

## April 16, 2020

The City Council of the City of Idaho Falls met in Special Council Work Session, Thursday, April 16, 2020, in the Council Chambers in the City Annex Building located at 680 Park Avenue in Idaho Falls, Idaho at 7:30 a.m.

### Call to Order and Roll Call:

There were present:

Mayor Rebecca L. Noah Casper (by WebEx)  
Councilmember Michelle Ziel-Dingman (by WebEx)  
Councilmember John Radford (by WebEx)  
Councilmember Jim Freeman (by WebEx)  
Councilmember Jim Francis (by WebEx)  
Councilmember Shelly Smede (by WebEx)  
Councilmember Thomas Hally (by WebEx)

Also present:

Pamela Alexander, Municipal Services Director  
Ed Morgan, Civic Center for the Performing Arts Manager  
Duane Nelson, Fire Chief (by WebEx)  
Mark Hagedorn, Controller (by WebEx)  
Ryan Tew, Human Resources Director (by WebEx)  
Rick Cloutier, Airport Director (by WebEx)  
Bear Prairie, Idaho Falls Power Director (by WebEx)  
Randy Fife, City Attorney (by WebEx)  
Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

Mayor Casper called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m. with the following items:

### Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update:

Mayor Casper stated Governor Brad Little's Stay-home order has been revised and extended until April 30, 2020. She also stated a Financial Advisory Committee is collecting information and Garden City Mayor John Evans is confident there will be enough monies to reimburse for COVID-19 expenses. Mayor Evans is also reasonably confident most expenses will meet the eligibility threshold, although this criteria is still to be determined. Mayor Casper briefly reviewed expenses common to most cities. She stated lost revenue is not a reimbursable item, therefore the City has been cutting the budget. She also stated a White House call occurred on April 15 (a summary of this call will be forthcoming); back-to-work planning is occurring with Department Directors (she believes it is important to gradually roll this out); employee masking requirement is to be effective April 17 (paper masks have been distributed); and, employee newsletters have been distributed.

Unified Command (UC) report – Chief Nelson stated UC meetings are continuing to occur although these meetings will be less frequent in the coming week. He also stated an Eastern Idaho modeling is taking place by Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center (EIRMC) with a regional approach of other hospitals. He is hopeful this information will give a better picture of COVID-19 in community. Emergency Room (ER) visits, admissions, and, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) data and responses are being used for the modeling. Chief Nelson stated Bonneville County has 15-16 COVID-19 cases with the majority of these cases contracted by community spread. The UC has been discussing how to prepare the community for the after-effects as this will have a rebound affect. Chief Nelson indicated Teton County has received a device for testing the community at large (this testing will occur in the near future) and the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) is working to have a decontamination process of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). He also indicated data for schools and higher education is being reviewed in the event they decide to re-open and, public safety is seeing a slight uptick in calls (although Fire and EMS calls are seeing a downturn from the previous year). Mayor Casper noted Teton County will have 300 testing units in the following week and 1000 testing units available in the next two (2) months. She also noted Teton County is one of the top 6-7 counties of percentage of individuals affected by COVID-19. She also clarified sterilization of the PPE is coming from Battelle Energy Alliance for use at INL.

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Mayor Casper stated the Declaration of Local Disaster Emergency extension for the City will expire on April 17. She noted the City of Ammon may be extending and Bonneville County will be extending their declarations. She believes Federal reimbursement will fall under the County declaration. Mr. Fife believes the City declaration does not need extended due to the County and the State. Councilmember Freeman believes the extension should occur to show support of Governor Brad Little. It was moved by Councilmember Smede, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to amend the agenda to include the extension of the Emergency Declaration with the good faith reason that the motion was not included on the agenda due to recent information from the Governor. Roll call as follows: Aye – Councilmembers Smede, Francis, Freeman, Hally, Radford, Dingman. Nay – none. Motion carried. It was then moved by Councilmember Francis, seconded by Councilmember Dingman, to extend the Emergency Declaration to match the Governor’s order. Roll call as follows: Aye – Councilmembers Francis, Dingman, Freeman, Hally, Radford, Smede. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Discussion regarding City Payroll:

Mayor Casper stated the Stay-home order pay, previously authorized by the Council, was approved through April 15. She reviewed alternative scenarios including enhanced unemployment, lay-off, and, furloughs. She also recommended May 4 be the re-start date for employees (as May 1 falls on a Friday). Director Alexander stated the finance team has reviewed all scenarios during the previous month. Mr. Hagedorn stated the majority of employees are working from home and/or rotating schedules to accommodate social distancing. Currently, there are 14 employees at home without pay. Two (2) employees are from the General Fund (Police), the remaining employees are from the Enterprise Fund (Library and Airport). Mr. Hagedorn stated the City pays 100% of unemployment, and per discussion with the Department of Labor, it is unknown who pays enhanced unemployment (additional information has been requested). A furlough would allow the unemployment benefit although the City is still paying the employee benefits. A layoff would cover the unemployment benefit, it would not cover City employee benefits although the employee could exercise their right to be paid out for vacation. Director Alexander stated work-from-home has been evolving and transitioning for several weeks from the Information Technology (IT) Division. She believes productivity continues to occur. To the request of Mayor Casper, Councilmember Smede reviewed the school board Stay-home order scenarios. Councilmember Francis believes the payroll options would be reduced if the City intends to re-open. Councilmember Hally believes due to the low numbers the employees should continue to be paid. Councilmember Dingman concurred. She believes there is no proof of a financial benefit as the City continues to pay some sort of benefit. Councilmember Freeman believes it is important to keep employees insured and is in favor of paying the employees. He commended the City as he also believes there have been no reduction in services. Director Cloutier noted extra employees were hired at the airport in anticipation of added flights, which has not occurred. He believes the better option at this time is a layoff as there is no determination date for those added flights. General comments followed. To the response of Councilmember Radford, Mr. Hagedorn stated for the most part individuals are continuing to pay their utility bills. Director Alexander concurred. Director Prairie stated Idaho Falls Power (IFP) is tracking payment patterns and creating metrics; Federal legislation is also being used; and, deferment and cash flow can be handled through the Rate Stabilization Fund. To the response of Councilmember Radford, Mayor Casper stated, per Library Director Robert Wright, the library employees will return to work per the Governor’s recent revised Stay-home order. It was then moved by Councilmember Radford, seconded by Councilmember Hally, to pay City employees through the Governor’s Stay-home order. Roll call as follows: Aye – Councilmembers Smede, Radford, Hally, Freeman, Dingman, Francis. Nay – none. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:34 a.m.

s/ Kathy Hampton  
CITY CLERK

s/ Rebecca L. Noah Casper  
MAYOR