

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49

**PHILOMATH CITY COUNCIL**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**March 19, 2020**

**A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The special meeting of the City Council of the City of Philomath was called to order by Mayor Eric Niemann on Thursday, Marcy 19, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the Philomath City Hall Council Chambers, 980 Applegate Street, Philomath, Oregon.

Present:

Mayor Eric Niemann (via teleconference)  
Councilor Ruth Causey (via teleconference)  
Councilor Doug Edmonds (via teleconference)  
Councilor Chas Jones (via teleconference)  
Councilor Matt Lehman (via teleconference)  
Councilor David Low (via teleconference)  
Councilor Matthew Thomas (via teleconference)

Absent:

Staff Present:

City Manager Chris Workman  
City Attorney Jim Brewer  
Finance Director Joan Swanson (via teleconference)  
Police Chief Ken Rueben (via teleconference)  
Public Works Director Kevin Fear (via teleconference)  
City Recorder Ruth Post

Absent:

**B. STAFF REPORT**

**1. City's response to COVID-19 pandemic to date** – Mr. Workman reviewed the chronological information and actions the City has taken since the beginning of the week March 3, when Governor Brown issued the first of several Executive Orders regarding the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. He noted the multiple times that outreach has been issued directing the public to official websites such as Benton County Health Department and Oregon Health Authority, apprising the public of changes to City operations, and providing general community information.

Mr. Workman confirmed that Municipal Court will not be held in April or May due to the lag time between the issuance of citations and court appearance dates.

Mr. Workman reviewed the bullet points on the proposed emergency declaration explaining the coordination with the Benton County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). He highlighted the purposes of the EOC and the need for an official emergency declaration to access assistance from the EOC. He also emphasized the use of the City Facebook page to provide information specifically about Philomath and to avoid information overload.

**C. COMMENTS BY MAYOR NIEMANN**

Mayor Niemann thanked City staff for efforts to manage the situation to date. He reviewed the latest information available from the Oregon Health Authority website. He requested a link be added to the City's website and also described the information available at the 2-1-1 site. He described statewide economic impact concerns that have

1 been voiced on recent conference calls with the Governor's office and the specific local  
2 impact on businesses such as restaurants. He reviewed resources available at  
3 businesses such as local pharmacies and special grocery store hours that have been  
4 established for at-risk shoppers. He noted postings on the Chamber website with area  
5 business hours and availability.

6 **D. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS BY COUNCIL**

7 Councilor Thomas identified that Dollar General also has special hours for elderly and  
8 at-risk customers.

9  
10 Councilor Low reviewed information presented by Philomath Community Services and  
11 the Gleaners regarding providing food to residents in need of those services, noting  
12 some changes in their programs to address the increased need. He also described ways  
13 that people can help, particularly by providing funding for food acquisition.

14  
15 Councilor Causey questioned if the City should consider an additional cash donation to  
16 PCS at this time. Councilor Low suggested that it might be premature for the Council to  
17 do that at this time, but it may be appropriate at a later date. Mayor Niemann agreed that  
18 it might be something to be considered at a later point in time, with additional review by  
19 staff. Councilor Low noted that the annual social service funding requests will be  
20 reviewed within the next month and added that there are other social service agencies  
21 that receive funding. Mayor Niemann suggested having the Finance & Administration  
22 Committee consider that question at their next meeting.

23  
24 **E. RESOLUTION 20-03 DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

25 Mayor Niemann described the potential advantages both for the City and local  
26 businesses of having the emergency declaration.

27  
28 Mr. Brewer explained that probably every city in Oregon will be making such a  
29 declaration. He described the necessity to be prepared and explained that the resolution  
30 is a step in the right direction. He described the requirements still exist to hold certain  
31 public hearings and the need for the public to be able to address the Council. Mayor  
32 Niemann suggested that an expiration date through April 6 was likely to short. He  
33 reviewed comments received from Councilor Jones regarding not limiting the  
34 acceptance of assistance to Benton County as specified in Sections 1 and 6.

35  
36 Councilor Edmonds questioned if virtual meetings would need to be used for upcoming  
37 meetings such as the Budget Committee meetings. Mr. Workman agreed that tonight's  
38 meeting was providing a test run for such meetings. He also noted the Finance &  
39 Administration Committee would need to meet next week to address union negotiations  
40 that affect the budget preparation.

41  
42 Mayor Niemann reviewed the comments received from Councilor Jones.

43  
44 Councilor Causey questioned the need for a limitation on City funds to be redirected for  
45 emergency use. She also questioned employment decisions. Mr. Workman noted that  
46 he currently has the authority to make all employment decisions with the exception of  
47 department heads.

48  
49 Councilor Lehman questioned what direction should be taken if there are opposing  
50 directives from different health officials. Councilor Low described the funneling of  
51 directives down to the local implementation level. Councilor Lehman questioned if

1 Section 5 should be amended as requested by Councilor Jones based on that.  
2

3 Councilor Edmonds requested input from the Finance Director regarding emergency  
4 expenditures. There was further discussion about the verbiage in Section 5 regarding  
5 directives from the Oregon Health Authority and Benton County Health officials.  
6

7 Ms. Swanson provided an overview of Section 2 that addresses extraordinary  
8 circumstances above and beyond the existing budget. Mr. Brewer agreed that this is the  
9 type of expenditure that would likely be reimbursed by an agency such as FEMA. There  
10 was additional discussion about this type of expense and a potential limit. Consensus  
11 was to only change the verbiage to read that procedures “may” be suspended.  
12

13 Section 5 was amended to change “and” to “or”.  
14

15 Section 6 was amended to add “the State of Oregon, or the government of the United  
16 States.”  
17

18 There was discussion about the duration of the declaration. Section 7 was amended to  
19 read “until revoked by the City Council.”  
20

21 There was discussion about needing to make changes down the road and the ability to  
22 make those.  
23

24 **MOTION:** Councilor Edmonds moved, Councilor Jones second, to approve Resolution  
25 20-03 as amended. Motion APPROVED 7-0 (Yes: Causey, Edmonds, Jones, Lehman,  
26 Low, Thomas and Niemann; No: None.)  
27

28 There were additional comments about the importance of donating blood during this time  
29 and purchasing gift certificates from local businesses. There were also reminders to  
30 check on your neighbors.  
31

32 **J. ADJOURNMENT**

33 **1. Adjournment** – Seeing no further business, Mayor Niemann adjourned the  
34 meeting at 8:38 p.m.  
35

36 SIGNED:  
37 Eric Niemann, Mayor

ATTEST:  
Ruth Post, MMC, City Recorder