



MINUTES

**Town of Weaverville
State of North Carolina**

**Town Council Regular Workshop
Tuesday, April 14, 2020**

Remote Electronic Meeting

Zoom: <http://us04web.zoom.us/j/167912792>

The Town Council for the Town of Weaverville met for its regularly scheduled workshop on Tuesday, April 14, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. as a remote electronic video meeting via Zoom Meeting.

Councilmembers remotely present were: Mayor Al Root, Vice Mayor Doug Jackson, and Councilmembers Dottie Sherrill, Jeffrey McKenna, Andrew Nagle, and Patrick Fitzsimmons.

Staff remotely present was: Town Manager Selena Coffey, Town Attorney Jennifer Jackson, Town Clerk Derek Huninghake, Finance Officer Tonya Dozier, Police Chief Ron Davis, Fire Chief Ted Williams, Town Planner James Eller, Public Works Director Dale Pennell and Water Treatment Supervisor Trent Duncan.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Root called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Town's Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

The Town of Weaverville Department Heads reviewed their slides from the Power point presentation that is attached.

Councilmember Nagle wondered 1) what the Town can and can't do in regard to following the authority given by the State and County, 2) can the Town ask the online payment company if we can waive the fee for payments at this time or if we can pay it, and what the estimated sales tax loss would be for the Town.

Town Attorney Jackson noted that the Governor's declaration applies to everyone. She believes that if the County wants to be more restrictive than the State, it can do so but the more restrictive County restrictions are only effective in the municipal jurisdictions if the respective mayors consent to them. The Town of Weaverville can always make it more restrictive as well but the question was whether the Town can be less restrictive than the County. Town Attorney believes that to be an option for the Town but will confirm.

Town Manager Coffey mentioned that the fee is \$2.95 per transaction for payment on water bills online and she was looking into trying to do away with this fee, but if this is possible there are some statements that Town Council will have to approve. She wonders whether jumping through the steps to do this will be effective given that we are hopefully rounding the corner for this to end and it would not be fair to others that have made those payments. There are other payment options, besides paying online, for the citizens and customers to pay their bills without incurring any fees, including: bank draft for water bills, drop boxes at Town Hall, and payment by mail.

As for the sales tax, Town Manager Coffey noted that the County is looking at lowering their sales tax projections by about 20% to 30% and to us that equals out to about \$500,000.

Councilmember Sherrill wondered where the new storage units for Public Works will be placed. Public Works Director Dale Pennell mentioned that they had been installed down where the old quarry used to be, beyond the gate heading toward the firing range.

Vice Mayor Jackson asked when we start to get over this pandemic, are we going to go through phases to get operations back up in the Town. Town Manager Coffey mentioned that she is keeping an eye on what other Towns are planning on doing, but the Small Town Strong initiative will be apart of this to help get information to the community about local businesses and to also get some input from the local businesses on how the community can help them get back up. She is hearing that we should be getting back to normal sometime in the May timeframe and she and Mayor Root have discussed some strategies to help the local businesses out.

Councilmember McKenna mentioned that several companies he works with are rethinking how they do business, including how they deploy people, conduct meetings, and use physical buildings. He wondered if the Town vision would change since there could be a ripple affect when businesses change. Mayor Root noted that this would be a great opportunity for us to rethink our Town model. Councilmember Fitzsimmons mentioned that, after this public health emergency has passed, having large gatherings may not be the norm anymore, so do we rethink about having big meeting rooms in the future.

3. Potential Action

Town Manager Selena Coffey noted that she is recommending a resolution to designate a primary and secondary applicant agent for the Town FEMA reimbursement. She is recommending that Fire Chief Ted Williams be the primary agent and she will be the secondary agent. Town Attorney Jennifer Jackson mentioned that this essentially assigns the paperwork submittal to the primary agent for FEMA reimbursements.

Vice Mayor Jackson made a motion to approve the Designation of Applicant's Agent Resolution. Councilmember Fitzsimmons seconded the motion. The motion passed by a majority vote of Council. Motion carries 5-0

Town Attorney Jennifer Jackson mentioned that it is important that we continue our governmental operations including an ability for Town Council on other public boards to continue to meet. The opinion has been given that public bodies can have remote electronic meeting, including public comment, and comply with Open Meetings law that guarantees transparency in government. The resolution before Town Council adopts special rules for remote electronic meetings and public hearings during the COVID-19 public health emergency. It authorizes the Mayor and board chairman to convert the Town's public meetings and public hearings to remote electronic meetings and to only allow in-person meetings and hearings if the gathering limitations and social distancing requirements can be observed.

Councilmember Nagle made a motion to approve the Resolution adopting Special Rules for Remote Electronic Meetings and Public Hearings during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency as presented. Councilmember McKenna seconded the motion. The motion passed by a majority vote of Council. Motion carries 5-0

4. Adjournment

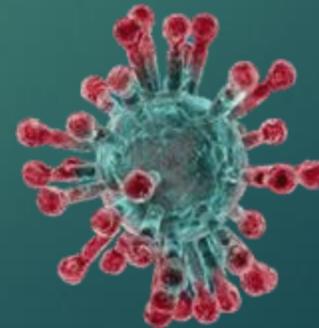
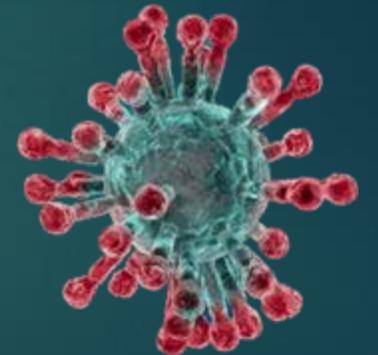
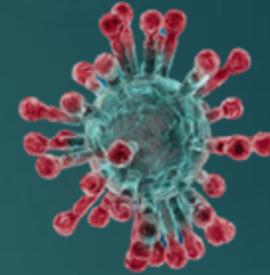
Councilmember Sherrill made the motion to adjourn; Vice Mayor/Councilmember Jackson seconded and all voted to adjourn the Council's workshop meeting at 7:25 p.m.



Derek K. Huninghake, Town Clerk

Town Council Workshop Town Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2020



Town Response to COVID-19

- ▶ Town Manager
- ▶ Fire Department
- ▶ Police Department
- ▶ Public Works
- ▶ Water Resources
- ▶ Planning and Code Enforcement
- ▶ Legal
- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Action Steps

Town Manager's Office

➤ Town Manager Selena Coffey

▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Guidance to departments regarding safety and operations protocols
- ▶ Closure of Town-owned buildings and park facilities
- ▶ Suspension of water disconnections
- ▶ Implementation of temporary advance sick leave policy and new federal leave benefits
- ▶ Implementation of Emergency Telework Policy and coordination of administrative staff working remotely where possible
- ▶ Communication to public via social media, website, e-Focus updates
- ▶ Submission of regular Situation Reports to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- ▶ Regular interaction with municipal managers and county administration

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Participation in Buncombe County Joint Information Center (JIC), EPI-Team, and Emergency Operations Command (EOC)
- ▶ Continued on-site and remote work
- ▶ Development and implementation of employee-related federal policies
- ▶ Continued strategy development to facilitate maximum Town operations and services
- ▶ Development and implementation of the Weaverville Small-Town-Strong Initiative and other strategies to help "reboot" local economy
- ▶ Development and revisions to proposed budget in light of COVID-19 considerations

Weaverville Fire Department

➤ Chief Ted Williams

▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Dispatch protocol revisions for sick calls
- ▶ Normal to reduced call volume
- ▶ Increased cleaning of the station and apparatus
- ▶ Personnel monitoring temperatures twice per shift
- ▶ PPE supplies ordered but some on backorder
- ▶ Part of command staff within the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) since open

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Working within our normal supply chains as well as through the EOC to procure the PPE that may be needed based on predictions
- ▶ Staying abreast of the constant guidance changes through CDC and local medical control for how we are to respond and what PPE is to be worn based on call dynamics
- ▶ Continue to function within the EOC to assist with response planning and provide timely information back to the manager
- ▶ Serving as FEMA applicant's agent for disaster recovery

Weaverville Police Department

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➤ Chief Ron Davis

▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Personnel self-monitoring of temperatures at shift change and increased cleaning protocols for department/patrol cars and equipment
- ▶ Limiting normal proactive and public-engaging activities, only responding to the most urgent public safety needs
- ▶ Addressing routine calls and reports by phone or other non-contact solutions
- ▶ Procured N95 masks and fit tested all officers as required
- ▶ Number of calls are near normal; some reduction in crimes such as larceny
- ▶ Additional patrols of closed businesses or those with modified hours
- ▶ Additional patrols at closed Town parks and buildings

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Adding reserve officers in preparation for need
- ▶ Assisting with meal site at Weaverville Elementary School

Public Works Department

➤ Public Works Director Dale Pennell

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▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Self-monitoring of staff temperatures each morning and evening
- ▶ Sanitizing building's interiors twice daily
- ▶ Utilizing extra vehicles where possible to transport personnel to lessen in-vehicle contact
- ▶ Routine social distancing, use of masks as necessary, and hand washing and sanitizer

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Decreased public activity allowing for increased work on projects
- ▶ All public services continue, including garbage pickup, water production and maintenance, brush and yard debris collection, water meter reading, 811 utility responses, mowing in parks and road shoulders
- ▶ Garbage collections up from approximately 7 tons daily to 12.5 tons daily

Water Resources

➤ Water Superintendent Trent Duncan

▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Personnel self-monitoring of temperatures each morning and evening
- ▶ Sanitizing building's interiors multiple times daily
- ▶ Practicing social distancing measures in house and in the field

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Adjusted run schedules to provide water supply as needed to the Town while practicing social distancing in the plant
- ▶ Networking with all departments electronically to uphold the Town's high level of service
- ▶ Delayed all contractors for current onsite projects and have limited deliveries to essential products

Planning and Code Enforcement

➤ Planning Director James Eller

▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Applications accepted via electronic submittal
- ▶ Site inspections performed within social distancing guidelines
- ▶ Zoning and sign permits issued electronically
- ▶ Enforcement visits addressed within social distancing guidelines

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Educating the development community
- ▶ Providing services for developers and property owners if services can be addressed electronically or via telephone

Legal

➤ Town Attorney Jennifer Jackson

▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Review and analysis of federal, state and local emergency declarations
- ▶ Develop Emergency Telework Policy
- ▶ Develop remote electronic meetings rules in compliance with Open Meetings Law
- ▶ Compliance with Families First Coronavirus Response Act
 - ▶ Guidance Documents
 - ▶ Assistance with Leave Requests
- ▶ Develop Supplemental Safety Rules related to COVID-19
- ▶ ABC – Store Security, Liquor Buyback Policy, Operational Changes

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Staying up-to-date with governmental briefings and SOG/NCLM postings
- ▶ Compliance with federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations
- ▶ Priority to COVID-19 Related Requests
- ▶ Normal support to departments
- ▶ Continued work on larger projects

Finance

➤ Finance Director Tonya Dozier

▶ Operational Response:

- ▶ Benefit-related issues
- ▶ Increases in use of online payment system
- ▶ Installation of additional drop box at front of Town Hall
- ▶ Suspension of water disconnections and late fees for non-payment
- ▶ In compliance with LGC regulations, reduced frequency of bank visits

▶ Ongoing Operations:

- ▶ Tracking all COVID-19 related expenses for possible reimbursement
- ▶ Monitoring any COVID-19 related employee leave requests
- ▶ Payment plans for large water balances
- ▶ Forecasting effects on next fiscal year revenues
- ▶ Managing finance staff that is working remotely

Action

- ▶ Resolution Designating FEMA Applicant's Agent
- ▶ Resolution re Special Rules for Remote Electronic Meetings