

MEETING OF THE CITY OF CONNELL, WASHINGTON
CONNELL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON
March 20, 2020

An Emergency meeting of the Connell City Council was called to order by Mayor Barrow at 7:06 pm in the City Hall and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Lee Barrow and Councilmember's: Pat Barrera and Mayor Pro Tem Joe Escalera.

VIA TELEPHONIC:

Councilmember's: John White, Katrina Kunkel, Shelly Harper and City Attorney Dan Hultgrenn.

STAFF: City Administrator Maria Peña, City Clerk Marissa Ortiz and City Treasurer Genesis Bernal.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion: Councilmember Barrera moved to approve the consent calendar as presented:

- a) Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting March 2, 2020
- b) Check Register 3/2/2020 for \$210.00
- c) Check Register 3/16/2020 for \$146,753.87
- d) Check Register 3/18/2020 for \$8,628.96
- e) Payroll Register 2/29/2020-3/05/2020 for \$101,501.53
- f) Payroll Register 3/15/2020-3/20/2020 for \$64,021.53

Councilmember Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Councilmember Escalera moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Barrera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

DISCUSSION ON CITY ACTIONS TAKEN RELATING TO THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) STATE OF EMERGENCY:

City Administrator Maria Peña informed Council that on March 10, she received information from Sean Davis at Franklin County Emergency Management regarding a possible exposure of the coronavirus at their Community Center. The following day she was contacted by a representative from the Governor's office informing of a webinar being held by Department of Health regarding the outbreak. On March 13, the Governor announced statewide closures of all schools. Mayor Barrow and City Administrator Peña worked closely with Emergency Management and participated in bi-weekly meetings with the Department of Health, North Franklin School District, surrounding Cities and Counties, and Hospital Districts. As of Monday, March 23, City facilities would be closed to the public. Staff would continue to work at their assigned locations and would answer phone calls and set up in-person meetings if needed.

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Equipment necessary for staff to telecommute was acquired and a telecommuting plan was in process. City staff was promptly set up to provide online meetings through GoToWebinar, this was made available to municipalities free of charge for 90 days due to the outbreak. The former Columbia Basin Health Association building was being turned into an emergency center for staff who preferred to be isolated if they believed they were exposed and did not want to infect their own families. The City was expanding Wi-Fi services to allow guest log ins for students who didn't have access to the internet to do school homework.

PROCLAMATION – DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

City Administrator Maria Peña reported that on February 29, 2020, Governor Inslee signed a Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency for all counties in Washington State due to the number of confirmed cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 18 the Franklin County Commissioners also declared a state of emergency for Franklin County. Provided for Council was a Proclamation from Mayor Barrow declaring an emergency for the City of Connell, it was read aloud.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-03 – PROCLAIMING DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY (COVID-19)

Presented to Council was Resolution No. 2020-03, Proclaiming a Declaration of Emergency in the City of Connell due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019. In approving the Mayor would be empowered to take whatever measures he deemed necessary and reasonable to respond to the threat of COVID-19 to protect the public health and safety of the City's residents during this state of emergency.

Motion: Councilmember Escalera moved to adopt Resolution No. 2020-03 Declaring an Emergency due to the Coronavirus. Councilmember Barrera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

H.R. 6201 – FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT

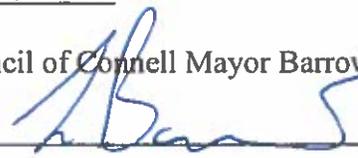
On March 18, 2020 the Senate passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. The provisions would go into effect on April 2, 2020 and would remain in effect until December 31, 2020. This was an economic stimulus plan aimed at addressing the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on Americans and it introduced paid sick leave and an expanded family and medical leave act to the nation's employers. Under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, full-time eligible employees were allowed up to 80 hours (2 weeks) of paid leave at their regular rate of pay if they were sick or quarantined. If an employee was absent to care for a family member or child, sick pay was based on 2/3 of the regular rate of pay. Under the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act, employees could take up to 12 weeks of job protected leave for certain qualifying reasons beyond what was currently permitted under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This included the need to stay home to care for a child due to a public health emergency which included the closure of schools or daycare facilities. The expanded protected leave was not related to whether an employee or a family member was required to isolate or quarantine.

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MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business before the City Council of Connell Mayor Barrow adjourned the meeting at 7:37 pm.

ATTEST: 
Marissa Ortiz, City Clerk


Lee Barrow, Mayor