

**City of Hood River
City Council – Special Meeting
March 19, 2020**

Council: Mayor Kate McBride, Mark Zanmiller, Megan Saunders, Tim Counihan, Jessica Metta, Erick Haynie, Gladys Rivera

Staff: City Manager Rachael Fuller, City Attorney Dan Kearns, Finance Director/ACM Will Norris, Planning Director Dustin Nilsen, Sr. Planner Kevin Liburdy, Fire Chief Leonard Damian, Police Chief Neal Holste, City Recorder Jennifer Gray

Absent:

I OPEN SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor McBride called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Fuller stated this meeting is being held remotely to support social distancing. The public was notified about the special meeting and a speaker phone is set up at City Hall, per open meeting laws. There is no one in the audience but there are a number of people dialed into the meeting, including City staff.

II ROLL CALL

III DECLARATION OF A LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY, R. FULLER

Fuller stated the purpose of this item is to ratify the emergency declaration that was signed effective March 17, 2020. The emergency declaration is preempt of action that allows the City to respond to the emergency and to the extraordinary circumstances caused by COVID-19. Specific steps that the City is taking at this time includes suspending utility shut offs, suspending late fees for payments and makes it clear the City's ability to request State and Federal funds in response to this. On the operations side, the City is maintaining essential services, utility operations, police, fire, and EMS. In order to do so, the City has put in safety protocols that include abiding by social distancing guidelines, PPE for first responders, contingency plans for staff and for those first and essential responders. The City has also closed facilities to the public, except for the Police Department. City services that are legally required and otherwise are being maintained. The City is changing the way it works; working virtually, remotely and limited staff at City Hall. The City is collaborating with community partners on this response, via the Emergency Operation Center at the County and the Joint Information Center at the County. The getreadygorge.com is a website that was put into place by the County and the EOC to share information with the community. These are scary times and unprecedented. How the City responds is important. The City is following guidelines from Public Health, including washing hands, cover coughs, and stay home except for essential activities like grocery shopping. Fuller added everyone needs to show up for others. Communicate with those who are impacted financially and the vulnerable populations. Also, including health care workers, first responders and all of those providing essential services at this time. Hood River has a very strong community and strong community partnerships. Nonprofits are stepping up, schools, County, Chamber and Mid-Columbia Economic Development District all taking extraordinary measures to respond to the community at this time.

Mayor McBride thanked staff for being proactive on creating the resolution this week. Everything has been changing very rapidly and she believes this was an appropriate thing to do in light of everything that is going on.

Mayor McBride stated she would like Council to have some discussion before a motion is made.

Councilor Haynie thanked City staff. He received a specific question regarding this declaration; is this a shelter in place order? He believes the answer is no but he wanted to ask.

Fuller stated this is not a shelter in place order. This allows the City to change some of the services that is provided, such as suspending utility shut offs and suspend late fees.

Councilor Saunders supports the resolution.

Councilor Rivera also support the resolution. She has one suggestion. On the suggested motion and on the document, she would like it to state COVID-19 rather than Novel Corona Pandemic. She agrees with Councilor Saunders, she believes there are other actions the City could be looking into.

Fuller asked Council if they hear about needs in the community that are not being met, please forward them to her, so the City can be mentioned at the coordinating calls she and the Mayor participate in. The City's role is to share the community wide information and to participate in the community response, in addition to maintaining essential services.

Councilor Zanmiller stated he knows the school has volunteers helping with food. If the City can be a clearing house for information about where there are other volunteer opportunities or requirements. This would help prevent people from rushing out and accidentally creating a crowd that is not necessary.

Mayor McBride stated volunteers was discussed on Monday in a meeting with Barbara Ayers. With the joint information that is getting set up, volunteer sign up was something that was discussed. They will be working on a process on where volunteers can sign up and be placed.

Councilor Counihan stated the City should do whatever it can do make sure the community comes out of this as whole as possible.

Councilor Metta stated in terms of small business support, MCEDD is using [MCEDD.org/ready](https://mcedd.org/ready) as a site for information for businesses and employers.

Mayor McBride thanked staff for weathering this so well, for being calm and methodical about everything that is being done and decisions being made. She thanked Council for attending today's meeting. She feels the date of April 14 in the declaration seems a little too early and that should be extended out further but this will be revisited at a future meeting.

Fuller stated there is a provision to extend the emergency declaration, should it be necessary.

Motion: I move to approve Resolution 2020-04 ratifying the City Manager's declaration of emergency pursuant to HRMC 2.48.050 and ORD 401.309,

Authorizing the City Manager to respond as appropriate to the Public Health hazard conditions associated with the Novel Coronavirus pandemic and with the one edit suggested by Councilor Rivera adding COVID-19 to the resolution.

First: Saunders
Second: Rivera
Discussion: None
Vote: Motion passed (roll called)
Ayes: McBride, Zanmiller, Saunders, Counihan, Metta, Haynie
Nays: None
Abstentions: None
Excused: None

Mayor McBride noted there are 64 participants in the meeting. She thanked the public for listening to the meeting.

IV ADJOURN – Adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:28 p.m.



Jennifer Gray, City Recorder



Kate McBride, Mayor

Approved by City Council on April 13, 2020