Minutes of Emergency Meeting held April 20, 2020

Emergency meeting with the following present: Mayor Mark Bowen; Aldermen Erik Dahler, Ruben Gonzalez, Jerry Stone, Laura Reyna, Sam Cortez; City Secretary Josie Campa; Police Chief Richard Priest; City Attorney Tom Cate.

Visitors: Gabriel Romero, Sam Parks.

Mayor Bowen called the emergency meeting to order at 6:32 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 MODIFICATIONS

Mayor Bowen told Council that the Public Health Emergency Declaration expires on April 22nd. He asked Council members if they had any changes or additions to the previous declaration. He reminded Council that the Governor’s order is still in play until further notice.

Alderman Dahler told the Mayor that he would like to see Item #6 of Exhibit A modified. He told the Mayor and Council he felt the last sentence of #6 needed to be modified or taken out altogether. Alderwoman Reyna agreed with Alderman Dahler’s request that the last sentence of Exhibit A’s #6 be taken out.

Alderman Reyna asked about the section concerning utility bills needing to have May added to it if declaration is extended, and asked the City Attorney what the recommendation is for the court. The City Attorney told Council that June 1st is recommended date for courts to reopen.

Alderman Reyna asked how things were going at the library and the City Secretary told her they were going well and that people appreciate the CURB-side service.

Alderman Reyna asked whether the park was open or closed. City Secretary Josie Campa told the Council that the park was open, but had been closed over the Easter holiday due to the Mayor’s second declaration that ran out after seven (7) days since Council did not approve it. Mayor Bowen told Council that was his intention, so that the park would not be used for social gatherings during the Easter weekend.

Alderman Reyna questioned whether the second declaration superseded the first declaration, and the City Attorney told her that it did not since Council passed the first declaration and not the second one.

Alderman Dahler asked about Exhibit A’s Item #11 and the park being left open. City Attorney Tom Cate told Council that in the first declaration the park was left open, however, after employees noticed that social distancing was not being practiced at the playground equipment and multipurpose court, an administrative decision was made to rope off those areas. It was agreed to have the playground equipment, basketball courts, pavilions, gazebos and restrooms at
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
ISSUED BY MAYOR ON MARCH 18, 2020 INCLUDING POSSIBLE CHANGES AND
MODIFICATIONS (CONT.)
the parks remain closed until further notice. Council also discussed the need for closing the
parks during holidays to prevent social gatherings. Mayor Bowen told Council he gets lots of
calls about the walking tracks remaining open as long as social distancing is observed.

Sam Parks asked Council about his fitness center being considered a gym, and whether the order
for this came from Council or the Governor. Mr. Parks told Council about the amount of area at
his business that allows for social distancing since he doesn't have enough people at one time.

City Attorney Tom Cate told Mr. Parks that the order for gyms to be closed came from the
Governor.

Alderman Cortez told Mayor Bowen he agrees with Alderman Dahler and Alderwoman Reyna to
continue to hold City Council meetings in the future. Alderman Gonzales told Mayor Bowen he
agreed with Council on that item, too.

Alderwoman Reyna asked about the letter that was sent out to the businesses. City Attorney
Tom Cate told Council that the Mayor and the Emergency Management team had agreed that a
letter needed to be sent to businesses and he drafted the letter for the Mayor. He told Council
that this letter encouraged businesses to follow the CDC recommendations to provide face masks
and gloves and limit number of patrons to maintain social distancing requirements.

Mayor Bowen asked Council members about areas at the park being roped off and Council
agreed this should be done if social distancing cannot be practiced.

City Attorney Tom Cate reminded Council that everything in declaration is subject to the
Governor's order and that he doesn't see anything wrong with extending the declaration for
another thirty (30) days with the modifications set out by Council.

Alderman Gonzalez suggested the declaration be extended to May 25th and Alderman Dahler
agreed. Alderman Stone asked if the Governor makes another declaration would it supersede this
date and City Attorney said date will be in that if Governor changes things. City Secretary Josie
Campa reminded Council that May 25th is Memorial Day and could declaration be extended past
the holiday. She asked if the declaration could be extended to the last day of May.

Alderman Dahler made the motion that Council adopt the declaration, as amended. Seconded by
Alderman Stone. Alderwoman asked that Council add park being closed on holidays to
amendments and Alderman Dahler agreed to add this to his motion along with the declaration
lasting until May 31st. Motion was passed unanimously.
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY
Mayor Bowen recommended to Council that Dr. Hack be appointed the city’s Local Health Authority. He told Council he has talked to Dr. Hack and he is willing to serve the city in this capacity.

The Mayor told Council that Dr. Hack has already been working with the Emergency Management team and has been a great help. Alderman Gonzalez told Council he feels the need to look at options. Mayor Bowen told Council he had others and they don’t have the time for it and don’t meet the qualifications as most medical people working in Lytle are not medical doctors. City Attorney Tom Cate told Council that the Local Health Authority must be a medical doctor and the medical people at the med clinics in Lytle are only physician’s assistants. Mayor Bowen told Council that Dr. Hack has been in Lytle twenty (20) years and has always had a good rapport with the city and its staff. After lengthy discussion, Alderman Dahler made the motion that Council appoint Dr. Hack as the city’s Local Health Authority.

Alderman Dahler told Council he has talked to Dr. Hack and he is very impressed with the doctor’s knowledge. After more discussion, Alderman Cortez seconded the motion. Discussion. City Attorney told Council that Dr. Hack was asked if he would do this and he had agreed, and Dr. Hack is familiar with the duties of a Local Health Authority. The Mayor told Council that the City Attorney had recommended a medical person for the Emergency Management team. Mayor Bowen then called for a vote on the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

UPDATE ON ENFORCEMENT OF GOVERNOR’S AND MAYOR’S ORDERS
Mayor Bowen told Council that Chief Priest would tell them about enforcement measures on the Governor’s and his orders.

Chief Priest told Council of some circumstances that the police department had gotten calls on, and how the department handled these calls.

The Chief told Council he does not have enough officers to place at HEB to patrol social distancing.

Chief Priest told Council that he had officer Danny Robison deliver the letters to the businesses that the Mayor and City Attorney had drafted and that he felt most people had not read it.

The Chief told Council that some of the Lytle businesses like Great Clips and Fantastic Sam’s were following San Antonio’s orders even before the Governor put out his order.

Alderman Gonzalez and Alderwoman Reyna told the Mayor and Council that they have received calls from citizens and don’t know what to tell them, and want to be informed as to what is going on.

City Secretary Josie Campa volunteered to update Council if the Mayor is okay with it.
UPDATE ON ENFORCEMENT OF GOVERNOR’S AND MAYOR’S ORDERS (CONT.)
Mayor Bowen told Council the pandemic has been very challenging and the Emergency Management team is not perfect, and said he would give Council updates in the future.

Alderman Reyna told Council she had gotten calls about a situation at Bill Miller’s and she knew nothing about it. The Emergency Management team members told Alderman Reyna they had not heard about this. Council then discussed the need for better communication during this crisis, and when this information is needed.

Alderman Reyna told Council she has asked about enforcement of the orders issued by the Governor and the Mayor.

Chief Priest asked for Council’s guidance on enforcement and asked for suggestions. The Chief told Council he has been working with the City Attorney on enforcement measures.

City Attorney Tom Cate told Council he can send a detailed email to Council after the Emergency Management team meets to inform them of what was discussed and/or decided by the team. He cautioned Council members to not communicate with one another on this email as it would be a violation of the Open Meeting Act.

Mayor Bowen told Council that this has been very challenging and he will keep them in the loop. He reminded Council that the Governor has the final “say-so” and that his recommendations will supersede the city’s.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.