

CITY OF FENTON
625 NEW SMIZER MILL ROAD
FENTON, MO 63026
MINUTES
EMERGENCY SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020
7:25 P.M.

Mayor Brasses stated in light of the current public health crisis and the Federal, State, and County Emergency Declarations, and in accord with the provisions of Sec. 610.020, RSMo. and the City's policy for meetings via videoconferencing adopted via R-20-01, the Board of Aldermen recognizes that it would be dangerous and impractical, if not impossible, for its meeting to be physically accessible to the public. The Board also recognizes the need for the public's business to be attended to in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare and in accordance with the County's stay-at-home order, in which the City is "strongly encouraged to remain open." In order to balance both the need for continuity of government and protection of the health and safety of our residents, businesses, persons, and employees, this meeting of the Board of Aldermen will not be open to in-person public attendance in person.

City Attorney Erin P. Seele stated an advance notice of the full 24-hours was not able to be given due to event requiring immediate official action and Staff and the attorney was not being able to complete the required information and research earlier and that notice was provided as soon as it was learned that Board action may be required. Alderman Clauss made a motion that there is good cause warranting an emergency meeting of the Board justifying less than 24 hours' notice. The motion was seconded by Alderman Wisbrock. Upon a vote being taken, the motion was passed unanimously by the Board of Aldermen.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bob Brasses called the special meeting to order at 7:25 p.m. via Zoom Teleconference (RSMO 610.015) due to the recent State of Emergency (as specified in the notice above and announced by the Mayor) on Thursday, April 16, 2020.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Jane Hungler called the roll:

Alderman Paul Seemayer - <i>participated via zoom</i>	Alderman Chris Clauss - <i>participated via zoom</i>
Alderman Andrew Sobey, Jr. - <i>participated via zoom</i>	Alderman Robin Huels - <i>participated via zoom</i>
Alderman Brian Wisbrock - <i>participated via zoom</i>	Alderman Richard Patton - <i>participated via zoom</i>
Alderman Joe Maurath - <i>participated via zoom</i>	Alderman Susan Jokerst - <i>participated via zoom</i>

Eight Aldermen were present at the opening of the meeting.

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT

Mayor Bob Brasses - *participated via zoom*
City Attorney Erin P. Seele, Esq. - *participated via zoom*
City Administrator Andrea N. Finkbiner - *participated via zoom*
City Clerk Jane Hungler - *participated via zoom*
City Planner Amy Starck - *participated via zoom*
Parks and Recreation Director Tye Lydon - *participated via zoom*
Public Works Director Matthew Budd - *participated via zoom*

This Special Meeting is being called for:

Discussion of projected reduction of revenues of the City due to COVID-19 pandemic and consideration of temporary layoff of certain positions.

City Administrator Nikki Finkbiner went over the information included in the Board's package including reviewing the financial negative economic impact of COVID-19 and the reduced work available for the Parks department due to the forced closures and social distancing orders from the state and county.

Nikki explained that there will be \$90,000± loss in revenue from the Park and Recreation Day Camp program alone and that RiverChase has stopped accepting reservations to then only have to issue refunds. It was noted RiverChase and related park programs have been closed since March 17.

Discussion ensued with status of the pools. Park and Recreation Director Tye Lydon shared the indoor pool is currently drained and was already scheduled to be closed throughout the summer for the tear-down and installation of a new indoor pool playground and resurfacing of the spa. Midwest Pool Management is performing maintenance on this pool. Outdoor pool is also drained and has just had acid wash completed. Chair re-strapping is on hold due to COVID-19.

Park and Recreation Director Tye Lydon also shared that he has been participating in local Park and Recreation aquatic webinars and they discussed needing to set a drop-dead date of when the pool must be open to make it worth opening. He discussed that date is normally July 4th but schools may be resuming in early August, which may further complicate the season. Tye is not sure one month of opening would be beneficial, as a lot of summer staff is school aged and other expenses. Tye further stated he did not believe the pool would just open but that it would be slow with restrictions and believed most of Riverchase would be that way with Day Camps reopening last.

Anticipated revenue loss the City is projecting is 15% from closed businesses and a 50% reduction in the businesses that remain open. Alderman Maurath noted, for the record, that there is an anticipated \$3.3 million reduction in our current fiscal year revenues and that Alderman Maurath believed the impact to the City would likely be greater than that projection. The Mayor and other Aldermen expressed agreement with Alderman Maurath's prediction based on what they have seen and heard.

Discussion continued regarding high traffic concerns if park programs would reopen and how to implement social distancing and health safety precautions. Also, it was noted that getting mobilization of Staff may be able to be done in under a week's notice for RiverChase Staff but not sure of lifeguards as they are contracted, but Tye assumed the same. It was noted by Tye and City Administrator Nikki Finkbiner that RiverChase was being very cautious in purchases because it is a gamble as to when programs could again resume and if the vendor chosen would even be operational in two months.

City Administrator Nikki Finkbiner shared that the Mayor, Chairman of Personnel, President of the Board of Aldermen and she had met the evening before to review the projected financials and the dwindling duties/projects in the Park and Recreation Department caused by the forced closures. After much review and discussion, temporary layoff is recommended.

Discussion ensued with concerns of extended timeline of reopening businesses, work shortage and ideas whether any work could be found, and continued loss of revenue. Alderman Clauss shared that this is a very difficult situation and decision. The Board is the steward of the City and taxpayer funds, we have to look at all aspects, there is not enough work and looking at a loss of \$3.3 million in revenue.

If employees are furloughed, they generally do keep their benefits at a cost to the City, and they can file unemployment. If temporary layoff, their benefits would end but would be eligible for COBRA and they can file unemployment. Either way, the City is looking at a reduction in force due to lack of work. It was noted that the cost of continuing benefits would be \$6,923.62 per month.

Park and Recreation Director Tye Lydon asked if temporary laid off, would they have to use PTO benefits and if returned would they have probation period. City Administrator Nikki Finkbiner replied, benefits would end, eligible for COBRA, and they would be paid out their PTO time. Tye asked when this would take effect if chosen. Nikki replied that would be the Board's decision.

City Administrator Nikki Finkbiner recommended if the Board move forward with this that the Park and Recreation Director and bookkeeper remain.

Alderman Sobey inquired if there are reimbursement programs available to the City. City Administrator Nikki Finkbiner stated they had looked into that very much but that, as of now, there was no local funding available. First stimulus package only 2 cities in Missouri qualified, as they have to have population of 500,000. There may be direct cost expenses through FEMA and City has already submitted the required information to start an application.

Alderman Huels inquired how many employees this would affect. City Administrator Nikki Finkbiner replied 7, 6 supervisors and 1 Rec. 3.

There was discussion of unemployment and a possible extra \$600 per week to workers on unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic and extends unemployment eligibility by up to 13 weeks, and it was Staff's understanding that wage charges for rate effect to City is waived during COVID-19.

Following much discussion, Mayor Brasses recommended temporary layoff. Alderman Clauss made a motion to approve temporary layoff of 7 positions at RiverChase, with the thought that if and when possible to reemploy them, the City will. The motion was seconded by Alderman Wisbrock.

Discussion of effective date, City property collection and payroll end date ensued and Alderman Clauss amended the motion to add effective date of Monday, April 20, 2020. The amended motion was seconded by Alderman Wisbrock.

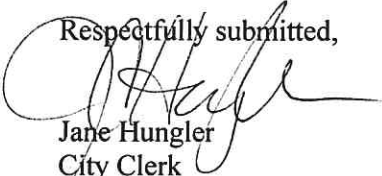
Upon the roll being called, the Board of Aldermen voted as follows:

Alderman Seemayer	<i>Nay</i>	Alderman Clauss	<i>Aye</i>
Alderman Sobey	<i>Aye</i>	Alderman Patton	<i>Nay</i>
Alderman Wisbrock	<i>Aye</i>	Alderman Huels	<i>Aye</i>
Alderman Maurath	<i>Aye</i>	Alderman Jokerst	<i>Aye</i>

It was announced that the motion was passed by the Board of Aldermen.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:16 p.m., Alderman Maurath made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Alderman Clauss. Upon a vote being taken, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Hungler
City Clerk