

**COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS**  
**Special Meeting**  
**April 6, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER:** By Mayor Ridge on Monday, April 6, 2020 at 7:04 p.m.

**PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE:** Councilmembers Baker, McRae, Hoogstra, Dyer, Weissenborn, Mayor Pro-Tem Armitage, Mayor Ridge, City Clerk Terpstra and City Manager Guetschow.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Zach Story**, 404 Warren, stated that he feels the Skate Park should be closed and has addressed his concerns to Council member Dyer and Mayor Ridge. He asked about the March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting minutes not being posted. He asked that Zoom or a better way to be used for Council meetings for the public.

**Ben Phlegar**, 425 Horatio, thanked council for doing this and expressed his concern for bringing back the second public comment and changing it back to five minutes. He feels this would encourage the public to engage and talk. He asked about what was supposed to be done with the leaves and voiced concern about that process becoming backed up.

**Kevin Karpinski**, with SEIU, stated that he was the union representative for the SEIU and was on the call to listen and learn in case anything arouse regarding employees.

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS:**

- A. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 2020-56 TO REVISE COUNCIL POLICY NO. 2020-01 ESTABLISHING MEETING PROCEDURES DURING COVID-19 EPIDEMIC:**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2020-56**

**A RESOLUTION TO REVISE COUNCIL POLICY 2020-01 ESTABLISHING MEETING PROCEDURES DURING THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC**

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, City Council approved Council Policy 2020-01 establishing meeting procedures during the COVID-19 epidemic; and

**WHEREAS**, those meeting procedures provide only one opportunity for public comments during meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council believes that the public interest is served by restoring its practice of offering two opportunities for public comment during its meetings; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Council Policy 2020-01 is hereby amended by deleting from subparagraph 4.1 the sentence that reads “Citizen comments at public meetings shall be limited to a single occasion during each meeting near the beginning of the meeting.”

**COUNCIL POLICY NO. 2020-01**

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to temporarily modify provisions of Council Policies 2016-02 Citizen Comments and 2016-04 Order of Business at City Council Meetings in order to conduct meetings as efficiently as possible during the COVID-19 epidemic while also complying with the provisions of the City Charter and state statute relevant to the conduct of City business.

**2. AUTHORITY**

This policy is adopted pursuant to the provisions of section 15.264(5) of Public Act 267 of 1976 as amended (Open Meetings Act) and section 4.71(I) of the City Charter.

### 3. BACKGROUND

On March 10, 2020, Governor Gretchen Witmer declared a state of emergency to maximize efforts to slow the spread of cases of COVID-19 in the state. Subsequent guidance from the Governor's office, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Barry-Eaton District Health Department, among other purposes, offer recommendations to limit public gatherings. Governor Witmer has issued an executive order suspending portions of the Open Meetings Act applicable to state government boards and commissions. No similar actions have been taken to suspend portions of the Act applicable to local governments. Accordingly, it is deemed prudent to conduct meetings in a more efficient manner so as to reduce the potential for exposure to the virus while still conducting public business in accordance with the law and standards of good government.

### 4. TEMPORARY POLICY CHANGES

Provisions of Council Policies 2016-02 and 2016-04 to the contrary notwithstanding, the following rules and procedures shall be applicable to all regular and special Council meetings that occur through May 31, 2020 or until the rescission of Governor Witmer's emergency declaration, whichever occurs first:

- 4.1 Citizen comments at public meetings shall be limited to a ~~single occasion~~ two sessions during each meeting ~~near the beginning of the meeting~~. The duration of comments by any citizen shall not exceed ~~three~~ minutes.
- 4.2 Citizen comments during public hearings shall be limited to ~~three~~ five minutes.
- 4.3 The action "Approval of the Agenda" shall be replaced with a "Motion for Unanimous Consent" to all business items except for those on which one or more members of the Council desire debate, discussion or additional information. Prior to asking for a motion for unanimous consent, the Mayor shall inquire of Council members if there are any items of business on the agenda on which a

member wishes to have debate, discussion or additional information. Items so identified will be noted. The Mayor shall then ask for a motion to approve the remainder of the agenda by unanimous consent. Voting on such motion shall be by roll call.

- 4.4 The "Communications and Committee Reports" section of the agenda shall be limited to reports on important matters that were not previously provided to Council in writing.

### 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This policy shall become effective with the Council meeting that occurs next following its adoption.

**Council member Baker moved, supported by Weissenborn to approve Resolution No. 2020-56 to revise Council Policy 2020-01 establishing meeting procedures during the Covid-19 Epidemic as presented, changing public comment from three back to five minutes. Carried. 7 Yes. 0 No. by roll call vote.**

**Council member McRae move, supported by Armitage to amend Council Policy 2020-01 to allow for two public comments with the time frame of five minutes each. Carried. 7 Yes. 0 No. by roll call vote.**

Attorney Hitch joined the call at 7:16 P.M.

### **B. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 2020-57 TO AUTHORIZE CONDUCTING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS THROUGH THE USE OF TELEPHONIC CONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY:** **RESOLUTION NO. 2020-57**

**A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE CONDUCTING  
CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS THROUGH THE USE OF  
TELEPHONIC CONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to resolution 2020-44, the City Manager has researched alternatives for conducting electronic public meetings, has tested alternatives and has concluded the option that will best meet the needs of the City Council and will allow for their and the public's effective participation in electronic public meetings is telephonic conference technology; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Manager has developed a format for the additional public notice required by Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-15 when holding electronic public meetings, which public notice was reviewed and approved as to form by the City Attorney; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council conducted an electronic public meeting utilizing telephonic conference technology on April 6, 2020 and determined that it could effectively and efficiently conduct its business while meeting the requirements of Executive Order 2020-15; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has determined that it is in the public interest to conduct future meetings as telephonic conferences until such time as the authorization for conducting electronic public meetings expires;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council conduct all future regular and special meetings through the use of telephonic conference technology until no longer authorized to do so as a means of limiting the spread of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus).

**Mayor Pro-Tem Armitage moved, supported by Dyer to approve Resolution 2020-5 to authorize conducting City Council meetings through the use of Telephonic Conference Technology as presented. Carried. 7 Yes. 0 No. by roll call vote.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**James McRae**, 320 W. Lawrence, stated that Mr. Guetschow had asked that he participate in the call to test how the teleconferencing was working. He advised that it was very clear and that he could hear everyone on the call.

**Kevin Karpinski**, SEIU Union representative, stated that he would like Council to consider the DPW and WWTP employees who are critical employees when considering this crisis. He stated that their wages have been budgeted for through June. He stated that he will be listening intently.

**Ben Phlegar**, 425 Horatio, thanked council for listening and reinstating the five minute, two public comment sessions back to the meeting agenda. He congratulated the girls who made the Dream Team for cheerleading and to Mayor Ridge and Council member Hoogstra for the role they play with that. He stated that this was a testament not only to the school but also the City as a whole.

**Zach Story**, 404 Warren, stated that he wanted to make it clear that he was only concerned about closing the Skate Park as that is where he seen people not adhering to the social distancing. He suggested thinking about sanitizing the disc golf baskets with bleach or looking into if it would be possible to do.

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

- Council member Dyer asked that a discussion be added to the April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding communications from City Hall during the COVID-19 Epidemic.

- Council member McRae no comment.
- Council member Baker no comment.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Armitage asked if the minutes being posted could be addressed.
- Council member Hoogstra thanked Mr. Phlegar for bringing up adding the five minutes back to public comment.
- Council member Weissenborn no comment.
- Mayor Ridge thanked everyone for participating in the meeting. She thanked everyone for their patience as we get used to this type of meeting and promised to get better. She stated that there is a White Campaign going on to recognize our first responders during this crisis. She asked that everyone participate to show support and stated there was information on the website and Facebook. She asked that everyone put a ribbon in their yard to show support. She stated that in regards to Mr. Story's concerns with the parks being open that they are being monitored on a daily basis. She advised Mr. Karpinski that the employee issues will be addressed at the City Council meeting on April 13<sup>th</sup>. She stated that public health and safety is the City's main concern. She stated that the City will be acting in the best interest of the City and it's employees.
- City attorney Hitch apologized for being late to call in. He stated that he had been in touch and advised council that they are extremely well served by the City Administration.

**Council member Baker moved, seconded by Hoogstra to adjourn at 7:37 P.M. Carried. 7 Yes. 0 No**

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Mayor Yvonne Ridge

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Ginger Terpstra, City Clerk, CMMC