



City of Colorado Springs

City Hall
107 N. Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Meeting Minutes City Council

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Wednesday, March 18, 2020

1:00 PM, Tejon St, 5th floor

Colorado Springs Utilities
Office

Special Called Meeting

1. Call to Order

- Present:** 7 - Councilmember Yolanda Avila, Councilmember Jill Gaebler, Councilmember David Geislinger, Councilmember Don Knight, Councilmember Andy Pico, President Pro Tem Tom Strand, and Councilmember Wayne Williams
- Absent:** 2 - Councilmember Bill Murray, and President Richard Skorman

2. New Business

- 2.A. [20-141](#) A resolution suspending certain rules of the City Council of the City of Colorado Springs until May 1, 2020 resulting from a public health emergency caused by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus

Presenter:
Wynetta Massey, City Attorney

Attachments: [Proclamation and declaration of Emergency - Mayor Suthers.pdf](#)
[City Council Resolution_Electronic Meetings_03-17-20.pdf](#)
[Signed Resolution 19-20.pdf](#)

Wynetta Massey, City Attorney, presented a Resolution suspending certain rules of the City Council until May 1, 2020 resulting from a public health emergency caused by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

Mayor Suthers stated this item is regarding how future City Council meetings will be conducted during the pandemic. He stated the declaration of emergency which was made was for the flow of federal funds to assist local government and to give the Mayor the flexibility to react to certain issues such as shutdowns or curfews immediately. He said the priorities of the City are the health safety and welfare for all the citizens, constant communication with the health department and direction regarding how to proceed, and monitoring communication from the White House and the Governor.

Mayor Suthers stated Bob Cope, the Economic Development Manager, is monitoring the funding for assistance to small businesses and they are working on funding for assistance to healthcare workers. He stated they are discussing whether or not there should be facilities for fire fighters who may be contract the virus or if they should quarantine at home.

Mayor Suthers stated the City anticipates they will experience a dramatic decrease in City revenue due to a decrease in sales tax due to restaurant closings and the reduction in tourism. He stated they are addressing this by implementing a hiring freeze, travel bans, delaying any discretionary purchases, deferring from some capital projects, and reduction of expenses in each department. He explained they will develop trigger points depending on how long this lasts and will be addressing the possibility of wage cuts, furloughs, or possible lay-offs.

Councilmember Gaebler, Councilmember Geislinger, and Councilmember Williams expressed appreciation for the Mayor's leadership during this difficult time.

President Pro Tem Strand if the City's general fund reserve account could be utilized. Mayor Suthers stated it could if necessary, but they want to be very cautious with using it.

Councilmember Williams stated he supports the Resolution because there needs to be flexibility with the Administration because there is still so much which is unknown.

Ms. Massey identified the five rules regarding City Council meetings which will be temporarily suspended until May 1, 2020 in order to permit electronic or telephonic meetings and participation. She explained how the meetings will be noticed to the public and said there will be no quasi-judicial items taken during this time frame.

Councilmember Geislinger asked if this Resolution needs to be extended if it could be done via an electronic meeting. Ms. Massey confirmed it could be if City Council passes this Resolution.

Councilmember Geislinger asked if any open meeting laws or provisions would be violated if there were technical difficulties during an electronic

meeting. Ms. Massey stated there would not.

Councilmember Williams asked why Closed Executive sessions were excluded from being conducted electronically. Ms. Massey stated she would be unable to verify there were no others listening in so those would still need to be in-person.

Councilmember Williams asked if a quasi-judicial process was required if the in-person requirement be waived. Ms. Massey stated staff is concerned it would violate the due process requirements, but if this issue persists, they can revisit it.

Councilmember Pico stated the City will work through this, recover and asked citizens to remain calm.

Councilmember Knight asked about the requirements of public notice for conducting an electronic meeting. Ms. Massey stated the meeting still needs to be noticed and conducted in the place, time, and manner it is noticed for.

Councilmember Knight requested a full City Council discussion regarding how to proceed with future City Council meetings. President Pro Tem Strand stated they will be more collaborative with all City Councilmembers going forward. Councilmember Knight requested an agenda of what would have been on the canceled March 23, 2020 Work Session meeting. President Pro Tem Strand agreed to provide that information.

Councilmember Williams requested postponing any non-time sensitive items to a later date.

Councilmember Murray requested any issues involving potential ballot items be communicated to City Council. Sarah B. Johnson, City Clerk, agreed to provide that information.

Motion by Councilmember Pico, seconded by Councilmember Williams, that the Resolution suspending certain rules of the City Council of the City of Colorado Springs until May 1, 2020 resulting from a public health emergency caused by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus be adopted. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0-2-0

Aye: 7 - Avila, Gaebler, Geislinger, Knight, Pico, Strand, and Williams

Absent: 2 - Murray, and Skorman

3. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before City Council, Council adjourned.

Sarah B. Johnson, City Clerk