Minutes of Special Meeting held March 23, 2020

Special meeting with the following present: Mayor Mark Bowen; Aldermen Jerry Stone, Sam Cortez, Laura Reyna and Alderman Ruben Gonzalez via phone; City Secretary Josie Campa; City Attorney Tom Cate.

Visitors: Danny Robison, Erik Dahler, Gabriel Romero.

Mayor opened the special meeting at 6:30 p.m. and led everyone in the pledge to the flag.

**CONSIDER AND ACT UPON DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ISSUED BY MAYOR ON MARCH 18, 2020, INCLUDING POSSIBLE CHANGES AND EXTENSION**

Mayor Bowen told Council that he had met with Emergency Management team, City Attorney and department heads before issuing the declaration. He said if anyone on Council has anything to add or wants to extend the time period they can.

Alderman Gonzalez asked that Bella’s Pantry not be suspended and that the Animal Control Director can choose another location if he chooses.

Mayor Bowen told Council that Bexar County and San Antonio are telling residents to stay at home, and that this is a change from their original declaration. He also said he is staying in touch with the Mayors in this area and that he chose to not close the park at this time.

City Secretary Josie Campa told Council that the Little League season was cancelled for this year, as was the annual Easter egg hunt.

Mayor Bowen told Council that people are walking at the park but they are keeping their distance from other walkers. He told them Wayne Newman is sanitizing the restrooms every two (2) hours.

Mayor Bowen told Council he will call a meeting if things progress and warrant another meeting.

The Mayor told Council, Senior citizens are a concern and ways to assist them are being discussed.

The Mayor said he and other Mayors and the Medina County Judge are wanting to keep businesses open since shutting everything down will really challenge a city. The Mayor also said that all grocery stores, gas stations and medical offices will remain open.

The Mayor told Council restaurant dining are being closed as per the Governor’s order, but they can continue to use their drive thru and curb-side services and we are encouraging the public to continue to patronize these businesses, and make adjustments, weekly if necessary.
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Alderwoman Reyna asked about volunteers being used at the Library. City Secretary Josie Campa told Council that as far as she knew only city employees are working at the Library. Alderman Cortez agreed with the City Secretary on this matter. The City Secretary said she would check with the Library Director to make sure no volunteers are being used at the Library.

Council then discussed what is being done at the Animal Control facility and agreed that dogs being picked up should be called an essential service and the Animal Control Director be given the power to exercise his discretion when it comes to this. City Attorney Tom Cate told Council this needs to be placed on the website, so people will know dogs are still being picked up.

Alderwoman Reyna asked if bathroom handles and door knobs were being sanitized and the City Secretary told her she would check on this and make sure they are being sanitized.

Alderwoman Reyna also asked that the time for utility payments be extended to the end of April. Council agreed.

City Attorney Tom Cate told Council he would make the modifications to the Mayor’s declaration for the paper, and also recommended Council extend the Mayor’s declaration to thirty (30) days.

Alderman Cortez made the motion that Council adopt the Mayor’s declaration with the amendments approved by Council members and that weekly adjustments be made, as needed. Seconded by Alderman Stone. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON POSTPONING MAY 2, 2020 GENERAL AND SPECIAL LOCAL OPTION ELECTION UNTIL THE NOVEMBER UNIFORM ELECTION DATE AS AUTHORIZED BY TEXAS GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT
City Secretary Josie Campa gave Council a copy of the Governor’s proclamation concerning upcoming elections, as well as the e-mail from the Medina County Elections Administrator agreeing with the Governor to postpone the election until November. Alderman Gonzalez made the motion that Council postpone the May 2nd election until November. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. The City Secretary agreed to call Southwest School District to check on their plans. Passed unanimously. City Attorney Tom Cate said he would prepare the resolution needed to postpone the election.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL TO FILL DISTRICT 5 VACANCY IF GENERAL ELECTION IS POSTPONED BY COUNCIL
Mayor Bowen told Council that since they had postponed the May election, they need to fill the District 5 vacancy on the Council. He said with people getting sick and due to the coronavirus he feels this position should be filled. The Mayor told Council that Erik Dahler had volunteered to fill Mr. Farmer’s position until the election is held and that now that the election has been postponed this means the seat would be vacant for eight (8) months. He said he wanted Council to consider Mr. Dahler for this vacancy at tonight’s meeting, and that since the city is in a crisis
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL TO FILL DISTRICT 5
VACANCY IF GENERAL ELECTION IS POSTPONED BY COUNCIL (CONT.)
now this position needs to be filled.

Alderman Jerry Stone made the motion that Council appoint Erik Dahler until November
election. Alderwoman Reyna said her concern was that this was not sent out to anyone else, and
said if Council meets weekly, this can be put out to others to see if they are interested.

Alderman Gonzalez asked the Mayor if he had talked to other former Aldermen about filling this
vacancy. The Mayor told Alderman Gonzalez and Council members he had talked to Ward
Sanders and Kevin Keith and they are not able to at this time. Alderman Gonzalez said Council
could review this on a weekly base.

Alderman Cortez told Council that when Mr. Dahler was on the Council before, he had done a
good job. He then seconded Mr. Stone’s motion. Alderman Gonzalez said this didn’t need to be
done tonight. Mayor Bowen again emphasized the need to get this position filled tonight and
said someone is ready to go.

Alderman Gonzalez asked Mr. Dahler why he had volunteered to fill this position on the
Council.

Mr. Dahler told everyone that he saw the need when Mr. Farmer passed away, and that it would
be an honor to serve out Mr. Farmer’s seat on the Council. He also said that he hadn’t see anyone
come forward, so he thought he would.

Alderman Gonzalez told Council it is not about the individual, it is about the position and he
didn’t think Council was going to do this, this quick. Mayor Bowen said he feels Council
doesn’t have that much time due to the coronavirus crisis, and Alderman Cortez said he wanted
to vote on the motion.

Alderman Gonzalez told Council he voted “No”.

Alderwoman Reyna asked the City Attorney for his opinion and Mr. Cate told her he has no
opinion, but due to practicality this seat was going to be filled in May with the election and now
it will be eight (8) months and should someone get sick this could be a problem. Mayor Bowen
called for a vote. Aldermen Cortez and Stone voted “For”, Alderman Gonzalez voted “Against”.

Alderwoman Reyna told Council she doesn’t even know Mr. Dahler, and didn’t want to vote.
Mayor Bowen told the Alderwoman to focus on the critical path ahead of the Council and that
Council owes it to the citizens of Lytle to get this done.

Alderwoman Reyna asked Mayor for a 10-minute break so she can talk to Mr. Dahler. Mayor
Bowen granted her request and the Council took a break at 7:30 p.m.
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL TO FILL DISTRICT 5 VACANCY IF GENERAL ELECTION IS POSTPONED BY COUNCIL (CONT.)
Council reconvened at 7:55 p.m. Alderwoman Reyna told Council she had talked to Mr. Dahler during the break and then voted “For” the motion. Motion carried.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON ALLOWING CITY SECRETARY TO PAY INCOMING BILLS IF COUNCIL IS UNABLE TO MEET IN THE COMING MONTHS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS
Mayor Bowen expressed the need for Council to allow the City Secretary to pay bills in case the Council is unable to meet in the coming months due to the coronavirus restrictions. Alderwoman Reyna made the motion that Council allow the City Secretary to pay incoming bills, if the Council is unable to meet. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously. The City Secretary told Council she would send them print outs of bills she is paying.

Mayor Bowen told Council he would keep them abreast of matters and adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.