



Holly Springs Town Council
Emergency Meeting

March 13, 2020

MINUTES

The Holly Springs Town Council met in a duly called emergency meeting on Friday, March 13, 2020 in the Council Chambers of Holly Springs Town Hall, 128 S. Main Street. Mayor Sears presided, calling the meeting to order at 7 p.m. A quorum was established as the mayor and four council members were present as the meeting opened.

Council Members Present: Mayor Sears, Councilmen Dan Berry, Peter Villadsen, Shaun McGrath and Aaron Wolff, and Councilwoman Christine Kelly.

Council Members Absent: none.

Staff Members Present: Randy Harrington, *Town Manager*; Daniel Weeks, *Assistant Town Manager*; Scott Chase, *Assistant Town Manager*; John Schifano, *Town Attorney*; Linda McKinney, *Town Clerk* (recording the minutes); Cassie Hack, *Director Communications and Marketing*; Mark Andrews, *Communications and Marketing*; Tamara Ward, *Communications and Marketing*; Jeff Wilson, *Director of IT*; Gina Clapp, *Director of Planning & Zoning*; LeeAnn Plumer, *Director Parks and Recreation*; Kendra Parrish, *Director Engineering*; Aaron Levitt, *Engineering*; Seann Byrd, *Director Water Quality*; Patty Dressen, *Interim Director Finance*; Luncie McNeil, *Director of Public Works*; Annemarie Forbis, *Human Resources*; Capt. Mike Patters, *Holly Springs Police*; and Leroy Smith, *Fire Chief*.

Mayor Sears called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. He said that we should not panic, even though it is a serious issue. He said that if you are symptomatic you should go to your doctor. If you test positive, your information will be shared with the Wake County Department of Health to be monitored.

Randy Harrington, Town manager thanked Council for being flexible to meet on six hour notice. He said that the purpose of the meeting was to update the Council and the Community on what the town is doing to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. He showed a chart that shows why it is important to take the actions the Town is considering, called "flattening the curve." This keeps the health care system from being overwhelmed and saves lives.

He said that Governor Roy Cooper and the Wake County Board of County Commissioners Chair Ford have issued State of Emergency Declarations. In accordance with the Governor's recommendations the Town is taking action to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 virus. Postponements and cancellations of some Town events follow Gov. Cooper's recommendation to avoid events and activities where attendance of 100 or more people is anticipated. Other event and meeting modifications are planned where non-time sensitive meetings can be delayed or postponed to mitigate social contact, but Town services will continue without interruption.

He outlined the following actions which the Town is taking, in effect starting at 7:00 am March 14, 2020:

Town Sponsored Meetings:

- No meetings through April 12, 2020:
 - Tree Advisory Committee

- Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee
- Board of Adjustment
- Community engagement meetings on Town projects (to be rescheduled)
- No changes: Planning Board and Town Council meeting schedules (but staff will review opportunities to avoid non-time sensitive agenda items to mitigate crowds and duration of social contact (promote watching online)

Staff:

- Focus on keeping our employees safe while maintaining municipal services
- Temporary telecommuting availability starting Monday, March 16 along with considerations for flex scheduling
- Encouragement of alternate meeting options (i.e. digital and video tools)
- Practice “social distancing”
- No travel to large conferences/meetings through April 15
- Elevated daily cleaning of commonly touched hard surfaces

Parks & Recreation:

- Cancelled and postponed activities through April 12, 2020
 - Family Prom (cancelled)
 - Spring Fling (cancelled)
 - Youth spring sports (postponed start)
 - Senior programs (postponed)
 - Cultural Center performances (cancelled, but will reschedule where possible)
- No changes
 - Arbor Day Tree planting (March 14, 2020)
 - Farmer’s Market
 - Facilities remain open (fitness and youth classes no changes)
- No changes but dependent on Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)
 - After school and track out programs (Any changes by WCPSS would likely trigger cancellation of after school, youth, and adult programming.)

Other Town Information:

- Encourage residents to pay utility bills online, and to use telephone or online sources for otherwise accessing Town Hall and town employees
- Police and Fire Department community engagements are cancelled through April 12, 2020
- Information: NCDHHS.gov/coronavirus; 866-462-3821

Mr. Harrington said that these are the key changes staff are planning. This is a rapidly evolving situation and staff is trying to be proactive, but there is no reason to panic and we are going to do our best to carry on as usual.

Mayor Sears asked Mr. Harrington to explain, for the benefit of the audience, why senior activities are being cancelled. Mr. Harrington said that the CDC and WHO say that those aged 65 or older are most at risk from this virus.

Councilman Berry asked if there be any extra cleaning of playground equipment hard surfaces. LeeAnn Plumer, Parks and Recreation Director, said to date there has not been any additional cleaning of playground equipment. Staff is not able to take on such a task, but we are encouraging anyone who visits the playgrounds to wash their hands at the restrooms before and after playing. The restrooms are being kept well stocked with soap and hand towels.

Councilman Berry asked if a contractor could be brought on to do that. Mr. Harrington said we can ask the contractor who is doing the extra cleaning inside facilities. Councilman Berry asked

if there had been discussion of not disconnecting water services for people with overdue bills. Mr. Harrington said we are suspending cut offs on a temporary basis, given that the best way to stop the virus is to wash your hands. We will continue to work with our residents who have not paid, but will not cut off water. Councilwoman Kelly asked if water had been restored to those who had been cut off. Patty Dressen, Interim Finance Director, said that to her knowledge the only disconnections that are happening at this point are people who are moving out, not for nonpayment.

Councilwoman Kelly asked if there was a banner on our web page to tell people the latest, and if we should post a sign to let people know the playgrounds are not being cleaned, or put it on the website. Mr. Harrington said we do have an external communication that will go out following this meeting and we can add that piece.

Councilwoman Kelly said that Meals on Wheels is anticipating continuing service, but there is a need for younger volunteers to deliver those meals. Also the Food Cupboard has put a call out for increased donations.

Councilman McGrath asked if there was the possibility to record Planning Board meetings so those who want to watch but not attend can see and/or hear them. Also if we could experiment with letting people Skype in and be engaged without overwhelming the service. He said the CDC reported that only 2% of the test kits are coming back positive. Also, remember that the trees are blooming and people have allergies, so not everyone who is coughing is infected. He said that Virginia schools had all been closed, and that ours might be closing soon, so we need to think about child care situations.

Mayor Sears said that the more we know, the better off we are. He will get information out to the Town as it becomes available.

Councilman Villadsen asked if we should cancel fitness classes or close the gym. Ms. Plummer said Parks and Recreation is encouraging people to bring their own mats, and are providing extra sanitations supplies. Attendance is already down. Staff is communicating with other municipalities and things could change.

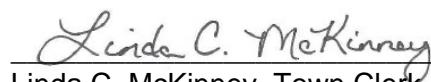
Councilman Wolff said he spoke with our school board representative, and right now they are taking their cues from the NC Dept. of Health. This will not be a Wake Co public school decision; it will come from above.

Councilwoman Kelly asked what percentage of town jobs could telecommute. Mr. Harrington said he did not have a percentage in his head, but most of the services we provide are out in the community – police, fire, public works, etc. Most of them are not eligible. But for those that are, we are making arrangements on Monday for telecommuting when it is feasible. Councilwoman Kelly asked if there were any projects that would be delayed. Mr. Harrington said that at this time he did not know of anything that is being postponed. With canceling public engagement committees there may be some temporary alterations of time lines, but nothing is being impacted at this time.

Mayor Sears said the recommendation is to avoid groups of 100 or more. If necessary we may provide audio and/or video feed to the Holleman room to keep the numbers under that level.

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilman McGrath and seconded by Councilman Wolff. The vote was unanimous. Mayor Sears adjourned the meeting at 5:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted on Tuesday, April 7, 2020.



Linda C. McKinney, Town Clerk

Addenda pages as referenced in these minutes follow and are a part of the official record.