

Alturas City Council

Special Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

July 10, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-25-20 and N-29-20 dated March 12, 2020 and March 17, 2020, The Alturas City Council Mayor Mark Steffek called the special meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the City Council Chambers and via teleconference. **Councilmembers present:** Mark Steffek, Loni Lewis, Kelly Crosby and Samantha Wood. **Councilmembers absent:** Cheryl Nelson. **Staff present:** City Clerk Macey Binning, Chief of Police Sid Cullins, City Treasurer Dorothy Long, Assistant Director of Public Works Kim Dodds, Fire Marshal Eric Hunter, and IT Specialist Sean Buie. **Public attending:** 0. All present joined together in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Steffek informed Council that the City of Alturas has an opportunity for funding through the State of California. This funding is for expenditures caused by the COVID-19. The City has up to \$50,000.00 in available funding. However, the application to apply for funding is due by 11:59 pm July 10th. Which is why the City Council called a special meeting in order to meet the deadline. Mayor Steffek asks City Treasurer Long how the City would be eligible for these funds

City Treasurer Long has seen minimum expenditures caused by the COVID-19. However, Ms. Long said the Alturas Police Department has been providing security at the testing site and this funding could be used to offset the wages of the officers during their time at those locations. In section 11.90 there is a long list of items that are considered reimbursable.

Councilmember Crosby believes after the Resolution and application are approved then the City can decide where funding should be applied.

Councilmember Lewis is concerned with who would enforce the Federal and State orders regarding COVID-19.

Councilmember Crosby believes the City is already in compliance. The City has taken action regarding social distancing, sanitizing, and teleconferencing for meetings. The only thing the City would need to improve on is if you can't social distance to wear a mask. Mrs. Crosby explains that there has been a misunderstanding in the Governor's order. The Governor is not ordering masks to be worn all day, he ordered if you can't social distance to wear a mask. This is why Mrs. Crosby recommends each Department Head enforces their own rules to comply, because not all will apply to each department.

Councilmember Lewis is concerned this will affect the Splash n' Play the City Council just approved.

Councilmember Crosby recommends following what the local health department requirements, and does not believe the Splash n' Play will be affected.

Mayor Steffek is concerned if the City does not appear to be complying, what would the consequences from the State be.

Councilmember Crosby replies that masks can not be enforced. Someone may have a health issue, which the Health Officer has stated that if you have a medical issue you are not required to wear a mask. Mrs. Crosby does not believe it is the City's job to force people to wear masks. It will be their job to provide access to masks and sanitizer which Public Health is providing to individuals and businesses.

Councilmember Lewis inquired how this will affect City employees. Would they be required to wear masks during the working hours.

Councilmember Crosby replies that they would not be required, only if they can not social distance. This is why Mrs. Crosby would like each department to evaluate and develop their plan to comply.

Fire Marshal clarifies that the Council is not going to enforce, but leave it up to the individuals. Mr. Hunter informs Council the Fire Department is already complying with regulations. When they arrive to a medical call it is recommended the patients wear a mask.

Council Crosby confirms that it is up to the individuals. However, our intentions are to follow the social distance guidelines.

Mayor Steffek reminds Councilmembers back in March the Department Heads established contingency plans for their department. Mr. Steffek advises that the Department Heads review and amend as necessary.

Councilmember Wood does not feel comfortable adhering to State and Federal regulations, especially when this agreement states future regulations.

Councilmember Crosby informs Council Modoc County just approved their application on July 9th. Mrs. Crosby advised Council it would not be wise to reject funds during a budget crisis. Especially if this funding could provide protection to staff and the public. Mrs. Crosby states "We do not have control over general public, this would be for the City staff and Councilmembers to follow guidelines best as possible". Ms. Crosby recommends we could only encourage the public.

Fire Marshal is concerned for people's rights with signing this agreement. He is also concerned with the unknown that comes with this agreement.

City Treasurer Long inquires if staff will be reprimanded if they refuse to wear masks.

Mayor Steffek expresses that is one of his concerns. He believes if the Council receives a complaint from the general public, Council will have to address that complaint. However, Mr. Steffek believes staff morale is a huge part of a successful team.

Councilmembers remind everyone we could always withdraw this agreement in the future if the City disagrees. However, in the past guidelines forced by the State, the City did not have a say in them.

Chief of Police Cullins had three points to clarify. First, Chief asks Councilmember Crosby if she is satisfied and believes our employees are currently in compliance with the Governor's guidelines.

Councilmember confirms with the contingency plans she believes we are currently in compliance.

Chief Cullins inquires if there are any expectations the Alturas Police Department will be forcing mask requirements.

Councilmember Crosby said her personal opinion is how do you force masks requirements when the Health Officer warns that some people can not wear masks due to health conditions. That would be a violation of someone's right. Mrs. Crosby would not expect the Alturas Police Department to enforce this on the public. Mrs. Crosby says if the County and City start seeing a spread of COVID-19, the Public Health Officer can advise guidelines as needed.

Chief Cullins final point to clarify is that there is \$50,000.00, that can only be used for COVID-19 related expenditures. Currently the Alturas Police Department would only be looking at a \$1,000.00 reimbursement for providing security at the testing sites, is that worth signing the application?

Councilmember Crosby believes there will be more funding opportunities, this is just the beginning.

Councilmember Lewis asks each department how they think the employees would react.

Public Works Assistant Dodds explains he has strong willed employees. However, they have been complying when masks are required.

Chief Cullins explains that if he required his officers to wear masks it would spoil the great working relationship.

Fire Marshal Hunter expresses that they Fire Department have been taking precautions. If they think a firemen or family member is potentially at risk they will not respond to calls. However, if they are mandated to wear masks that would be different.

Councilmember Crosby express that this is why it would be a Department Head's call to amend the contingency plan as they see fit, that will comply with the guidelines.

Councilmember Wood expresses her concern of jeopardizing the City by signing this agreement because of a lot of unknowns.

MOTION by Councilmember Crosby, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Lewis to approve **Resolution #2020-28** approving the conditions of receipt of funds under the Budget Act of 2020 and designating the Mayor as signatory to sign the associated certifications that the City of Alturas will comply with Federal and State orders and guidance related to the COVID-19 emergency. In favor Councilmember Crosby, Lewis and Mayor Steffek. Opposed Councilmember Wood. **Motion Passes.**

Councilmembers agree they do not need to develop Policy and Procedures on departmental practices regarding compliance with the federal, state and health guidelines/orders. Since in March 2020 the Department Heads already established a contingency plan. The plans will just need to be amended as needed and reviewed and approved by Council.

No Action was required on Agenda Item 2.

With no further business to come before City Council. **MOTION** by Councilmember Kelly to adjourn the meeting at 11:06 a.m. and to return in regular session on Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 2:00 p.m., City Hall. **SECONDED** by Councilmember Wood. **ALL AYES.**

Respectfully,

Macey Binning

Macey Binning
City Clerk