

**CITY OF HESSTON  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**MINUTES of April 2, 2020**

**Council Meeting No. 5**

The special meeting of the Hesston City Council was held on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. via video teleconference displayed in the Council Chamber / Municipal Court Building located at 110 E. Smith Street.

**PRESENT**

Council members Larry Fuqua, Jason Jones, Brad Unruh, Clare Moore and Susan Swartzendruber, City Administrator Gary Emry and City Clerk Jason Thrasher with Mayor David Kauffman presiding. A quorum was present.

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Adam Strunk with the Hesston Record

**ZOOM MEETING DISCUSSION**

One of the purposes of the Special Meeting was to review and test the protocols for conducting a video teleconference meeting using Zoom Meeting software. It was discussed how we would keep this meeting and future meetings of this type open to the public.

Meeting agendas and Zoom Meeting invitation links would be posted on our website. The Council Chambers would be open during the meeting and the meeting displayed on the overhead monitors. Up to 9 residents could attend in-person. Others could join the internet-based video meeting via the invitations posted on the website or via telephone.

**COVID-19 DISCUSSION**

City Administrator Gary Emry gave an update on information he has received from teleconferences, email briefings, and webinars from a variety of sources including local Council of Governments, League of Kansas Municipalities (LKM), Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Kansas Governors briefing, and White House briefing to state and local municipalities.

The following is a summary of recent information received from an LKM meeting of 4/2:

- The city should expect the pandemic to impact the 2020 budget with reductions in sales tax revenue, property tax revenue and franchise fees.
- Federal relief funds, provided to each State, would be passed to local governments with populations of 500,000+ under current guidelines. Under this scenario, local government monies allocated to the State of Kansas would only go to a couple of counties that meet those population levels. The Governor's office will be working with the federal government to come up with a more equitable distribution of those funds so that more rural municipalities would also see a benefit.
- On March 29<sup>th</sup>, the President issued a disaster declaration that included the State of Kansas which would free up FEMA funds. Staff will be documenting pandemic related costs and losses.

Next, he described the staffing schedules within the various city departments that would allow for social distancing while still providing city services. Specific social distancing protocols for each department was discussed. It was reported that the city would follow the Governors stay-at-home order until April 19<sup>th</sup> and then reassess.

It was reported that a variance request has been received and that legal will be engaged to advise how to handle the public meeting aspect of the variance process. A variance requires a public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Board which would be an issue under current social distancing guidelines that limit gatherings to 10 people or less.

A question was raised regarding the status of our wastewater treatment plant. It was reported that we have regular staff stationed at the plant to handle any issues.

It was discussed if the City would distribute any information to the private sector regarding grants and relief funding related to the recently passed CARES Act. It was noted that the Hesston Chamber has been providing that information to its members. There was also a recent Zoom meeting on this subject that was conducted by Representative Stephen Owens.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Relief Act was discussed and staff's efforts in working with our attorneys to understand the details of the act.

A question was raised regarding meeting protocol and if we could have a camera set up to allow constituent or guests to speak during a video teleconference meeting. It was reported that staff had a process that would allow for constituency or guest comments.

At 4:46 p.m. Clare Moore moved to adjourn the meeting. Jason Jones seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

These are Draft Minutes until approved at the next regular council meeting scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on April 13, 2020.

Audio of this meeting can be found on the City of Hesston website at [www.hesstonks.org](http://www.hesstonks.org) under Document Center / Minutes / 2020.

Recorded by  
Jason Thrasher  
City Clerk