

## MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS

March 17, 2020

On March 17, 2020 at 5:30PM the Board of City Commissioners met via telephone, with Commissioner Marquardt present in the Mayor's Conference Room of the City/County Office Building, located at 221 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The purpose of the special meeting was to discuss impacts to the organization relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those present included: Mayor Bakken (telephone), Commissioner Marquardt, Commissioner Zenker (telephone), Commissioner Guy (telephone), and Commissioner Oban (telephone).

Renae Moch provided an update to the Commission on the activities occurring within Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health (BBPH) beginning with March 13, 2020. Activities include the Department of Operations Center located at the BBPH building, daily briefings with staff and the North Dakota Department of Health officials, and communication efforts to share with local media and the community.

Robert McConnell provided an update on guidelines for City of Bismarck employees. The guidelines include information on personal hygiene, travel guidance, and links to the CDC website and the North Dakota Department of Health website.

Discussion was held regarding part-time employees within the organization and what factors will be evaluated to determine if these employees will be paid during interruptions in their regular work routines. Keith Hunke indicated it is too early to determine the outcome and it will need to be adjusted in the future. Mr. Hunke noted there are too many variables to determine when this issue will be addressed again; he added that information changes daily, as more is learned about the impacts of the COVID-19 virus.

Commissioner Guy questioned what will happen to employees who become ill and if the city can allow for a negative leave balance. Janelle Combs, City Attorney, informed everyone that the City can allow for a negative leave balance, but overtime is not allowed to recoup the leave. Attorney Combs noted there is a need for guidance on how far to allow the leave balance to be below zero. Commissioner Guy directed staff to provide information on what other cities are doing and options to consider at the March 24<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

An update was provided by Keith Hunke on how upcoming meetings will be handled. All advisory board meetings have been postponed at this time. There will only be 10 people allowed in meetings at this time, staff will be asked to help with the flow of meetings.

Department directors have been advised to attend City Commission Meetings if their department has an item on the regular agenda. In addition, for those with items on the consent agenda, they are to contact the Commissioner holding the portfolio prior to the meeting to address any questions relating to those items. Janelle Combs informed the Commission that the North Dakota League of Cities is working to coordinate with larger cities to determine guidance for public meetings. The public cannot be stopped from attending these meetings.

Commissioner Oban inquired in City Commission meetings can be cancelled. He noted, it might send a wrong message to the [public by meeting. Janelle Combs informed the Commission that meetings can be cancelled and meetings can be held to address priority business. Commissioner Oban thinks it would be logical to cancel the March 24, 2020 meeting. It would allow for a pause until the meeting on April 14, 2020. Attorney Combs noted these are public hearings salted for the March 24, meeting which will need to be held.

With no other business the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.