

GREENWOOD CITY COUNCIL

March 27, 2020 - 10:59 a.m.

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES**

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PRESENT

Council Members: Mayor Brandon A. Smith, Niki Hutto, Linda Edwards, Betty Boles, Johnathan Bass, Matthew Miller, and Ronnie Ables; City Manager Julie Wilkie, Assistant to the City Manager Ryan Thomas, City Clerk Steffanie Dorn, Fire Chief Terry Strange, IT Director Danny Byrd, and City/County Building Official James Whittaker. James Hicks from the Index-Journal.

(Several other people were in attendance by telephone but were not identified. A full list of attendees were included in these minutes.)

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CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brandon Smith called the teleconference meeting to order at 10:59 a.m. and gave the invocation.

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STATEMENT AND  
QUORUM

After City Clerk Steffanie Dorn confirmed a quorum was present, Mayor Smith read the following statement, "In accordance with SC Code of Laws 5-7-250(d) council may adopt emergency ordinances without regard to any reading, public hearing, publication requirement or public notice. However, I understand that an agenda has been posted on the front door of City Hall and notification of this meeting has been given to the news media." He further stated, "For this specific agenda, there is no time for public comment. However, if we must continue to meet electronically, we will allow for public comment on items as required by law."

CONSIDER

Ordinance No. 20-005 an Emergency Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Greenwood to Temporarily Suspend the Normal Operating Procedures Applicable to Council Meetings and to Authorize the City Manager to Continue Developing, Implementing, and Revising as Necessary Plans Intended to Protect the Safety and Health of Citizens and City Employees, to Continue to Provide Delivery of Government services, and to Restrict the Spread of the Covid-19 Virus.

Under the only New Business, City Manager Julia Wilkie acknowledged this pandemic required social distancing measures and asked Council to temporarily suspend normal meeting procedures by replacing them with remote meetings by electronic means, or by telephone. These meetings will still require a quorum to be present and will allow for public participation. She confirmed to Mayor Smith that this ordinance will formally put these procedures in place in order to continue to conduct the business of the City.

City Manager Wilkie informed Council that this ordinance will also give her the flexibility to extend the business license fee deadline to June 5<sup>th</sup> without passing another ordinance. City Clerk Steffanie Dorn informed Councilor Betty Boles that, even though Federal taxes were extended to July 15<sup>th</sup>, City businesses are required to pay their license fees on June 5<sup>th</sup> to prevent them from going into deeper debt and help preserve the City's cash flow. By that time, businesses should have proof of income from their filed taxes but, if they haven't paid their federal taxes, paying an estimated amount can help them avoid a 10% penalty.

City Manager Wilkie also informed Council of the intent to extend Hospitality and Accommodations Tax deadlines to June 20<sup>th</sup>. If they're not paid after that date, there will be three months of penalties charged to delinquent businesses. Normally, payment is scheduled for the 20<sup>th</sup> of the next month but, by extending March and April payment deadlines, it should encourage them to pay their taxes (which should be lower than usual because of this pandemic) on time.

Finally, City Manager Wilkie also informed Council of the intent to extend commercial sanitation payments to June 10<sup>th</sup> to help alleviate the financial strain on local businesses.

According to State law, this emergency ordinance will expire May 27, 2020, unless a renewal is needed. Anything after that date will require another ordinance.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Councilor Boles wanted to know if there would be any forgiveness for businesses who may still be strapped for cash, or closed down, and unable to pay their back-taxes after these deadlines. City Manager Wilkie stated that businesses should already be prepared because they were given leniency at their initial due date.

City Clerk Dorn confirmed that Staff is composing a letter encouraging businesses to pay on time to receive a two-percent discount and businesses with no gross receipts can file a \$0 form. She also confirmed to Councilor Linda Edwards that the City Finance Department is already aware of businesses that were behind in paying their fees before being affected by the pandemic and will go through the process to send them court notices if payment hasn't been received after three months.

A motion to approve Ordinance No. 20-005 was made by Johnathan Bass, seconded by Niki Hutto.

Those who voted in favor were Mayor Smith, Niki Hutto, Linda Edwards, Betty Boles, Johnathan Bass, Matthew Miller, and Ronnie Ables.

The motion passed unanimously.

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CITY COMMENTS	MANAGER	There were no additional comments at this time.
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CITY COMMENTS	COUNCIL	City Manager Wilkie informed <u>Councilor Edwards</u> that she wants to defer having a work session unless something extremely important happens before the regular business meeting.
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Councilor Hutto left the meeting at 11:26 a.m.

Because of delays, City Clerk Dorn confirmed her and City Manager Wilkie's decision to postpone the City's audit until the May Council meeting. Also, the City's audit committee, consisting of Mayor Smith and Councilors Niki Hutto and Matthew Miller, must meet prior to the presentation.

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ADJOURNMENT	A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Linda Edwards, seconded by Matthew Miller.
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Those who voted in favor were Mayor Smith, Linda Edwards, Betty Boles, Johnathan Bass, Matthew Miller, and Ronnie Ables. Niki Hutto left the meeting early and did not vote.

