

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEXINGTON CITY COUNCIL

March 23, 2020

7:00 P. M.

The regular meeting of the Lexington City Council was called to order at 7:00 P. M. by Mayor Spencer Johansen in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mayor Johansen led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken to find the following physically present: Mayor Johansen, Alderman Colclasure, Alderwoman Wilson, Alderman Stover, Alderman Richard and Alderman Franklin with Alderman Schreiber attending remotely. Members of the staff and public present were: Luke Smuckers attending remotely and Chief Belvery.

It was moved by Alderman Colclasure and seconded by Alderwoman Wilson to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2020 council meeting. Motion carried with five yes and one present.

It was moved by Alderman Stover and seconded by Alderman Franklin to approve the Treasurer's Report for March 23, 2020 and pay bills in the amount of \$38,938.01. It was noted that there was a payment to Wm. Masters Inc. for Water Tower lights that needed to be replaced included in that amount. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Alderman Stover and seconded by Alderwoman Wilson to approve the Treasurer's Report for March 9, 2020 and pay bills in the amount of \$22,001.57. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Input:** Paul Deters from the school spoke about what the school has been doing during the COVID-19 outbreak and school closure. Last week while the school was closed they still managed food preparation and distribution three times on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. They had five drops for food throughout the community. We typically serve about 1500-1600 meals, last week we served 2700. Those are not the typical grab and go sack lunches they are hot meals. We were not feeding children, we were feeding households. We are not obligated to feed households, but at this point we felt we had the ability to do so as we had so much food in the refrigerator. We will continue to do so. We reached out to the Food Pantry and the Lexington Community Church and both have been willing to step up to help with preparation. The Food Pantry had distribution on Saturday. He is trying to keep everyone updated by email to try to keep everyone organized. As far as food he will do the best that he can with what they have.

As far as technology, that is another challenge. They reached out when they saw this coming and have been working with Verizon Wireless. They have a government contract with them and they have put in hot spots at over 10 families now that puts them at 100% of all families on the internet. We have ChromeBooks, we have devices in the hands of anybody who wanted one. We don't have students who don't have the ability to get on the internet.

The last four conference calls with the Mclean County Superintendent, EMA and the Governor's Office have been about emergency planning. He has a pretty good idea of what the next steps should be. He has offered up his building as a shelter, a medical shelter in case the hospitals run out of room and don't have enough beds. He also reached out to EMA Director Dan McDaniels and offered their building as a shelter in case of a tornado or some kind of disaster where we would need a fallout shelter.

The other thing is supplies. There is not enough supplies in the forefront. He put out a survey to his staff requesting any kind of goggles, safety masks, disposable aprons or gloves. Anything that we have at school we are offering up. He will take them to the drop off point tomorrow. Farmers who may have dust masks or any kind of masks at all. Just recently they are allowing hand sewn face masks. We will put the request out on facebook and social media tomorrow.

These are the things that he has planned. He has had a lot of people step up to volunteer. He is trying to be very careful how he asks for help and what they will do if someone gets quarantined. And he wants to be careful of what they are able to do.

He is concerned about graduation. The goal is to have something for the seniors. The end of the third quarter was the last day they were in school. There will be guidance from the State Board of Education.

The question was asked how long they would be able to continue feeding the children to which he answered as long as he could get supplies and as long as they were financially able. As long as the bills are paid by the state they have been asked to feed every child no matter what age they are no matter whether they go to our school or not. He is concerned about the early taxes coming in with everything being pushed back.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Discussion/Vote on Douglas Drive North Bids**

Mayor Johansen explained that instead of adjourning the meeting tonight we are going to recess as the bids will be in tomorrow. Casey's would like to start construction April 1st. The council will meet again tomorrow to go over the bids at 11:00 A, M.

**New Business:****City's Response to CAVID-19**

Mayor Johansen reported that the city has offered to any elderly person that needs groceries, prescriptions picked up or anything like that, call up here to City Hall and someone will deliver it.

Here at City Hall he was concerned about Star and the other employees, so they have limited that. Billy DuBois is taking care of the Water Plant and he told the guys to stay home and if we have an emergency come up we will call them. He has been in the office yesterday and today due to the road bids coming in. Chief is working and has a full staff.

He has been on a conference call twice a week with the Governor's Office and they are informative and feels the governor is reaching out to everyone and doing what he can.

He also gets a debriefing from Brad Cole, president of the Illinois Municipal League. They pass on letters they have written to the governor and one thing we have on our agenda is an amendment to restructure the Water Pollution Control Loan. He had reached out to the Illinois Municipal League to explain to them that we had a payment coming up May 1st of \$288,000 and it would be nice if we could defer that a little while and see if we are going to need it. They liked the idea and sent it to the governor. Dan Brady called him yesterday, he sent him a letter.

He did get another letter asking that all the payments be expedited to the municipalities. He assumes the school got one as well.

His first concern is for the safety and health of the citizens. We will worry about the money part later.

**Discussion/Vote Ordinance 2020-2: An Ordinance Pertaining to Local State of Emergency**

All council members had a copy of the ordinance and of the letter from the Illinois Municipal League in the packet of what to do in a state of emergency. This ordinance covers any kind of emergency we may have in the future. The Illinois Municipal League has approved this and he has had Attorney Shields look it over as well.

The question was asked why there was no consultation with the Chief of Police and also why emergency spending did not need the council's approval. Mayor Johansen could only assume that it was in the case of a real emergency he may not be able to reach out to anyone. We can go back and address this ordinance at a later date and make amendments to it.

Motion was made by Alderman Stover and seconded by Alderman Franklin to approve Ordinance 2020-2: An Ordinance Pertaining to Local State of Emergency. Motion carried with five yes and one no.

**Discussion/Vote Ordinance 2020-3: Amendment to Restructure Water Pollution Control Loan**

Mayor Johansen explained that there are two loans with the EPA. One payment is \$288,000 due May 10th and the other is \$140-\$150,000 due around May 14th. He thought we might be able to restructure the loan and put the payments on the end of the loan and it would still be under the TIF, that way we would have some money in reserve for whatever we might need during this crisis.

He shared his idea with the Illinois Municipal League which they wrote to the governor asking for a six month delay on loan payments. He does not know what will happen with that. He talked with Dan Brady yesterday and sent him a letter requesting the same thing. He believes they should be set back a year. He has put this ordinance together along with Farnsworth because they would work with the EPA. He thinks it is something we should look at. He does not know what the financial impact on the city is going to be. Every tax dollar we get from the state is going to be affected. The money we get from the gaming machines is gone. We don't know how long this is going to last. He thinks this will help us in the future. If we don't need the money then we go ahead and make an early payment on the loan. He wouldn't do anything with the Sewer Loan because it is paid off before the TIF.

A question was asked about payment of property taxes to which Mayor Johansen replied that they could say that they could extend payment by six months on those. We count on that money coming in. Every tax that we normally see coming in is going to be affected.

A question was asked about the fuel tax to which the reply was that it should continue coming in unless the state decides it wants to use that money for something else.

Mayor Johansen thinks the governor is sensitive about the needs of the municipalities.

Mayor Johansen explained how this works with the EPA, we drew the ordinance up and we sent it to the EPA so they could look it over and they approved it. Once we pass it they will get started on the paperwork.

The question was asked about the number of years that the loan would be restructured for. Mayor Johansen replied that we could control the number of years that it was to be restructured for and can be restructured for just the remainder of the term and add a year on to it.

If we approve this there is nothing that says we have to sign anything. If we look at the paperwork and we agree with the interest rate and the payoff date. Keep in mind we do this again in November. There is another payment due of \$288,000.

Alderman Stover commented that trying to ballpark a budget without having an end date. Two months versus six months is a whole different ball game. We can budget if we need to use a date when you think it should be over but there are no guarantees.

Mayor Johansen said they would look at the interest rate, Zach talked like it would be the same interest rate we have now and we would look at the term of the loan and make a determination from there. If we all don't agree with it we will not do it. The rate could also be lower.

Motion was made by Alderman Franklin a seconded by Alderman Stover to approve Ordinance 2020-3: Amendment to Restructure Water Pollution Control Loan. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Mayor's Report:** Mayor Johansen reported on the following items:

After tomorrow he will start working from home. He will have his phone and will transfer City Hall calls to his phone.

**Police:** Chief Belvary reported on the following items:

After a 2 ½ year long process we finally have new citations approved by Mclean County Circuit and Circuit Judge. We went live about 2 ½ weeks ago along with Chenoa and now Hudson would like to join us. With another department on board citations are directly loaded into the system and cut down on emailing. The cost was all picked up by Violette. Since 2010 \$5 of each fine goes directly to webcon citations, \$2 goes directly to the city and \$3 goes directly to Circuit Clerk and that money is used for implementation and maintenance for that program.

We now have the prescription drug take back box. We got that on a grant and did not cost the city anything. That program seems to be going well.

He put out a facebook post concerning the coronavirus relating how the Police Department will operate. Restricting our contact, keeping the 6 foot rule, not going into anyone's house unless we have to. The guidelines for that are to make an arrest or investigate a crime. He will assist rescue if needed but are not going into houses. Police officers deal with a great variety of people and we don't want to unwittingly bring something into someone's home because of the underlying medical conditions we could affect.

Two local farmers have supplied them with masks. We were also able to get hand sanitizer from the school.

The question was asked if the stay at home order was enforceable to which he replied that it really was not. The governor is counting on the good will of the citizens to obey. They have the option to arrest for criminal endangerment or a civil cease and desist order. Probable cause still exists but he would have to have a reason to stop the car to see if they are out for a valid reason.

**Finance & TIF:** Alderman Stover is working on the budget.

**Water/Sewer/Sanitation:** Alderwoman Wilson reminded everyone that they received an email from the county regarding completing their Statement of Economic Interest before May 1st.

**Street/Alley:** None

Mayor Johansen reminded everyone that the bids for Douglas Drive will be opened tomorrow at 10:00 A.M. and the council meeting will reconvene at 11:00 A. M. The bids have to be read in public. If there are more than 10 people in the room we will take it outside.

There being no further business a motion was made by Alderwoman Wilson and seconded by Alderman Franklin to recess till 11:00 A. M. March 24, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

By Pati Pease

City Clerk

Approved: April 27, 2020