

ACTION MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020 COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 215 E. BRANCH STREET ARROYO GRANDE, CALIFORNIA

In compliance with the State and County Shelter at Home Orders due to the coronavirus pandemic, and as allowed by the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20, which allows for a deviation of teleconference rules required by the Ralph M. Brown Act, this meeting was held by teleconference.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ray Russom called the Special City Council Meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. via teleconference.

2. ROLL CALL

Council Members Lan George, Jimmy Paulding, Kristen Barneich, Mayor Pro Tem Keith Storton, and Mayor Ray Russom were present via teleconference.

Staff members present via teleconference were Acting City Manager Bill Robeson, Acting Deputy City Manager Whitney McDonald, Director of Administrative Services Mike Stevens, Chief of Police Beau Pryor, Director of Recreation Services Sheridan Bohlken, Accounting Manager Nicole Valentine, and Five Cities Fire Chief Steve Lieberman. City Clerk Kelly Wetmore and Information Technology Manager Walt Cuzick were present in the Council Chambers.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Council Member Paulding led the flag salute.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Ray Russom invited public comment. Speaking from the public via teleconference in support of Item 6.b. (Consideration of Letter to Governor Regarding Establishment of a Rent and Mortgage Relief Program) were Jill Zamek, June Cochran, and Carmen Boquin. No further public comments were received.

5. CLOSED SESSION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Special Meeting of May 1, 2020

- a) Public employee appointment pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b):
Title: Acting City Manager

City Attorney Carmel announced that the City Council appointed Bill Robeson as the Acting City Manager and Whitney McDonald as the Acting Deputy City Manager. The motion was made by Mayor Ray Russom, was seconded by Council Member George, and the vote was unanimous.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS:

6.a. Update Regarding Countywide COVID-19 Efforts.

Acting City Manager Robeson explained this would be an update on information received from the State and County regarding COVID-19 efforts, including information regarding the County's START (Steps to Adapt and Reopen Together) Plan.

Acting Deputy City Manager McDonald provided a brief update regarding current City departments and operations, and stated that City staff is currently reviewing the County's START Plan to determine what the City will need to implement the measures identified in the Plan. Five Cities Fire Authority Fire Chief Lieberman provided an update of Fire Authority operations as it relates to an increase in emergency medical calls and response, and provided a brief overview of fiscal impacts as a result of unanticipated expenses that have been incurred in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Acting Deputy City Manager McDonald then provided a brief overview of the proposed standards and guidelines in the START Plan, which is available for public review at ReadySLO.org. She provided clarification regarding the State and County orders, that the START Plan is the County's Plan and that the City's responsibility is to implement the Plan for its employees and members of the public. She further explained that the City does not control the County's determinations of when each phase of the Plan is implemented, and does not control the County's determination of which businesses re-open and under what criteria and restrictions.

Mayor Ray Russom acknowledged that there has been some confusion in the public about the Governor's plan to release the next Phase on Friday and whether the State's order or the local County order takes precedence. She explained that the County's Phase 1 is significantly less stringent than the State's Phase 1 and that the County is working with the State to see which order the County will be following. Staff responded to extensive questions from Council.

Mayor Ray Russom invited public comment. Speaking from the public via teleconference was Judith Bernstein, who stated she agreed with most of the proposed START Plan; however, she expressed concerns that gyms reopening in Phase 1 is too soon and should reopen in Phase 2, that some of the City's restaurants do not have enough inside seating and asked if there was a plan to expand outdoor seating, and expressed concern about discrimination against elderly people who are healthy; and Jocelyn Brennan, President/CEO, South County Chambers of Commerce, who thanked the Mayor for the collaboration with the County and announced that the Chamber would be hosting a free webinar to discuss the guidelines for businesses to reopen and to answer questions, and that registration is available online at www.southcountychambers.com. No further public comments were received.

No action was taken on this item.

6.b. Consideration of Letter to Governor Regarding Establishment of a Rent and Mortgage Relief Program.

City Attorney Carmel presented the staff report and recommended that the Council approve and authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the Governor regarding the establishment of a rent and mortgage relief program as a result of the COVID-10 pandemic. Staff responded to questions from Council.

Mayor Ray Russom invited public comment. Speaking from the public via teleconference was Judith Bernstein, who spoke in support of the proposed letter; however, she expressed concerns that the letter was too broad and that it should include criteria as to who would receive relief funds. No further comments were received.

Council questions and discussion ensued regarding modifications to the letter to include property owners as those who should benefit from rent relief, to include creation of an oversight and

accountability committee to monitor program distribution and to ensure its success; to include creation of emergency direct assistance programs that are balanced and equitably distributed; and to include a statement that the letter was unanimously approved by the City Council.

Action: Council Member Paulding moved to approve the letter, as modified. Mayor Pro Tem Storton seconded, and the motion passed on following roll call vote:

AYES: Paulding, Storton, Barneich, George, Ray Russom

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

6.c. Consideration of Letter to the Governor Regarding COVID-19 Fiscal Impacts to California Cities and a Request for State and Federal Assistance.

Acting Deputy City Manager presented the staff report and recommended that the Council approve and authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the Governor on behalf of the City regarding COVID-19 fiscal impacts to California cities. Staff responded to questions from Council.

Mayor Ray Russom invited public comment. No public comments were received.

Action: Mayor Ray Russom moved to authorize a letter the Mayor to send a letter to the Governor on behalf of the City regarding COVID-19 fiscal impacts to California cities. Council Member Barneich seconded, and the motion passed on following roll call vote:

AYES: Ray Russom, Barneich, Paulding, George, Storton

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

7. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

/s/Caren Ray Russom, Mayor/Chair

ATTEST:

/s/Kelly Wetmore, City Clerk/Secretary

(Approved at CC Mtg 05-26-2020)