

Fertile City Council Minutes
Special Meeting
March 19, 2020

The Fertile City Council held a special meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 11 a.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens, Council members Stanton Wang, Todd Wise, and Linda Widrig. The meeting was held by teleconference with Council members Wise and Widrig present in Council Chambers and Mayor Wilkens and Council member Wang present by telephone as allowed by the emergency guidelines in place at the State level due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Also present were City Administrator Lisa Liden and Public Works Director Kevin Nephew. The purpose of the meeting was to approve a local emergency declaration, closing the community center and City offices to the public and pay for City employees during the pandemic.

The meeting was called to order at 11:02 a.m. by Mayor Wilkens.

The first item up for discussion was approval of a local emergency declaration. Administrator Liden explained that the declaration was necessary in order to be eligible for State or Federal funding should the City be hit hard by the pandemic and have additional costs in handling the emergency. Discussion was held on whether there should be an end date on the declaration and Council member Wise recommended not putting an end date due to the uncertainty of when the pandemic could affect local operations.

A motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the passage of the Mayoral Declaration Declaring a Local Emergency. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and put to a roll call vote. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion was carried.

The next item up for discussion was closing the City Office and the Community Center to the public. Council member Wise asked about closing the park bathrooms as well. Administrator Liden noted that there is no lock on the south door of the park building so bathroom access couldn't be readily closed but a sign could be made up letting the public know that the bathrooms were not regularly sanitized and for the public to use them at their own risk.

A motion was made by Council member Wise to close the City Office and the Community Center to the public until further notice. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and put to a roll call vote. All voted in favor of the motion and it was carried.

The next item up for discussion was staff sick leave and pay for absences due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Administrator Liden explained that only full-time employees have sick time benefits to use if they get sick. She noted also that if a shelter in place order was given by the Governor that City employees would likely be deemed essential and required to work. However, not all duties of City staff would be deemed essential and if staff could complete essential duties with reduced work hours Liden was wondering if sick time would have to be used to cover lost hours.

After discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Widrig to pay all City employees for their regularly scheduled hours if they are off work or working reduced hours due

to the COVID-19 pandemic. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and put to a roll call vote. All voted in favor and the motion was carried.

The final item up for discussion was the matter of late fees and water shut offs for residents. Administrator Liden noted that many cities were waiving late fees at this time and were also suspending all water shuts due to delinquency.

A motion was made by Council member Wise, seconded by Council member Widrig to suspend late fees and water shut offs due to delinquency until the declared emergency is over. A roll call vote was taken and all voted in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 on a motion by Council member Wise.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator