



**CITY COUNCIL EMERGENCY SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
JUNE 22, 2020 – 1:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding
Alderwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, Post 1, Chairman
Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2
Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2
Aldermen Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3
Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice Chairman
Alderwoman Dr. Estella E. Shabazz, District 5, Mayor Pro-Tem
Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

OTHERS PRESENT:

Interim City Manager Patrick C. Monahan
City Attorney Bates Lovett
Director Coastal Health District Dr. Lawton Davis
Deputy Clerk of Council Margaret Fox

The Emergency Special Called Meeting was held at 1:03 p.m. via ZOOM. The invocation was offered by Alderman Purtee.

Opening Remarks by Mayor Johnson:

Mayor Johnson thanked the Aldermen and all in attendance for supporting the Emergency Special Called Meeting. He explained the reason he called the meeting was due to the fast rising of the local COVID-19 cases. Mayor Johnson attributes the local increase to the State's early re-opening.

Mayor Johnson reported on the local COVID-19 statistics and the need for more testing in Chatham County. He introduced Dr. Lawton Davis, Director Coastal Health District, and asked Dr. Davis what advice he could share with Council on curtailing the additional spread of COVID-19.

Dr. Davis gave an update on the local spread and testing of the coronavirus, including the following topics:

- Close contact is still the enemy.
- The public should continue with good behavior (washing hands often, wearing mask, social distancing, and staying home whenever possible)
- The Coastal Health District will continue to give updates to the public.
- Businesses need to police their establishments by encouraging the wearing of masks, washing hands often, wearing gloves, and social distancing.
- A formula was created to gauge how the coronavirus is spreading in communities (more now than before). A document showing the spread of the coronavirus was created by zip codes.
- Testing with anti-bodies, although it's not as accurate as swabbing.
- There will be a challenge if/when the schools reopen.



- The local hospitals are continuing to supply updated information.
- Nursing homes are still taking precautions.
- There has been an increase in cases among the younger generation.

Dr. Davis quoted coronavirus statistics according to age, race and community. He stated the demand for testing is astronomical and they could run out of testing kits. The Coastal Health District will receive a donation of 100,000 mask shortly and will make them available to the public. He gave the web site for updates on COVID-19: www.gachd.org.

Following Dr. Davis' presentation, the Mayor and Aldermen had discussions and Dr. Davis answered questions pertaining to increased cases, protection, and testing. The Aldermen requested a copy of the coronavirus cases by zip code. Mayor Johnson instructed City Manager Monahan to forward a copy to each Aldermen.

Mayor Johnson requested the City Manager to give an update on the City's current status.

City Manager Monahan reported the City is still in Phase I, taking temperatures, requesting mask, washing hands frequently, using and dispensing hand sanitizer, social distancing, increased sanitation in all areas, teleworking where possible, and staggered work schedules. He anticipates moving into Phase II during the latter part of July.

Action:

Mayor Johnson emphasized the importance of wearing a face mask to slow the transmission of the coronavirus. He asked City Attorney Lovett, given Governor Kemp's State Mandated Orders, how can local municipalities assist residents in helping control the spread of COVID-19.

Attorney Lovett indicated Governor Kemp withdrew local control, so no local rule or ordinance can be more restrictive than Governor Kemp's Order and currently, no municipality has challenged that Order.

Mayor Johnson instructed City Attorney Lovett to draft an Emergency Order requiring all residents/visitors to wear a facial mask in public. The Emergency Order should include language for children under the age of two, and those unable to wear mask (people with health conditions).

Closing:

Mayor Johnson thanked all in attendance and encouraged the public and staff to stay vigilant and safe.

With no further business coming before the assembly, Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Initials: 