



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
EMERGENCY MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 13, 2020 – 2:00 PM
TAVARES CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 EAST MAIN STREET, TAVARES**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

**Amanda Boggus, Mayor
Lori Pfister, Vice Mayor
Lou Buigas, Council Member
Troy Singer, Council Member
Roy Stevenson, Council Member - *absent***

STAFF PRESENT

**John Drury, City Administrator
Bob Williams, City Attorney
Susie Novack, City Clerk
Mike Fitzgerald, Community Development Director
Bob Tweedie, Economic Development Director
Tamera Rogers, Community Services Director
Lori Houghton, Finance Director
Richard Keith, Fire Chief
Stoney Lubins, Police Chief
James Dillon, Public Works Director
Phil Clark, Utilities Director
Crissy Bublitz, Human Resources Director
Mark O'Keefe, Public Communications/Emergency Management Director**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Boggus called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Drury provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. EMERGENCY MEETING – CORONAVIRUS IMPACTS ON CITY

Tab. 1. Impacts of the Coronavirus on City Operations

Mr. Drury said the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended mitigation strategies for the State of Florida response to COVID-19 for the ensuing

weeks. After reviewing CDC recommendations and monitoring COVID-19 impacts, a City of Tavares plan has been developed. He said each community has different needs and are implementing different plans. The team assigned to the City of Tavares response plan includes the Police Chief, Fire Chief, City Administrator, Economic Development Director, Public Communications/Emergency Management Director, and Human Resources Director. The team will continue to work together to monitor and make recommendations. Mr. Drury said the Tavares response plan team is asking for final guidance on plans moving forward in the ensuing weeks.

CDC Recommendation Strategies for Florida

Mr. Drury noted Florida is a tourist hub with an older population. At this time there is no widespread transmission. The following community mitigation recommended by the CDC is as follows:

- Monitor local information
- Know the signs of illness and take appropriate action with your Doctor
- Schools and child care facilities – stay in contact with school or child care officials
- Assisted living facilities – stay in contact with assisted living facilities management team
- Provide workplace guidance
- Cancel large gatherings of 250 people or more, with persons at high risk limited to gatherings of 10 people or less

City of Tavares Employee Guidelines and Procedures

Mr. Drury noted the following guidelines have been implemented for the City of Tavares:

- City of Tavares first responders continue to serve as normal
- City of Tavares employees who are ill are encouraged to stay home
 - Employees with fever remain home for 24 hours after fever dissipates without assistance from fever reducing medications
 - If a Doctor, Health Department or Hospital determines a City of Tavares employee needs to remain quarantined due to any type of flu, the employee will remain home for fourteen days
 - City of Tavares employees sick leave will be reimbursed fourteen days due to flu
 - Sick leave will not be utilized by City of Tavares employees who continue to work remotely
 - Travel eliminated for all City of Tavares employees until further notice
 - Senior Shakedown limited to 10 persons
 - All City buildings limited to 250 people including the Pavilion on the Lake

Mr. Drury noted the environment is continuously changing and said current information for the City of Tavares would be available on the city website at www.tavares.org. The

City will adjust policies, plans, and procedures when the CDC makes recommended changes.

Mr. Drury noted there are several upcoming events including those organized by outside entities. He said staff has requested outside entities document to the City if they will have more than or less than 250 participants. Mr. Drury said the Florida Vintage Race Boat event scheduled March 14-15, 2020 has indicated they will have less than 250 participants. Events that expect over 250 participants would not be permitted to move forward. Staff is recommending the city-organized event, Seaplane A Palooza, be cancelled. All remaining events would move forward through April, with an update provided to Council in May to reassess the plan. Mr. Drury said staff is asking for guidance from Council on upcoming events and in particular the Sunnyland Antique Boat Show. He noted members of the business community were present to express their thoughts.

Freddy Belton, Business Owner, noted he is in favor of keeping events and businesses open and letting people determine whether or not they wish to attend.

Andrew O'Keefe, O'Keefe's Restaurant, said he is in support of continuing upcoming events. He said people can make their own decision to attend events and Tavares should remain business as usual.

J. Scott Berry, Executive Director, Tavares Chamber of Commerce, said the Chamber's Executive Committee is cancelling all events, with the exception of a golf tournament, for the next thirty days. He said cancellations through April is in line of most Chamber's throughout Lake County and Central Florida. He said the Chamber supports the business community as well as guidance from the CDC.

Bridget Fitzpatrick, Jones Brothers Seaplanes, said Jones Brothers Seaplane Requests Seaplane A Palooza be rescheduled and not cancelled. She said Jones Brothers Seaplane Bingo will be rescheduled to a future date per CDC recommendations.

Alex Cook, Key West Resort, said the Sunnyland Boat Festival is an outdoor event and varying age groups attend. He said attendees should determine their own self-quarantine needs. Mr. Cook said all aspects of an event should be considered before cancelling.

Terry Feist, Chairman, Sunnyland Boat Show, said the event draws from 27 states and Canada. He noted many sponsors and attendees have canceled, and said the Sunnyland Executive Committee would like to continue with the event. Mr. Feist said the Sunnyland Executive Committee and Chapter will acquiesce and support the city's decision.

Mayor Boggus asked if Sunnyland has the ability to reschedule the event. Mr. Feist said the Sunnyland Chapter is part of a larger organization that has other events

scheduled throughout the country each month. He said if the event is cancelled they will come back with an event next year.

Mr. Drury asked Mr. Feist if Sunnyland would implement mitigation strategies such as not permitting attendees who have traveled out of the country or on a cruise in the past fourteen days or those with fevers, and adding hand washing stations. Mr. Feist confirmed and said procedures could be implemented at the front gate. Mr. Drury asked if the event could be downsized to 250 persons or less. Mr. Feist said no as they have over 200 registered boats for the show itself. Mr. Drury said he has enjoyed working with Mr. Feist over the past 13 years and the city will continue to assist the event while balancing the city's due diligence during a national tragedy. He said events are important to businesses and the community.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from Council.

Mr. Drury noted Council Member Stevenson planned to attend the meeting by teleconference if his schedule allowed. He asked if Council Member Stevenson was present by phone. There was no response.

Council Member Buigas asked if the Governor cancelled all activities by State of Emergency. Mr. Drury said no. Council Member Buigas noted her support to move forward with events if held outdoors.

Council Member Singer noted these unprecedented times have closed Disney World for a month. He said the CDC recommended all events with 250 or more attendees be cancelled. Council Member Singer said he understands events are held outdoors and noted his support for city events and businesses. He said there are 20 million residents in the state with 42 positive cases and percentages need to be taken into consideration. He asked if the St. Patrick's Day event, which is not city sponsored, will move forward. Mr. Drury said the city would ask the event sponsor to issue a letter stating there will be less than 250 attendees in order to move forward. He said if there are more than 250 people anticipated to attend the city would not issue a permit. Council Member Singer asked what the current event permit allows. Mr. Drury said the permit allows for a street closure, entertainment in the sidewalk, and city supported barricades.

Vice Mayor Pfister said events should move forward as scheduled including the St. Patrick's Day event and Seaplane A Palooza. She said people should be able to make their own decision to attend. She said the CDC has made recommendations only at this time. Vice Mayor Pfister said she is not in support of closing the Pavilion on the Lake or cancelling the Sunnyland Antique Boat Show and the city should move forward with every event as planned.

Mayor Boggus said she is not in support of limiting events as long as the CDC mitigations are recommendations only. She said the public who is ill should be encouraged to stay home and warn at-risk populations to avoid festivals or large groups.

Vice Mayor Pfister noted she does not wish any conditions be placed on events.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to continue all City events as planned with no conditions, and for staff to move forward with events as originally planned.

Council Member Buigas said she would 2nd the motion as long as an addendum limiting the Senior Shakedown and enclosed areas is added. She noted her support for events as long as they are open air.

Vice Mayor Pfister said the age group that attends the Senior Shakedown understands their immune system may be compromised when determining to attend or not. Council Member Buigas noted a concern for the city and asked about liability. Attorney Williams said mitigation requirements are too attenuated for the city to have liability. He said procedurally there has been a conditional second, and a second to the motion should be made to move forward with discussion. Council Member Buigas said she would withdraw her conditional motion, as long as the city has no liability.

Council Member Buigas seconded the motion.

Mayor Boggus asked for any further discussion.

The motion carried 3 to 1 as follows:

Amanda Boggus: Yes
Lori Pfister: Yes
Lou Buigas: Yes
Troy Singer: No

Mayor Boggus asked if issues can be re-addressed at the next City Council meeting [scheduled May 18, 2020.] Mr. Drury said the Sunnyland Antique Boat Show will be moving forward unless the organizers decide to cancel. Mr. Drury said the City of Tavares will continue to support events as they are currently scheduled. He said there are no more items for discussion as the meeting is single purpose.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Mayor Boggus adjourned the meeting at 2:39.

Respectfully submitted,

Susie Novack, MMC/FCRM
City Clerk