

**BEACHWOOD CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
HELD AT BEACHWOOD CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 25325 FAIRMOUNT  
BOULEVARD, ON MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020 AT 6:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 P.M. by Council President James Pasch.

ROLL CALL:	Present	J. Berns, M. Burkons, A. Isaacson, J. Pasch, E. Synenberg J. Taylor
	Absent:	B. B. Janovitz
	Also Present:	Mayor M.S. Horwitz, D. A. Calta, L. Heiser, T. Turick

**1. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Horwitz read his prepared remarks. Those remarks are attached hereto for the official record

**2. Discussion regarding the City of Beachwood, Ohio' response to the Coronavirus**

Mr. Pasch opened this meeting and read his prepared remarks. Those remarks are attached hereto for the official record.

Mr. Pasch then discussed his points with the Committee along with any others that have come up.

After Mr. Pasch reviewed his points, he asked if the Committee had other items or concerns they wanted to discuss.

Mr. Berns asked if there would be concerns about Planning and Zoning restrictions.

Mayor Horwitz stated that there will be no problems moving items along such as triage tents or other medical facilities under a declaration of emergency.

Mr. Isaacson asked about the scope and time for a declared state of emergency.

Ms. Calta stated that changes would be limited to the duration of the emergency.

Ms. Calta stated that without a definitive ending, the Mayor would determine when to end the state of emergency.

Mr. Pasch stated he would like to request Shaker Court to suspend any landlord/tenant actions or evictions that are currently pending. Mr. Pasch would like to send a letter to Judge Montgomery requesting to suspend action until after the epidemic.

Mr. Pasch discussed the next item which includes a suggestion for a City hotline.

Mr. Pasch suggested that Community Services and Recreation personnel take charge on implementing a hotline for seniors in the community.

Mayor Horwitz stated that he has started calling and letting seniors know that the City is available to help if necessary. Mayor Horwitz also suggested using high school students if more man power is needed.

The next item discussed was a proposed Economic relief package for residents. Mr. Pasch proposed a \$100.00 dollar per person package. For example: \$500.00 for a family of 5 or \$200.00 for a family of two for residents in the City of Beachwood.

Ms. Isaacson stated that an Economic relief package is a very interesting idea with good potential. Mr. Isaacson voiced concern that it may be much too early to consider such a relief package and would like to use it at a later date.

Mr. Isaacson also stated that he would like to know how the City would administer such relief and be cognizant of waste or fraud.

Mr. Burkons stated that he would like to revisit this once the Economic situation for the City is known.

Mr. Pasch asked Mr. Heiser how often the City received RITA revenues.

Mr. Heiser answered "twice a month."

Mr. Synenberg stated that planning should begin on the Economic relief package and replied that the City will be spending far less money on previously planned and budgeted projects due to this epidemic. Mr. Synenberg suggested allocating those funds elsewhere.

Mr. Burkons stated that residents understand services may not be able to continue to be provided at past levels.

Mr. Burkons also stated that he would like further guidance from the Finance Director.

Ms. Taylor asked how the City can assist its employees in need such as other employees donating vacation and sick time.

Mayor Horwitz stated that he will likely have a policy in the next few days regarding sick time.

Mayor Horwitz stated that the Administration will be reviewing all options such as flexible hours, buying hours, and setting up a back for hours.

Mr. Pasch thanked everyone for their time and thoughts regarding the current Coronavirus emergency.

Mr. Pasch asked if there were any further questions and there were none.

**3. Any other matters coming before the Committee of the Whole**

None.

**Adjournment**

Moved by J. Taylor, seconded by J. Berns, at 7:09 P.M. to adjourn the Committee of the Whole Meeting to the next regularly scheduled Council Meeting.

Yes: J. Berns, M. Burkons, A. Isaacson,  
J. Pasch, E. Synenberg J. Taylor

No: None.

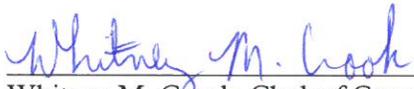
Abstain: None.

Not Voting: None.

MOTION ADOPTED

Approved:

  
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Martin S. Horwitz, Mayor

  
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Whitney M. Crook, Clerk of Council

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**Pursuant to Ordinance Number 2017-107 Council has determined that the official Minutes of its Body, its Committees, and those of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consist of the Audio Recording of the meetings together with a written synopsis of all agenda items and votes.**

To our citizens, business owners, employees and visitors – rarely in our history as a people are we asked to collectively rise to a challenge the way that we must today. But there is no greater responsibility – no greater priority than our health and safety. Because without our health, we have nothing. And what makes our current crisis so unique is that our health now depends on one another. Our individual health and well-being is reliant on all of us listening to the public health experts and taking this as seriously as possible.

First I would like to thank our Governor Mike DeWine for taking the lead in keeping us safe. Governor DeWine has made a series of tough decisions that will save lives. These were not political decisions – they were public health decisions. He came to them by listening to the health experts around him. One of those experts that we all owe a debt of gratitude to is Dr. Amy Acton, our State’s Director of Health. She has been continually advising the Governor’s team and the public every step of the way since the outbreak of the Coronavirus. I would ask everyone to please listen to Dr. Acton when she says, “Please know everyone, this is the real thing. This is not a drill. This is the once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, and everything each of us does matters.”

We can limit this virus’ impact and bend the curve – stopping the exponential growth of the virus, so that our healthcare system is less overwhelmed, and less people lose their lives. But in order to do that we all need to radically change our everyday behavior. Please do not feel like you are invisible. Just because you are not symptomatic does not mean that you are not a carrier of COVID-19. Dr. Acton said that 1% of Ohio’s population has it but does not know it and that we can expect 40% of the population to become infected. The peak of the pandemic is anticipated for late-April to mid-May. The best advice that I saw is that instead of acting like someone who is avoiding contracting the virus, act like someone who already has the virus and is trying not to pass it onto others. We have a responsibility to each other to practice social distancing; wash our hands frequently; do not go out into public places and venues unless necessary. Take all the precautions that are being made daily by the CDC and the Ohio Department of Health.

As the Mayor said, please know this City is working diligently to keep us safe. The Mayor and his team started preparations from the moment we had knowledge of COVID-19 and have been working around the clock on emergency preparations. The Mayor has reviewed those plans with me and council leadership. As Council President I have talked with the Mayor about the following that I would like the discuss as a council this evening:

- 1) Waiving a formal process and granting planning and zoning approvals so that medical facilities such as UH and the Clinic can set up mobile tent facilities if and when they are needed without any red tape;
- 2) Asking the Shaker Courts not proceed with any landlord-tenant evictions during the pandemic so that people do not lose their homes – we need to protect people at this time;
- 3) Creating a city hotline so that residents in need of medicine, groceries and other necessities who can not leave their home because of either their age or their autoimmune condition have a line to call and seek assistance from the city;
- 4) The creation of an COVID-19 Economic Relief Package for residents of \$100 per person – with every resident of a household being eligible (This would cost an estimated \$1M - \$1.3M).

These measures span a wide range of areas and are unprecedented. But trying to tackle a global epidemic is also unprecedented. On the planning and zoning measure — in the event that medical facilities in our city need to expand with temporary structures, it is critical that we allow them to do so at a moments notice so that people can be treated.

On the tenant-landlord disputes, it is crucial that in the midst of an age of quarantines that people are not kicked out of their homes – doing so puts both them and others at risk.

On the creation of a hotline - we have one of the oldest average populations in Cuyahoga County. This virus has a much greater impact on the elderly and as the governor stated today, those over 65 should not be going out. We should create a hotline to provide assistance so that we can pick up and drop off necessities at people's homes or apartments.

As far as an Economic Relief Package is concerned, people are struggling with the additional expenses – extra babysitting/childcare as schools shutdown; extra medical supplies; additional groceries. We have the ability to provide a meaningful amount of funds to families. The two largest hurdles are: (1) The administration of those funds; (2) The uncertainty of our city's revenue for the fiscal year because of the Coronavirus. But what is not uncertain is that there are families in our community that need some help, and that a relief package could provide assistance.

In addition to my conversations with the Mayor, I have been in constant communication with the President of our School Board, Dr. Weiss. The Schools have developed a program that will provide lunches to the Beachwood families in need during their closure. I would like to thank our Superintendent Dr. Hardis and the School Board for their continued leadership in a time of crisis.

Our solutions must constantly evolve because every day we learn more and must react accordingly. This is how it will be for weeks, if not months. We must all stay calm, and understand that if we work together, and listen to the science, we have the ability to lessen this virus' impact. Please remember that before you walk out your front door with any symptoms, you are making decisions that will have life and death consequences to the lives of others. Please stay at home. As Dr. Acton said, "this is not a drill." Everything we do matters. We all have to come together to get through this crisis. We have to rise to the occasion, and I am confident that we will do just that.

Mr. President, Members of Council, Directors and all the residents who are watching tonight. In my 25 years of public service and my 66 years on this earth, I have never discussed an issue more serious than the coronavirus pandemic that I will speak about tonight. As Mayor of Beachwood, my highest priority and greatest responsibility is to the health and safety of all those within our city's border. If there is anyone in this country that by now does not understand the life and death implications of this issue, I am not going to educate you tonight. I'm going to assume that anyone within the sound of my voice understands that the threat we face is as great as any war on our country and will require levels of personal sacrifice none of us have ever been asked to give.

Tonight, I would like to talk about the preparations we have made in the City to help maintain services and to assist our residents to understand how their participation is vital in the process of mitigating the results. The words mitigation and social distancing are the buzzwords of this pandemic. We are relying on scientific models and the experiences of other countries that prove public events, restaurants, schools and social gatherings must be cancelled or closed to win this war. Keeping people away from people is the only chance we have to prevent hundreds of thousands of deaths.

Before I speak specifically about Beachwood, I would like to offer my thanks to Governor DeWine, the State's Health Director Dr. Amy Acton and their team in Columbus that has been so courageous in moving forward the systematic closings which will accomplish mitigation. We follow their daily broadcasts and make sure that their orders are enforced locally.

We started this process several weeks ago with a public safety drill at our Emergency Operations Center. Since then, we have worked on updating our emergency procedures manual and we have had multiple meetings with our Directors Emergency Task force to make plans for the response of each department as this virus became more real. In the past few weeks planning for this has consumed the bulk of my day. I've participated in multiple conference calls with the Northeast Ohio Mayors and Managers Association and with federal and state organizations devoted to coronavirus planning. I follow all the county board of health and state updates and I'm a member of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Coronavirus Local Response Initiative which partners with Johns Hopkins and Harvard to give mayors across the country a forum to exchange information. I am also in regular contact with Beachwood Place Management, Menorah Park Management, the Beachwood Schools and other religious schools, businesses and institutions around the city. I have worked closely with Council President Pasch to make sure that if I get sick, he can step in immediately to maintain city operations.

Our goal is to maintain essential city services for as long as possible. We are keeping City Hall open, and we have started sanitizing protocols throughout the building. Every visitor and employee will have their temperatures checked at the guard desk. All of the offices in City Hall place employees well over 10 feet from each other. In the event that we do have to close City Hall, our directors and key department members will be able to work off site through city

issued laptop computers. We are a unique business. We have about 200 employees and over 75% of them cannot work from home. They are essential personnel and first responders in the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments.

Probably the most important department at this time is Fire and Rescue. Led by Chief Holtzman and Assistant Chief Lutz, they have been planning for weeks. Our Emergency Operations Center has been tested and is ready for use during this pandemic, or as a back-up to City Hall. The Department has a sufficient number of masks and protective gear to get them through this pandemic. They have changed protocols on approaching a run. They try to get early notification and assessment through our Dispatchers to make sure they are protected properly on approach. Our goal is to make sure our firefighters are wearing protective gear at all times to avoid exposure. In the event that we do have squads that are unavailable, we maintain mutual aid agreements with all of our neighbors, but we especially rely on Pepper Pike and Lyndhurst. Finally, I want to thank Chief Holtzman and Asst Chief Lutz for the very important work they've done in reviewing all the protective measures in assisted living and nursing homes in the city. Thanks to the administration at Menorah Park for early on locking down their facilities to visitors and family. They have set aside special quarantine areas if needed. And they have cancelled any events within their buildings. And they are even checking the temperatures of our rescue squads as they enter.

Our Police Department is making appropriate adjustments to reduce exposure of its staff during this time. They are limiting non-emergency contact with the public as much as possible. They are not going on fire runs unless there is also a police matter involved. They are practicing social distancing in their offices and making sure that cars, work spaces and equipment are routinely sanitized. Our Mayor's Court will hear cases this Wednesday, but may be closed down after that. We will announce this later.

Our Public Works Department is continuing business as usual. We will continue to pick up the rubbish on schedule and we'll continue doing special rubbish pickups. All of the other services offered by the department will continue unless there is a reduction in staff due to quarantine. In the event there is a significant loss of manpower, contingency plans are being developed to make sure that rubbish will be collected.

In the Community Services Department all programs have been cancelled until April 5<sup>th</sup>. We will continue to operate the senior van service only for pre-scheduled rides. The drivers will be equipped with masks and all vehicles will be wiped down after each ride. We are requesting that residents do not come to City Hall to register for future programs. You can send in checks or register on line. If you want to register for Barkwood, we will still need proof of residency but that can be faxed in or scanned and sent in an email. Several of our Community Services staff will transition to a senior assistance program that we are developing. As more and more seniors are forced to stay in their homes, we will be calling them to check if they need food, medicine or other services. If there is a relative or neighbor you want us to check on, or if you

have any questions about Community Services programs, please call them directly at 216-292-1970.

Our Building Department will remain open and we will be issuing permits, conducting inspections and accepting plans for review. If we lose staff or choose to close City Hall, some of these functions may be done online and we will determine how many services we can offer as we move forward.

Finally, our Finance Department will also continue to remain open. We will continue to pay bills and issue checks. We have contingency plans in place to continue most finance functions off site if it becomes necessary.

I cannot emphasize enough that this is a time to over react. Practicing social distancing-keeping at least 6 feet away from other people, washing your hands, keeping your family away from other families are all critical to mitigating the horrible effects of this pandemic. If you are running a temperature, have a dry cough or other flu-like symptoms don't go to work. Call your doctor and get tested right away. I want to thank our schools and religious institutions who have been extremely pro-active. Most synagogues and churches in the area did not hold public services this past weekend. If you are affiliated with a smaller synagogue and hold regular morning and evening services, I would urge you to stop immediately.

My message, the message from our Governor, from our healthcare professionals, and from every responsible scientist in this area is simple. Every day we delay in practicing mitigation, social distancing and personal hygiene people will die. Most experts agree that we are about two weeks behind the steps that Italy took and we will shortly see total mass quarantine and non-essential businesses closed. Our health care system runs the risk of being overwhelmed. This is a matter of life and death. The number of people infected doubles every 5-7 days. You are not just making decisions about your life; you are making decisions about other people's lives.

We are engaged in Public Service Work. We know there is always a tornado or mass casualty around the corner. But the containment of the coronavirus is something totally different. Mitigation must be accomplished on a national level and it requires the sacrifice of every individual in America. The City of Beachwood, our employees, Council and administration stand ready to take every action we can to protect and assist our residents in this challenging time. We ask for your help in taking the warnings and recommendations from our public health officials and government officials seriously and hopefully, together, we will reduce the impact of this devastating virus.