



BLACKDUCK CITY COUNCIL EMERGENCY MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020 @ 6:00PM
EMERGENCY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: The City Council of the City of Blackduck met in an Emergency Council Meeting at Blackduck City Hall at 6:00pm March 18, 2020. Meeting called to order by Vice Mayor Moore and the Pledge of Allegiance was stated.

ROLL CALL:

Councilors present: Councilors Kolb, Moore, and Gulette

Councilors Absent: Mayor Patch and Councilor Roth

Staff Present: City Administrator Christina Regas, Public Works Supervisor Mike Schwanke

Others Present: Justine Vernland, Cherry Brands, Tony Rossberg, and Jennifer Parker of the Blackduck American

APPROVAL OF AGENDA –Moved by Councilor Gulette and seconded by Councilor Kolb to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION – Mayor Patch

1. Resolution 2020-14 - Resolution declaring a local emergency – Moved by Councilor Kolb and seconded by Councilor Gulette to approve Resolution 2020-14. Administrator Regas provided to the Council members and audience a summary of the status of the City of Blackduck and services. Regas stated most cities in the State of Minnesota are declaring local emergencies that allow the governing entity the ability to receive funding if needed and to provide a teleconference option for council members to attend meetings so that government can still continue in Blackduck. Regas provided a report from the public safety committee from March 16, 2020 for the Ambulance and Fire Department to ensure the entities are prepared to service the community; the Press Release posted to the City website www.blackduckmn.com that explains what city buildings are open or closed; and that all non-essential meetings and committee meetings have been canceled at this time. Additionally the City has compiled a listing of local businesses that are open or closed or reduced hours at this time to ensure the police department can monitor those buildings to protect the community. Regas stated she and the Mayor met with the Beltrami County Health Manager and provided a status of Blackduck. Regas stated the health manager provided some suggestions on how to proceed in the event the closures become long-term for summer businesses such as the golf course and campground. Regas stated that Public works is business as usual. Regas further stated that although this is a time for school age children to be home, some Minnesotans are considering traveling north for ‘vacations’. Regas highly recommends adhering to the CDC recommendations and stay home in your community to lessen the spread of the virus. Resident Justin Vernland stated he has noted Minnesotans that have cabins in the area are traveling north and also looking for groceries in smaller cities. Regas emphasized the importance of supporting the community of Blackduck and its businesses more than ever in this time and encourages the residents to shop local whenever possible.

Questions / Answers –

Q. Brands – What will the resolution do besides declaring a local emergency?

A. Regas – Regas stated it provides the City by Ordinance the ability to enter into any contracts in a time of a disaster; provide emergency service and funding; and allow the City Council to hold



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meetings via teleconference so as to not violate open meeting law. Regas further stated departments should be mindful on the City budgets.

Q. Rossberg – Will there be a way for the public to access the meetings electronically?

A. Regas – Currently is reviewing the best most cost effective way to hold the meetings electronically either by teleconference or Zoom Meetings.

Q. Brands – How will the City notify the public if some changes have to be made? Are you calling business owners or residents?

A. Regas – What type of changes are your asking about?

Q. Brands – Anything that may affect the public. If the City has to go on lock-down and can't go to doctor appointments.

A. Regas – The City is following the protocol from Beltrami County Emergency Management and this entity has their own Facebook page and Regas suggests the public 'like' this page. Regas further stated she will continue to update the City on Blackduck365 page any changes as they happen.

Q. Brands – What do we do for the elderly who don't have access to social media.

A. Regas – Good question. Regas suggests administrators at local nursing homes include the residents in any changes, and will put anything into the paper.

Q. Rossberg – Is there a way to have an AMBER alert system in the County to alert residents of sudden changes?

A. Regas – Beltrami County already has this in place.

A. Councilor Moore – CODE RED is run by Beltrami County Dispatch

Q. Councilor Kolb – Is there a way the City can tape the Resolutions or notices to City Hall so residents can see them if they walk by.

A. Brands – The public is not supposed to be out in public right now. Brands stated she doesn't know the answer but would like to know if the City is discussing ways to be more informative and to address the elderly age group.

A. Regas – When that age group doesn't have access then the next platform is for the newspaper to have information for the public to read.

Q. Brands – Is the City putting information in the paper?

A. Regas – Noted that Jennifer Parker has attended meetings and has reported.

Q. Kolb – Can the City adopt a phone tree roster and people can receive the daily phone calls?

A. Regas – Who would make the phone calls? Currently, the City does not have an automated platform to send out information much like the School District does. Regas suggested consulting the School District for information.

Q. Brands – Is this new platform something the City can look into so in the event this lasts longer the residents do have the information they need?

A. Regas – Yes, these are all great suggestions and will be looked into. Right now it's important to find the most cost-effective means of communication.

A. Parker – I'm certain if the City asked the School district that communication would be released and how it works.



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Q. Brands – Can the City run its information through the schools?

A. Regas – It is unknown at this time. Regas stated she will try to find a good option that provides the best option for the City.

A. Vernlund – I don't sign up for the School updates and I receive them.

A. Parker – The school is hooked up to all parents on every child in the district via text, email, and phone.

Q. Brands – If there is a lock down or change is it information the City can put on Lakeland News?

A. Gullette – It may be a good path.

A. Regas – If a lock down happens like the last executive orders it will be all over the news and include the whole state.

A. Gullette – The local radio station could be contacted for a community item.

A. Parker – Suggests having announcements on Paul Bunyan TV home page.

A. Schwanke – Suggests having public works put notices out door to door.

Vice Mayor Moore called for questions a second time.

There were no questions.

Vice Mayor Moore called for questions a third time.

There were no questions.

ADJOURN – Moved by Councilor Gullette and seconded by Councilor Kolb to adjourn the meeting at 6:24pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Christina Regas, City Administrator

Rudy Patch, Mayor