



# City Commission Work Session Minutes

March 26, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

City Hall, Commissioner Chambers  
401 S. Park Avenue | Winter Park, Florida

## Present

Mayor Steve Leary

Commissioner Greg Seidel

Commissioner Sarah Sprinkel

Commissioner Carolyn Cooper

Commissioner Todd Weaver

Commissioner-elect Marty Sullivan

Commissioner-elect Sheila DeCiccio

City Manager Randy Knight

City Attorney Kurt Ardaman

City Clerk Rene Cranis

The work session was conducted via GoToWebinar.

Prior to the meeting, Mayor Leary reviewed the protocol for this work session. Attorney Ardaman reminded panelists to state their name before speaking for the benefit of those that are listening via phone.

Mayor Leary called the work session to order at 5:02 p.m.

### 1. Test of technology in preparation for future Commission meetings.

Mayor Leary stated Mr. Knight will lead the discussion. All panelists will be muted during the presentation with comments and questions to taken after the discussion.

Mr. Knight stated although Commissioner Cooper's camera is not operating, she is participating with audio only.

### 2. Update on COVID-19 preparations and actions.

Mr. Knight reviewed the commission and city manager's role during emergency situations. He gave an update on essential and non-essential operations of the city and adjustments made to maintain essential functions in compliance with CDC requirements and Mayor Demings Executive Order.

Fire Chief Dan Hagedorn stated the Fire Department is under normal operations with an additional transport vehicle, de-contamination equipment in vehicles and portable units. Supply levels are adequate to last 2-3 weeks. He reviewed data on cases and demographics in Orange County and the State of Florida.

Mr. Knight provided operational status of Police Department operations and communications efforts through social media, website and press releases.

Parks and Recreation Director Jason Seeley summarized the cancellation of programs and events and closure of venues and parks. Staff is rolling out virtual programs for youth and adults and a drive-in movie in partnership with the Enzian Theater. Maintenance in landscaping, urban forestry and lakes divisions continue with social distancing. He asked for direction on closure of the golf course and boat ramp to comply with the stay at home order by Orange County.

Mr. Knight stated water and wastewater plants are fully operational and maintenance crews are working rotating schedules. Construction crews are on call, office staff is working as needed and utility locators continue to work. A decision may be needed whether to slow down or stop discretionary undergrounding. Public Works crews are working rotating shifts and management and exempt staff are working from home. Building permits and inspections have increased and inspectors continue to do inspections, but exterior only. Permit staff is working rotating shifts.

Mr. Knight reviewed the budget impact showing reduction in revenues from taxes, rental fees, and other sources. He reviewed reduction in expenditures which include freezing vacant positions, cancellation of travel and training, purchase of non-essential equipment and supplies, reduced cost of utilities due to closure of venues and transfer from the contingency fund. He summarized the impact to the electric utility budget due to reduced commercial usage but with a slight increase with residential usage due to residents at home. In addition, with loss of jobs and income some customers may not have the ability to pay. Staff will continue to monitor the budget and adjust as necessary with budget adjustments coming to the commission for approval.

Mr. Knight stated the city has stopped utility cut-offs but may need a policy to provide for future payment. He stated that the city has been supporting its customers by directing them to agencies that can assist with utility payments and other needs, making signs for restaurants to allow for curbside pickup, and suspending industrial waste charges for restaurants. During this time of closure, Park Avenue sidewalks will be pressure washed. Staff is considering a micro-loan program for the CRA and a matching city contribution for donations to the 2-1-1 utility assistance program.

Mr. Knight advised that a resolution will be on the agenda for the March 20<sup>th</sup> special meeting to formalize the use of Communications Media Technology (CMT) for commission meetings but there may be other policy decisions that will need to be made.

Commissioner-elect Sullivan suggested that staff provide a link on the city's website to information on the CARES Act.

Commissioner Sprinkel suggested working with the League of Cities. She stated that she is reluctant to cut off use of lakes via private residences. Commissioner-elect Sullivan agreed.

In response to questions by Commissioner-elect DeCiccio, Mr. Knight stated case data can be made available but certain information cannot be released due to privacy regulations. Mayor Leary suggested that updated case data be posted on the city's website and residents directed

to the website for consistency of information being released. Chief Hagedorn pointed out that this is self-reporting situation and that there is misinformation about the number of cases in the city as non-city residents seek care at the hospital in Winter Park. Mayor Leary suggested only disclosing county-wide information rather than city specific data.

Responding to questions, Chief Hagedorn stated the quarantined city firefighters were tested through the State Department of Health. Employees will only be tested if the patient has tested positive with results expected within 24-48 hours. Employees who are exposed will be under a mandatory 14-day quarantine regardless of whether they are experiencing symptoms. Currently, three firefighters are quarantined but without symptoms.

Commissioner Seidel suggested displaying the current topic on the screen during these virtual meetings.

Commissioner Cooper thanked Mayor Leary for the videos to residents as she feels it gives comfort as would the presence of the fire and police chiefs in these videos. She suggested considering a resolution declaring a state of emergency which she feels will give more leverage if opportunities arise for FEMA reimbursement. She also suggested another security officer be assigned to the CBD and that the Police Department promote its program where the department calls on city residents to check on their well-being. She expressed her appreciation for the budget information and said that the city needs to be prepared and move staff to fill gaps.

Mayor Leary stated he has been cautious in participating in press conferences due to lack of social distancing and as a result, would not support a video including other staff members. He does not feel it is necessary to add additional police presence due to the decrease in crime and patrol efforts. He advised that golf was listed as an acceptable activity in Mayor Demings Executive Order but if the golf course or boat ramps are closed, then it needs to be enforced.

Commissioner Weaver supported closure of the golf course and boat ramps due to social distancing and said the city needs to do its part toward containing this virus. Commissioner-elect DeCiccio agreed with closure for a couple of weeks.

Commissioner-elect Sullivan stated he is in favor of shutting down the golf course; however, he feels boat ramps should not be closed since users are typically smaller groups with minimal interaction.

Commissioner Sprinkel spoke in favor of closing both the golf course and boat ramps.

Commissioner Seidel said the city should follow the same rules as Orange County for consistency of rules.

Commissioner Cooper said she feels the city should err on the side of caution and model the behavior we expect of other businesses which means shutting down the golf course and boat ramps.

After additional discussion, it was agreed to direct staff to close the golf course and boat ramps but allow use of the golf course for walking only.

Mayor Leary asked for clarification on the proposed resolution to allow for virtual meetings, temporarily; however, a policy will need to be adopted due to the passing of the charter amendment to allow for participation for future virtual meetings.

Attorney Ardaman advised that the Governor's Executive Order is controlling with respect to virtual meetings, physical presence and quorum. The City Charter specifies a quorum by physical presence and stated the resolution is appropriate to put policies and procedures in place.

Mayor Leary asked whether any item discussed today needs to be readdressed in Monday's special meeting. Commissioner-elect DeCiccio asked for an update on COVID-19 cases and Commissioner-elect Sullivan asked for an update on the budget impacts.

Commissioner Weaver expressed his concern regarding the substation transformer and questioned whether it is subject to failure. Mr. Knight stated this backup transformer is working well and being maintained.

Commissioner Cooper encouraged ongoing and consistent communication through phone calls to the elderly, website or e-mails and that emergency information be provided via links to the CDC website.

Commissioner Sprinkel stressed the need to stick together and communicate one message. She encouraged continuing to help people in need.

Commissioner Seidel suggested that any e-mails received by a commissioner be forwarded to city staff to respond. Mayor Leary agreed and urged caution in communications to the public. Mayor Leary adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.