



MINUTES
Town of Atherton
CITY COUNCIL
April 1, 2020
SPECIAL MEETING
This meeting is being held virtually

Mayor DeGolia called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm

4:00 PM SPECIAL SESSION – *Convene as the City Council*

1. **ROLL CALL** - Wiest, Widmer, Lempres, Vice Mayor Lewis (absent), Mayor DeGolia
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

City Clerk Suber read a public comment from Karlene Elder thanking Council and Town staff for their support and assistance during the completion of her residential construction project allowing for ADA improvements.

3. **ATHERTON COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATES**

City Manager Rodericks presented a general overview to Council of the County extended Shelter-in-Place order and the actions taken in response. Rodericks discussed the creation of the Builders Roundtable Subcommittee and work performed by that group. Rodericks continued to explain the impact of the March 31, 2020, County order prohibiting residential construction except for cases of emergency. He further expanded on the option for public infrastructure projects that support essential governmental functions and essential infrastructure projects as being allowed to continue.

Council discussed continuing construction activity on the Town Center project during the Shelter-in-Place (SIP) order and defining that as essential activity supporting essential governmental services.

Eric Harrison, resident asked clarifying details about the current Shelter-in-Place order and when residential construction would be allowed.

Bob Erskine, President SJ Amoroso, shared processes that have implemented on job sites to increase and improve safety in response to COVID-19 that would apply to the Town Center Project.

City Clerk Suber received public comments via text message, identified here by the last four (4) digits of their number:

- XXX-XXX-6867 asked clarifying questions about when local residential construction could continue.

Dennis Woodside, resident, thanked Council and Staff on the work done by the Council and staff.

Mayor DeGolia provided details regarding the work performed by the Builders Roundtable Subcommittee, the rules and regulations established and the proposed form. He also framed the next steps of the conversation for allowing any Town related construction activity.

Suber received public comments via text message, identified here by the last four (4) digits of their number:

- XXX-XXX-0448 suggested that the Town refer to the San Mateo County order as the governing rules.
- XXX-XXX-1226 asked clarifying questions why other jurisdictions are allowing construction activity and Atherton is not.

Council discussion ensued related to the work done by the Builders Roundtable Subcommittee. forms and

Rodericks added that the Town can allow construction activity to continue by direction of the Council deeming it an essential governmental function. He noted the project would be subject to following the rules and regulations related to social distancing and outlined by the Builders Roundtable Subcommittee. He added that library services have already been deemed a non-essential service.

City Attorney Ebrahimi responded to Council questions clarifying what constitutes an essential governmental service. She noted that is defined locally by each affected agency. Ebrahimi provided guidance for Council to consider evaluating what work needs to be done now as a necessary project and what work can be deferred. She added Council can evaluate the risk of the activity in question as it relates to the spread of the virus.

Council continued discussion considering the various points related to allowing Town Center construction activity to continue during the SIP order.

Building Official Greenlee responded to council questions related to safety measures that building officials and inspectors are will take during any onsite inspections. He added that remote inspections will be performed when possible. He noted several precautionary measures included PPE equipment for staff.

Councilmember Lempres requested that a specific plan for how to proceed with construction activity be brought back for Council review at the next Special Meeting.

Councilmember Wiest commented that he supports the idea of developing a detailed plan for continuing construction on the Town Center in coordination with SJ Amoroso and bringing that back to Council for consideration.

Bob Erskine noted that SJ Amoroso will provide a site-specific action plan to staff no later than Monday, April 6, 2020.

MOTION by Wiest, Second by Widmer to certify the continuing emergency, and ratify

such rules and regulations enacted by the Director of Emergency Services in response to COVID-19.

AYES: Widmer, Wiest, Lempres, DeGolia

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Lewis

4. KNOX PLAYSCHOOL RENT DEFERRAL OR REFUND DUE TO COVID-19 SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER AND RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURE

City Manager Rodericks introduced the item, provided details about Knox Playschool services, the request made by Susan Knox and their business operations plans. He also introduced Susan Knox, owner and operator of the school.

Councilmember Widmer asked clarifying questions about the request and services offered by Knox Playschool. He noted the extension of the order through May 4, 2020. He also suggested financial relief resources to Susan Knox.

Susan Knox, owner and operator of Knox Playschool responded to Council inquires and provided details about her plans for operations. She noted that she will likely be closed through the school year, which is June 11, 2020. She noted that she would bill for May or June and intends to offer refunds if she is unable to provide services for her Summer sessions. She amended her request to have a rent reduction until she is able to reopen.

Lempres recommended that Council consider waiving the full month rent for April and evaluate other options moving forward.

Public Works Director Ovadia indicated that based on Council commentary he had no objections to waiving the full rent for April and continuing the rent relief until the school can reopen.

MOTION by Wiest, Second by Widmer to waive the April rent for the Knox Playschool as it is in the public good allowing a necessary service to continue operations once the COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place order is lifted. Rent relief will be reevaluated in May for further consideration by Council and Staff will coordinate other financial supportive options with the Knox Playschool.

AYES: Widmer, Wiest, Lempres, DeGolia

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Lewis

5. COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMENTS – None

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

7. **ADJOURN**

Mayor DeGolia adjourned the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anthony Suber".

Anthony Suber
City Clerk