

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE WEST BRANCH CITY HALL, 121 N. FOURTH STREET ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020.

Mayor Frechette called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Paul Frechette, Council Members Mike Jackson, Chris Powley, Ellen Pugh, Rusty Showalter, and Cathy Zimmerman.

Absent: Joanne Bennett

Other officers present: City Manager Frank Goodroe, Clerk/Treasurer John Dantzer, and City Attorney Greg Meihn

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Mayor Frechette noted the reason for the special meeting was to update Council and come up with an action plan in response to the national emergency and Governor’s executive orders.

Manager Goodroe noted the updates that he had received throughout Tuesday and the shut downs that other government agencies are installing. Manager Goodroe noted that he made the decision to change the hours of operation as follows:

- City Hall- Monday-Friday 8:00 am-12:00 pm with no public allowed inside the building except workers.
- Public works – Monday-Friday 7:00 am-12:00 pm with no entering of residents homes except for emergencies.
- Wastewater Plant – Monday –Friday 7:00 am-12:00 pm.
- Police Dept. – no changes to hours.

In addition all public restrooms will be closed, and the recycling center will be closed.

Member Jackson asked if the work load would be able to be accomplished on a shorter work day. Manager Goodroe noted they have plenty of work to fill the entire day but it was made as a way to limit the workers exposure. Manager Goodroe noted al employees would still be required to come in if needed for emergencies.

Member Zimmerman ~~noted it was her opinion that regular hours should be maintained or that no hours should be worked if there are health concerns~~–asked for rationale as to City staff working full or half days.

Attorney Meihn spoke on how other communities that he deals with are handling the situation and what the Governor is hoping to achieve. Attorney Meihn also noted that the most recent executive order calls for the cancelling of all unessential meetings and lifting the Open Meeting Act requirements to allow for remote meetings.

Member Showalter asked about how overtime would be handled and it was noted that overtime would only be paid if a worker is required to come in at a time other than their normal work day.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY PUGH, TO APPROVE THE GUIDELINES AS ESTABLISHED BY THE CITY MANAGER UNTIL THOSE ARE NO LONGER NEEDED AND TO ALLOW OVERTIME IF A WORKER IS REQUIRED TO COME IN OTHER THAN THEIR NORMAL WORK DAY.

Yes — Frechette, Jackson, Powley, Pugh, Showalter, Zimmerman

No – None

Absent – Bennett

Motion carried

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Mayor Frechette noted that all information approved will be passed onto employees by Manager Goodroe and any other updates will be disseminated to Council as they come up.

Member Pugh asked about the upcoming Board of Review meetings and it was noted by Attorney Meihn that the Governor has currently not extended Board of Review requirements so those meetings would have to still go on. Clerk Dantzer noted he had been in contact with City Assessor Jim Van Wormer and social distancing will be practiced for that meeting.

It was also noted that all nonessential meetings of boards will be cancelled and City staff will work on the ability to hold future City Council meetings remotely.

Member Showalter noted the need to have a plan in place if an employee is found to test positive for the virus.

Member Jackson noted the need to have a plan if a shelter in place is ordered by the Governor.

Mayor Frechette adjourned the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Paul Frechette, Mayor

John Dantzer, Clerk