

THIS MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY.

Amherst City Council met in a Regular Session under full compliance of State Law with President Wasilk opening the meeting at 7:00 P.M. Roll call, Mr. Dembinski, Mr. Cowger, Mr. Wachholz, Mr. Nahorn, Mr. Heberling, Mr. Janik, Mr. Van Treuren. Also present were Council President Wasilk, Mayor Costilow, Safety/Service Director Jeffreys, Law Director Pecora, Assistant Law Director Ward, Treasurer Ramsey, and Auditor Pittak.

The Prayer was invoked by Chaplain Nahorn, followed by the Pledge to the Flag led by Sergeant at Arms Dembinski.

Consent Agenda: Mr. Van Treuren motioned to accept the Consent Agenda as read. Seconded by Mr. Cowger. Roll call vote 7-0 to accept the Consent Agenda.

Acknowledgement of the Public pertaining to items on the Agenda: There was no one speaking.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS FIRST READING:

- (a) An Ordinance authorizing and directing the Safety/Service Director to solicit bids for the 2020 Street Rehabilitation Program and authorizing and directing the Safety/Service Director to award the contract for such work to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder; and declaring an emergency. **(A-20-18)**

Mayor Costilow thanked Council members for sending this item on to Council floor. They are ready to bid this out and he asked for suspension of rules so they can get this out for bid. Mr. Cowger motioned to suspend all Council rules so that this may be passed in its first reading. Seconded by Mr. Dembinski. Roll call vote 7-0 to suspend rules. Mr. Cowger motioned to adopt. Seconded by Mr. Dembinski. Roll call vote 7-0 to adopt. Becomes 0-20-15.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS SECOND READING: NONE

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS THIRD READING: NONE

Miscellaneous and acknowledgement of the public: due to the meeting held remotely, there was no opportunity for public to speak at this time, but public was advised if they had questions, to e mail them. There were no e mail questions and no one else was speaking.

Agenda requests and committee meeting schedules:

A-20-19 Utility Due to the COVID-19 pandemic; no utility bill fees such as late or non-payment will be assessed, and no shut-off of utilities for Amherst residents through the March 2020 utility bill through the July 2020 bill."

Utility May 11, 2020 at 6:50 p.m. A-20-19

All Council Committee Meetings for May 5, 2020 are cancelled.

Reports of the Administration:

Auditor Pittak: Reported the March Auditor's reports were sent out to everyone at the end of March so everyone should have them. Any questions, call his office.

Treasurer Ramsey: The March Treasurer's reports were sent out. He reminded everyone that taxes are not due til July 15, per the State and Federal decrees.

Law Director Pecora: No report

Safety/Service Director Jeffreys: No report

Mayor Costilow: We will continue to follow the Governor's COVID19 plan; and his plan to re-open the city. We were told by the Lorain County Health Department we have six confirmed COVID19 cases in Amherst. No deaths came of the virus. We should continue to practice safe distancing. The city has adopted precautionary measures to keep our employees and public safe. Our plan is to keep buildings open for services, but we will be closed to the public til at least May 15. All the departments are fully staffed and they can be contacted via e mail or the listed phone numbers. Much of the staff will continue to work from home as long as possible. Everything has been working out very well so far and we are keeping our employees safe. He said the adoptive work schedules are working well with some employees staying at home and some actually on call and on different shifts. That will continue til at least for the next two weeks. Speaking to the Agenda Request read this evening, the city has not assessed any utility fees or shut off any utilities. Most customers are still doing pretty good with paying their bills. Last month 88% of customers paid their bills; the average is 90%. We have already not assessed about \$28,000 in late fees; which is about \$14,000 a month. The customers right now are in arrears about \$164,000. That's really not too far off normal. Typically, about 90% of people who get shut off notices do pay their bills. So when this is all set and done, there will be customers who will be seven months behind. We will work through that when we get there.

This year's budget leaves us in pretty good shape. We really won't know the effect of all this until later this year, or possibly next year. Collections of taxes are down of course at the deadline has been extended until July. Some numbers he received today show that a significant amount of returns still need to come in. This year, withholding is down a little bit, but he does not know the exact numbers. We will be in pretty good shape just with the cash balances and the cash we have on hand to get through this year.

The OPWC project that we do yearly and we have been approved for it, the money won't be there until July and the county is in some doubt if it will even be there then. So we will push that project out until next year. It will be a good thing as we will be able to bid it early next year rather than this summer. So hopefully we can get some better bids and begin the project earlier.

We have decided to delay the sidewalk program for this year. The Building Inspector has been out, but we will hold off until next year. If residents want to repair their sidewalks, the Building Inspector will work with them.

We are really watching our large expenditures, but no service is suffering. We have been providing all the services. The city employees are to be commended. They have been spectacular through all this. The City has done a good job to provide what is needed.

Mr. Van Treuren complemented and thanked the Mayor and Administration for working with the garbage company to pick up the bulk waste at the park. Our Administration went the extra mile to get this accomplished. This helped the residents a lot.

Mr. Janik asked about the Meals on Wheels program and if it is still continuing and if it's staffed appropriately. Mayor Costilow said the staff is absolutely spectacular. They have limited some of the rides as to avoid putting seniors in the same car as our staff. Sprenger did provide the meals as well as staff but limited that to keep their staff safe. So our Office on Aging staff did talk to many businesses and Fligner's really stepped up to the plate. They are now providing those meals on wheels. Those services are staying steady. They are doing very good with this. There are others that have stepped up – such as St. Joe's and the schools are providing lunches. along with a lot of individual residents that help out.

Mr. Cowger motioned to accept the Reports of the Administration Seconded by Mr. Dembinski. Roll call vote 7-0 to accept the reports.

Acknowledgement of the receipt of March monthly reports from the Auditor and Treasurer: Mr. Janik motioned to acknowledge the receipt of the March reports from the Auditor and Treasurer. Seconded by Mr. Cowger. Roll call vote 7-0 to acknowledge reports.

Mr. Cowger motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Dembinski. Roll call vote 7-0 to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 P. M.