their operations. **Mayor Sexton** discussed his communications with the Governor, local State Representatives, and Peter King, Director of AWC in order to request that the

April 9, 2020

State relax some guidelines on restricted funds such as REET and Lodging Tax, so that those funds could be used to continue to provide critical levels of service to citizens, and discussed AWC's compiling of a formal request for the Governor to do so.

Mayor Sexton asked that **Fire Marshal Kelly Blaine** give an update on the City's Emergency Operations Center in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Fire Marshall Kelly Blaine discussed the City's EOC, which was activated on March 9, 2020 in order to provide logistical support for the City's Police, Fire, EMS, and Sewer functions. **Blaine** relayed the most current information from the Skagit County Health Department regarding the data on COVID-19. **Blaine** described expenditures for health and safety measures, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other materials for maintaining social distancing guidelines as described by the CDC, and stated the current dollar amount spent on such is \$12,171.27. **Blaine** discussed the great number of generous donations by local businesses in assisting the City in these efforts. **Blaine** discussed the collaboration with neighboring municipalities and County Sheriffs Department, which are all working in partnership to assist in logistic needs for all first responders in Skagit County. **Blaine** discussed the current operations of the EOC in terms of staffing levels and function.

Police Chief Mike Luvera discussed the current operations of the Police Department, wherein staff and officers have been separated physically and, shifts hours, and vehicle usage adjusted so that social distancing recommendations can be maintained. **Chief Luvera** described plans which are in place with neighboring agencies in the event that any agency were to have patrol impacts due to COVID-19 illness. **Chief Luvera** discussed the shift in types of calls, and the efforts in limiting of in-person contact.

Fire Chief Rob Toth discussed the current operations of the Fire Department, wherein staff has been physically separated, and the changes in calls, with call volumes down approximately 15%. **Chief Toth** discussed contingency plans which are in place with neighboring agencies, so that if an agency is greatly affected by COVID-19, support is available.

City Administrator Greg Young stated that he is proud of staff for pulling together during this COVID-19 event.

Councilor Green praised efforts being made by staff and for City businesses' contributions to the City's operations in this pandemic.

April 9, 2020

Councilor Chaplin thanked all for their efforts. **Chaplin** stated that he has been asked by neighbors if there's anything they can do other than stay home.

Councilor R. DeGloria praised the explanations of current events from those in public safety.

Councilor Stavig thanked staff for keeping the City functioning, and **Interim City Administrator Greg Young** for updating him on current events via telephone.

Councilor Loving praised staff, especially Kelly Blaine for their efforts during this time.

Councilor Aslett thanked staff for keeping the City functioning, and praised **Police Chief Mike Luvera** for a public announcement update which was shared widely on social media, and ways in which social media can be used to distribute information quickly and widely.

Councilor J. DeGloria thanked all on the front lines for their efforts, and expressed his support.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

No Special Presentation.

PROCLAMATION:

No Proclamation.

COMMITTEE & BOARD REPORTS:

No Committee & Board Reports.

OFFICERS REPORTS:

Mayor Sexton discussed the process for which Officers Reports at the next regular Council meeting, whereat all Department Heads will give a status update.

Finance Director Joe Stewart discussed he change in the payroll date, and the reasons for the date changes, including the need for additional time to review payroll before processing and cleaning up pay periods in terms of dates to eliminate errors. **Stewart** updated Council on staffing levels, and discussed how the Finance Department is continuing to provide payroll and Accounts Payable services. **Stewart** discussed COVID-19 related expense tracking and types of leave.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

April 9, 2020

No Unfinished Business

NEW BUSINESS:

Bid Award for Sewer Pump Replacement

Public Works Director Marv Pulst discussed the need for the replacement of one of three pumps located at the pump station located on Avon Allen Road. **Pulst** discussed the bid process, in which the City received two bids, and has found that the bid from Whitney Equipment Company's bid is the low bid and meets specifications.

A motion was made by **Councilors J. DeGloria /Aslett** to award the sewer pump replacement bid to Whitney Equipment Company in the amount of \$64,730.02. All in favor; motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilor J.DeGloria encouraged all, including those listening in the community to maintain social distancing, that we will get through this together, and thanked first responders.

Mayor Sexton adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Joe Stewart
Finance Director

Steve Sexton
Mayor