

MINUTES OF AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2020, AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 2828 SHERIDAN ROAD, ZION, ILLINOIS

.....

Mayor McKinney called the Emergency meeting to order.

On call of the roll the following answered present: Commissioners McDowell, and Fischer. Commissioners Frierson and Holmes attended the meeting by phone. A quorum was present. Also attending by phone: City Administrator David Knabel and City Attorneys James Vasselli and Mike Muthleb.

Mayor McKinney led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor McKinney asked that they take a moment to acknowledge the First Responders throughout the Country who are battling the coronavirus.

AGENDA CHANGES

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell to accept the City Council meeting agenda as presented. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Frierson, aye; Fischer, aye; McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments. Commissioner McDowell suggested the possibility of looking into using “Zoom” in lieu of attending by phone. Mayor McKinney stated there had been previous discussions about the possibility of using laptops or IPADs that have cameras.

ORDINANCE/CITY OF ZION PERSONNEL PLAN

Commissioner McDowell stated the temporary personnel plan temporarily closes the Building Department to the public but is available by appointment. He asked how the public will know they need to make an appointment. Administrator Knabel stated City Hall personnel will still be available on a daily basis and can issue permits in the Building Department, they will be going off site to meet in the parking lot for paperwork. They will try and handle as many calls as they can when they come in. Although the facilities are closed to the public City Hall is still operating. Commissioner McDowell asked how the public will know that they will need an appointment to interact with the Building Department. Mayor McKinney stated they have been putting the information on the City Page and the COVID-19 Facebook Page which is being updated regularly. He has also received calls from people that do not have internet is updating them by phone. He stated they are also working on putting notices in the water bills to let people know how the City is operating while being closed to the public. Commissioner McDowell asked if the Building Department was still issuing building permits. Administrator Knabel stated they are handling them on a case by case basis. They are working with contractors to provide pictures and to document their work. The contractors are familiar with the Code so they are granting approvals based on that method. They are making sure people have proper facilities within their home. If it is something that is not urgent or if there is a need for an in person inspection they are offering this as a secondary option. Either the contractor or homeowner may be present but will not have more people gather than necessary. People can still apply for permits but are asking them to be patient on getting the paperwork and approving the work. Commissioner McDowell wanted to confirm that emergency repairs can be acted upon and to call the Building Department after. Administrator Knabel stated they should contact the Building Department first. The voice message in the office of the Building Department indicates that they are checking messages regularly and will get back to them as soon as possible. They are coordinating with homeowners so they may get the work done without the typical in person inspections.

Commissioner Holmes asked if the recorded message provides the public with the correct contact numbers. Administrator Knabel stated each individual department has their own message but he is not sure what each message says. He will check to make sure proper contact numbers are noted. The website lists the contact numbers for each department. Commissioner Frierson asked if rental inspections were being discontinued. Administrator Knabel stated the program has been put on hold and any rental inspections previously scheduled have been rescheduled. Mayor McKinney stated there is someone in the department every day and messages are checked daily. He stated the inspectors will still be driving around. This is a good opportunity for residents to be able to clean up their properties without fear of being fined.

Commissioner Fischer asked Administrator Knabel to explain to the public the details of the personnel plan that is being approved for the month of April. Administrator Knabel stated the Building Department has four inspectors that will be rotating on a daily basis. They will be doing external code compliance but will not issue fines or tickets but will still be notifying individuals. Administrative staff will also be operating on an alternating basis. Finance will have three Account Technologists that will be rotating duties based on payroll and bill processing and a part-time staff as well as the Assistant Director of Finance. Department Heads will be in on an “as needed” basis. They are encouraged to do whatever they can from home. Public Works has been directed to pair off in teams of two for both the Water Department and Street Department so as to have contact with only one other individual daily. Police and Fire will continue to operate as they have been. The Chiefs are in constant contact with each other on statuses and hot spots to try and limit exposure to employees and are keeping up with the recommendations of the Health Department. Public Service has been suspended until at least April 15th. He stated they will revisit the plan on April 30th but for now they do not want services to fall behind more than they have to. A plan was needed to give direction and stability to the employees. Commissioner McDowell asked in worst case scenario if employees get sick and the department becomes short-staffed will the temporary plan provide coverage or will they have to come back and revise the plan. Administrator Knabel stated the plan is for the hours that employees are expected to work. The Continuity of Operations Plan that was adopted addresses the continuity of services if different levels of exposure are hit which is handled internally. There have been discussions with surrounding communities’ regarding coverage of services. This plan is for personnel hours and expected work from the City as a whole.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell that an Ordinance (20-O-17) be passed approving the City of Zion (Temporary) Personnel plan through April 30, 2020. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Frierson, aye; Holmes, aye Fischer, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

Mayor McKinney stated it is important that people abide by the Shelter in Place order issued by the Governor. It is not a joke and encouraged the public to apply the social distancing guidelines as the numbers keep growing in Lake County. The information is available online on the Lake County Health Department website as well as the City’s coronavirus page which is updated regularly.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, it was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Fischer and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 3:25 p.m. Motion carried.

City Clerk