

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GALVESTON
SPECIAL MEETING - APRIL 23, 2020**

4/23/2020 - Minutes

1. DECLARATION OF A QUORUM AND CALL MEETING TO ORDER

With a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 1:15 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present (via videoconference): Mayor James Yarbrough, Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Craig Brown, Council Member Amy Bly, Council Member David Collins, Council Member Jason Hardcastle, Council Member John Listowski, and Council Member Dr. Jackie Cole.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Items - a total of 202 comments were received all related to COVID-19 with the following breakdown: 84 in favor of opening the beaches; 9 in favor of keeping the beaches closed; 38 related to opening the businesses; 18 related to the draft reopening plan; 2 related to assistance for small businesses; 6 in favor of opening the golf courses and tennis courts; 6 in favor of opening short term rentals, hotels, and bed and breakfasts; 2 are requests to open churches; 2 are medical questions related to COVID-19; 8 related to wearing face masks; 1 related to gathering on the Seawall; 18 related to help for the homeless population in Galveston; 1 in favor of opening the fishing piers; 2 requests to allow fishing charters; 2 in favor of allowing pet grooming; 2 related to swimming pools; and 1 related to the enforcement of current stay at home order.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.A. Update On Corona Virus/COVID-19 (B. Maxwell)

Mayor Yarbrough reported on meetings with the County and other cities within the County on a standardized reopening plan, a meeting with Judge Hidalgo on timing for Harris County's plan, and the City Manager had a meeting with Nim Kidd regarding reopening. City Manager Brian Maxwell provided the following update: we continue to perform very well on testing, our current testing is at 2% or less; we have tested about 3% of the population; we are running out of q-tips; there is an issue of an explosion of cases in the Texas prison system; now splitting testing site times with League City; the Governor is asking everyone to stay the course and if in doubt keep it closed; the Governor is working with the federal government on testing supplies; the Governor clarified golf course order again today; we still have about 40 employees working remotely; he met with the hoteliers, businesses, large attractions, and fishing piers; the Governor will announce a plan on Monday; the beaches being closed is not about contracting the virus on the beach, it is about limiting points of contact for first responders; factors in the reopening plan the three top priorities are supply chain, points of contact for first responders, and safety of the citizens. Mayor Yarbrough reported on testing results provided by Dr. Keiser. Discussion was held regarding testing times and locations in Galveston, the difference of city and the Governor's restrictions, statistical data of nursing homes, and the homeless coalitions efforts to assist the unsheltered population.

4.B. Discussion Of The Draft Reopening Plan (B. Maxwell)

Mayor Yarbrough reported that all is moot until we hear from the Governor. If the Governor gives the okay, this would be the starting point of the basis of what the city is doing. Council Members provided comments and suggestions regarding the city's draft reopening plan.

4.C. Discussion Of Issues Related To Municipal Elections; Dates, Early Voting And Any Related Matters (Legal)

City Attorney Don Glywasky provided an update on a possible election date in July. He reported that the Governor has expressed that under the Election Code he does not believe he has authority to allow a general election to occur on any day other than the uniform election dates in May and November. He reported on two lawsuits related to mail in ballots.

5. ACTION ITEMS

- 5.A. Consider For Approval An Ordinance Of The City Of Galveston, Texas; Modifying Certain Emergency Orders Ratified By City Council In Ordinance 20-28; Making Various Findings And Provisions Related To The Subject, Providing For A Penalty And Providing For An Effective Date.

Motion was made by Mayor Yarbrough, second by MPT Brown, to extend the orders through April 30.

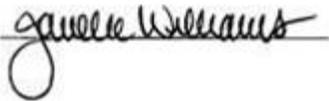
Discussion was held regarding a plan for opening the beaches. City Manager Brian Maxwell reported that the City has not heard back from the GLO regarding a plan to open the beaches.

An amendment to the motion was made by CM Listowski, second by CM Hardcastle, to open the beaches as stated in the draft report as follows: the beaches will be opened to pedestrians in the morning from 6:00 - 9:00 a.m. seven days a week; no masks will be required; no sitting, laying or other stationary act will be allowed on beaches during this time; fishing from rock piers will be allowed during the same days and hours as mentioned above; surfing will be allowed during the same days and hours mentioned above; to be effective Monday, April 27. In favor: Collins, Hardcastle, Listowski, and Cole. In opposition: Yarbrough, Brown, and Bly. Motion carries.

The original motion, with the amendment to reopen the beaches, was unanimously approved.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.



Janelle Williams, City Secretary
Date Approved: June 25, 2020