



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – June 3, 2020 Agenda Item 5

Work Session

Discussion of Emergency Ordinance

Recommended Council Action

Discuss.

Context with Key Issues

On March 11, 2020, the City Council adopted Uncodified Emergency [Ordinance 2020-4](#), an uncodified Ordinance whereby the City of Takoma Park confirms the City Manager's authority to take all appropriate and reasonable actions necessary to prevent and/or reduce the impact of the outbreak of disease caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the efficient operation of the City's government in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents.

Pursuant to the terms of the Ordinance, the Ordinance shall terminate on the 90th day from the date of its enactment or on the day that the Governor declares that the State of Emergency has ended, whichever is later. The Council may rescind, modify, or extend the Ordinance by a majority vote.

Two days after the Ordinance was adopted, the Governor of Maryland issued an Emergency Declaration closing non-essential businesses and taking other steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Maryland. City operations moved to remote service where possible. Changes in City staff schedules and work locations were made by the City Manager under the Ordinance. Since March 13, there have been eight additional actions taken under the Ordinance. The Council was consulted in advance on most actions and the actions are recorded on the City Manager page of the website.

Most work of the City has been able to follow standard processes during the pandemic. However, there have been several issues that required immediate action that would have been hindered by waiting for a Council meeting to be held. There also could be a situation where Councilmembers would not be able to meet due to illness or to power or internet outage. As the region moves towards reopening, there is considerable uncertainty about actions that may need to be taken. Unfortunately, the region's municipalities have not always been informed of actions being taken at the State and County levels, so advance planning at the municipal level during the pandemic has not always been able to occur.

The Council may decide to continue City operations under the terms of Ordinance 2020-4 or rescind, modify or extend the Ordinance at a future meeting.

Council Priority

Engaged, Responsive, and Service Oriented Government. This Ordinance is to allow for all appropriate and reasonable measures during a public health emergency to assure the efficient operation of the city's government and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

Environmental Considerations

Actions may need to be taken that supersede certain environmental procedures or purchasing requirements. At this time, however, no such actions are envisioned to be likely.

Fiscal Considerations

Total costs of the Ordinance are not known. Some savings may occur by being able to take timely action. Hazard pay has been authorized for certain staff in the Police and Public Works Departments.

Racial Equity Considerations

Actions are to be taken to protect the health and safety of City staff and residents, the majority of whom are people of color.

Attachments and Links

- Uncodified Emergency [Ordinance 2020-4](#)