

CITY OF PASADENA
City Council Minutes
May 7, 2020 – 2:00 P.M.
City Hall Council Chamber

SPECIAL MEETING

The virtual meeting was convened pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 17, 2020, and was held solely by videoconference/teleconference

OPENING: Mayor Tornek called the special meeting to order at 5:13 p.m. The pledge of allegiance was led by Councilmember Kennedy.

ROLL CALL:
Councilmembers: Mayor Terry Tornek
Vice Mayor Tyron Hampton
Councilmember Victor Gordo
Councilmember John J. Kennedy
Councilmember Steve Madison
Councilmember Gene Masuda
Councilmember Margaret McAustin
Councilmember Andy Wilson

Staff: City Manager Steve Mermell
City Attorney/City Prosecutor Michele Beal Bagneris
City Clerk Mark Jomsky

ORAL PRESENTATION REGARDING STATE, REGIONAL AND PASADENA HEALTH OFFICERS' ORDERS RELATED TO REOPENING CERTAIN BUSINESSES AND ACTIVITIES-- COVID-19

City Manager Mermell summarized Governor Newsom's "Resilience Roadmap", specifically Stage 2: Lower-Risk Workplaces, and responded to questions.

Councilmember Gordo, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, summarized the Committee's discussion on the item and the direction given to staff, which included the recommendation for staff to move forward with drafting a Health Directive that would become effective when the Governor's actions become official. The Committee also recommended that staff consider guidelines to move further into Stage 2 and Stage 3 as detailed in the California Resilience Roadmap; and the development of the "Pasadena COVID-19 Dashboard," to be presented to the City Council on Monday, May 11, 2020. The Committee also requested that staff include in the City's Health Order the re-opening of the Brookside Golf Club, trails, and the Rose Bowl Loop (Loop), with the re-opening of the Loop include a detailed plan for staffing and an analysis from the Health Officer.

Councilmember Madison spoke on the need to create a taskforce comprised of staff to conduct research and develop a plan with creative options and contingencies to re-open the City's economy and recreational areas. He expressed disappointment that such plans are not currently available; and stated his preference that the City staff take on a leadership role in moving forward with re-opening the City's local economy.

City Manager Mermell stated that staff will outline the State's criteria of Stage 2: Lower-Risk Workplaces at the May 11, 2020 City Council meeting, and will provide data points on where the City stands in relation to the benchmarks at the May 18, 2020 City Council meeting.

Dr. Ying Ying Goh, MD, Director of Public Health, provided information generated by the State related to the timing and ability for individual counties to be able to meet criteria in order to re-open local economies, data on COVID-19 cases in the City and State; and responded to questions.

Councilmember Gordo suggested that staff consider additional resources in the Health Department to assist with their heavy workload. He spoke on the need for staff to inform the City Council on staff's actions.

Councilmember McAustin spoke on the need for staff to inform the City Council of the rules and regulations related to the Brookside Golf Course, including operational details on how golf will be played.

In response to Councilmember McAustin's request for operational details, City Manager Mermell responded that staff will provide the rules that have been promulgated by the RBOC for Brookside Golf Course.

Councilmember Masuda spoke on the need to listen to the City's Health Director; and advocated for a slow re-opening of the City's local economy taking into consideration public safety.

Councilmember Kennedy spoke on the need for the Public Safety Committee to provide input on the item and give direction to staff. He spoke in favor of waiting a week, regardless of Governor Newsom's guidelines and declaration of a "soft re-opening" of the economy to protect the public safety of the residents and visitors to the City.

Councilmember Wilson spoke in favor of staff circulating to the City Council and public safety protocols for Brookside Golf Course and retail establishments.

City Manager Mermell stated that various City department staff have been working collaboratively on plans to facilitate the implementation of the Governor's orders; and can present detailed information to the Economic Development and Technology Committee regarding established plans to move the City further into Stage 2: Lower-Risk Workplaces Policy. He noted that there are policy issues that will be presented to the City Council to make modifications to rules to facilitate the re-opening of businesses. He recommended that City Council take advantage of the opportunity the Governor is providing in terms of re-opening parts of the business community and recreational activities. The City plans to utilize staff in both the commercial districts and commercial areas to monitor crowds, and the compliance of businesses.

Mayor Tornek spoke in support of Governor Newsom's actions allowing a limited number of retail establishments to operate curbside services, with minimal exposure, and in favor of the re-opening of the Brookside Golf Course. In addition, he suggested the need to delay the re-opening of the Rose Bowl Loop until staff provides more details on the safety plans.

Vice Mayor Hampton spoke on the need to provide City residents with their own options to choose whether to leave their homes; and stated his preference that Brookside Golf Course and the Rose Bowl Loop opened simultaneously. He also spoke in favor of staff re-opening the Disc Golf course in Hahamonga.

Councilmember Gordo spoke on the need for staff to provide the level of information that makes all members of the City Council comfortable, including the approved rules, analysis, and rationale for each plan and regulation. He proposed that staff move forward with the approval of the very limited health directive. He also requested that staff conduct additional analysis as requested at the Economic Development and Technology Committee; present to the City Council a full and robust report and analysis for potential action related to the Rose Bowl Loop; and begin the planning process at the Council Committee and City Council levels to prepare for future actions by the Governor.

Councilmember Kennedy spoke on the rapid moving COVID-19 pandemic, and on the need to give deference to staff on the decisions made to protect the City and residents. He also cautioned the use of City employees at the Rose Bowl Loop as there has been violence associated with individuals in terms of authority and dictating to people regarding health directives, such as wearing face coverings. He stated he believes that science dictates where the City should go and that the economics are critically important, but the health and safety of the City's residents and visitors is tantamount.

Councilmember Gordo requested that staff agendaize for discussion at a future City Council meeting an action to provide monetary support, in conjunction with the Pasadena Community Foundation, relief funding for small businesses that have not received assistance from the Small Business Administration or the Federal Government, at the May 11, 2020 City Council meeting.

Mayor Tornek and Councilmember McAustin were excused and disconnected from the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

City Clerk Jomsky reported that 12 letters were received providing comments related to the re-opening of businesses in the City, advocating for rental assistance, and the re-opening of the Rose Bowl Loop and Arroyo trails, and expressing concerns with re-opening local business; noting that the correspondence was distributed to the City Council, posted online, and made part of the record.

City Clerk Jomsky read aloud comments from the following individuals, on various topics related to the item, including advocating for the City to resurface streets, stating support and opposition to the re-opening of recreational activities in the Arroyo Seco (including the Rose Bowl Loop and disc golf course), and expressing concerns with re-opening local business, from the following individuals:

William Papanian, Pasadena resident
Ken Perry, Pasadena resident
Jennifer Meakins, Pasadena resident
Paul Little, Pasadena resident
Daniel Safford, Pasadena resident
Caroline Murrey, Pasadena resident
Michael Vann, Pasadena resident
Howard Tan, Pasadena resident
Esteben Lizardo, Pasadena resident
Nina Chomsky, President of the Linda Vista-Annandale Association
Blake Hempel Ramsey, Pasadena resident
Tristan Manning, Pasadena resident
Ben Planchon, Los Angeles resident
Maria Garcia, Pasadena resident
Robert Murrieta, Pasadena resident
Dagoberto Bribiesca, Altadena resident
Benjamin Shane, Pasadena resident
Kevin Dixon, Monyroise resident
Jeff Heapy, Pasadena resident

In response to Councilmember Gordo's request for a summary of staff's next steps, City Manager Mermell stated that on May 7, 2020, in accordance with revised State rules, the City will allow curbside retail for a limited category of retailers (specifically: book stores, clothing stores, florists, music shops, sporting goods, and toy stores). The City will allow Brookside Golf Club to operate. On

