

NEW YORK MILLS CITY COUNCIL
March 18, 2020
5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The emergency meeting of the New York Mills City Council was called to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Hall Building at 28 Centennial 84 Dr. West, New York Mills, Minnesota all members of the Council having been notified of the meeting and the business to be transacted.

Members Present Maki, Roder, Hetland, Hoaby, and Nesland

Members Absent none

Staff Present City Clerk Julie Roberts, Public Works Director Kyle Mattson, and Police Chief James Gritz, Fire Chief Ryan Brasel

Guests Present None

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

Mayor Maki presented a Proclamation and Declaration of Emergency for the City of New York Mills. This document will allow the council to conduct meetings electronically and communicate electronically and puts open meeting law aside:

CITY OF NEW YORK MILLS, MINNESOTA
RESOLUTION NO. 03-18-2020

WHEREAS, the virus named "SARS-CoV-2," is a new strain of coronavirus that has not previously been identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person and which causes a disease named "coronavirus disease in 2019," commonly known as "COVID-19," which is a respiratory disease that can result in serious injury or death; and **WHEREAS**, on January 21, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the United States; on March 6, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the State of Minnesota; and as of March 18, 2020, there are seventy seven known cases of COVID-19 in Minnesota.

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19, beginning on January 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a National Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Tim Walz declared a Peacetime State of Emergency to authorize all necessary resources to be used in support of the COVID-19 response; and

WHEREAS, as of March 17, 2020 the World Health Organization Situation Report confirmed a total of 179,000 cases of COVID-19 in over 154 countries, including 7,426 deaths; and as of March 18, 2020 a total of 77 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been identified by the World Health Organization as a pandemic, and the United States Centers for Disease Control has provided guidance for individuals, healthcare professionals, and businesses to slow the spread of COVID-19, which include cancelling or postponing in-person events that involve more than ten people for eight weeks; and

WHEREAS, local cases will trigger a more aggressive public health response and are predicted to impact residents of New York Mills and those who work in or travel through the City, including City employees; and the need for social

distancing, school closings, and quarantine methods to stop the spread of COVID-19 is expected to cause significant challenges; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, City Clerk and Emergency Management Director find that this situation threatens the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the community and will cause a significant impact on the ability of public safety personnel to address any immediate dangers to the public as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, City Clerk and Emergency Management Director find that traditional sources of financial aid, assistance and relief will not be able to compensate for the potential impact of COVID-19, and have determined that the necessary resources to respond to and recover from this pandemic will exceed those resources available within the City of New York Mills, and additional resources will be needed from county, state and federal sources.

WHEREAS, Under the authority given by Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, Mayor Marsha Maki declares that a local emergency exists within the City of New York Mills, effective March 18, 2020, and that it is in the best interest of the citizens of New York Mills to invoke all the powers and responsibilities attending thereto as provided by Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 12 and further proclaims that such emergency constitutes a declared emergency.

WHEREAS, said City Council does hereby find that the aforesaid conditions warrant and necessitate the Mayor's Proclamation and Declaration of Emergency dated March 18, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED, DECLARED AND ORDERED that said local emergency shall be deemed to exist and the Mayor's Proclamation and Declaration of Emergency dated March 18, 2020 is approved until its termination is proclaimed by the City Council of the City of New York Mills, Minnesota.

Adopted by the City Council this 18th day of March, 2020

Marsha Maki, Mayor

Julie Roberts, City Clerk

A motion was made by Nesland to approve the Proclamation and Declaration of Emergency. The motion was seconded by Roder. Discussion ensued and Roberts asked for clarification as to who is considered the Emergency Management Director. There is no documentation in place as to who that is. After discussion, new motion was made by Nesland to name Kyle Mattson as the Emergency Management Director, with Brasel and Gritz at his team. The motion was seconded by Hoaby. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

The department heads updates:

Roberts indicated that a document was put out on the city website and facebook page indicating actions that are being made by the City regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. On Sale liquor business has been closed and the Off Sale will remain open at this time. The office has communicated to our customers alternative ways to make utility payments. The city office will remain open at this time, but this may change as issues develop. Building maintenance is doing extra rounds of wiping down doors and surfaces. The senior citizens center will continue to deliver meals on wheels and are offering frozen meals to be delivered. The center is also offering to make delivery of other items that their clients may need. Other individuals in the community have posted on facebook that they are willing to do shopping and make deliveries for those who are shut in.

Roder added that Friendly Rider out of Wadena is willing to also do these services and she directed them to the Senior Center and the City Office.

Mattson has been in contact with many organizations to make sure he is following proper protocol. He is offer flexible schedules to his people to accommodate childcare needs and separation of people
Brasel is having a Fire Department meeting late in the evening on March 18, 2020, to discuss protocol and how this pandemic will affect how the fire department does their jobs.

Gritz has imposed safety protocol for his people and will be allowing some flexibility as needed to work schedules and safety concerns.

Roberts reviewed what other cities are doing for paying their employees through this pandemic. The League of Minnesota Cities has encourages cities to keep employees working as best they can and to be creative with use of paid time off benefits. Nesland added that he keeping people busy is the first choice, but to allow employees to use paid time off banks and let them run in arrears and pay back the hours later in the year or if the Federal or State governments offer relief of any kind, the balances can be replenished. The group was in favor of proceeding with that plan.

Roberts asked that someone address the people who gather at the senior center. It appears they need help in making a plan for picking up the meals on wheels. The drivers appear to be gathering inside the center while they wait for the packaging of meals to be completed. Chief Gritz said he would go talk to them.

Kyle explained that in the emergency order handed down from the state and federal level indicates that utilities cannot be turned off. There are customers with past due amounts that will continue to grow. Our normal course is to turn off the utilities. Since this is not an option, Mattson asked if the council felt it was appropriate to just certify past due balances to the County Auditor for inclusion on the tax roll. Nesland made a motion to proceed with that plan during this pandemic period. The motion was seconded by Roder. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Roberts referred to the Drinking Water Notice that Mattson had sent out to the council. She just wanted clarification that this was created as a tool in case customers started to raise concern about the water supply. Mattson confirmed that it was created as a tool, but will not be sent out unless concerns arise from our customers.

Roberts distributed a document from the MMUA regarding COVID-19 protocol for information purposes only.

Future meetings and decision will be done via electronic form going forward until the pandemic restrictions are lifted as directed in the Mayor Proclamation and Declaration of Emergency.

Adjournment – A motion was made by Nesland and seconded by Hetland to adjourn. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Julie A. Roberts
City Clerk