

Emergency Town Council Meeting
Saturday, March 14, 2020
8:00 A.M. Town Hall

Edinburgh Town Council met in an emergency session on Saturday, March 14, 2020 at 8:00 A.M. at the Town Hall, 107 South Holland Street, Edinburgh, Indiana.

President Simpson called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members answering roll call: Councilwoman Debbie Buck, Councilwoman Miriam Rooks, Vice President Dawn Graham, Councilman Ryan Piercefield, and President Jeff Simpson. Also present were Town Attorney Dustin Huddleston, Clerk-Treasurer Scott Finley, Town Manager JT Doane, and all department heads.

COVID-19 Public Safety Discussion – Mr. Doane handed out documents from Indianapolis EMS regarding protocol for the COVID-19 outbreak. Councilman Piercefield also handed out some information from the Department of Homeland Security. Information has been posted on the town website informing the public of the necessary precautions to reduce the spread of this virus. He said he and Fire Chief Mike Herron met with a worker's compensation insurance representative and a health insurance representative this week. Worker's comp will not cover COVID-19 as it is difficult to determine that it was contracted due to work processes. Our health insurance will be covering medical costs related to the outbreak.

Fire Chief Mike Herron said he forwarded a message from an Indianapolis EMS briefing on March 10th. There is a lot of info and opinions. It is not exactly known how it spread initially and there is no vaccine for it yet. He explained the transmission, diagnose, treatment, and prevention of the virus. The state is past the point of containment and now must deal with mitigation to reduce the spread. Most healthy people's immune systems can fight the virus but elderly people and people with underlying health issues can be more vulnerable. The recommendations are to avoid large groups of people and practice basic hygiene like washing your hands frequently. There has been at least one positive case in Johnson County.

Mr. Herron explained that he wrote a policy last night regarding Edinburgh's EMS response. Transport of patients assumed to have COVID-19 will be transported by one of a few ambulances in the area because of a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) and to avoid contamination of PPE and ambulances. The department would be dispatched on a flu-like run and would ask a series of questions upon arrival and limit exposure. The town will be responding to calls related to COVID-19 but will not be using our ambulances to transport. They would be transferred by Bargersville or White River Township. Other medical issues will be handled by standard operating procedures. Hospitals are taking the issue very seriously.

Councilwoman Buck asked if there was a timeline?

Mr. Herron said currently the timeline is unknown. He explained that if the brunt of the virus hits too quickly, the health care system will be overwhelmed. If it is drawn out over a longer period of time, we should have the resources to handle the situation.

Discussion was held regarding how the virus spreads and the EMS response.

Mr. Doane said the public safety workers have received additional PPE for responding to calls. We need to have flexibility if we have a town employee effected by the virus.

Mr. Finley said the personnel policy does allow additional sick days to be approved by council on a case-by-case basis.

Wastewater Superintendent Rebecca Frakes said she has already received guidance from IDEM. If this virus hits the community it will inevitably hit the wastewater facility. IDEM is asking that departments share resources with other communities as there has to be operators at the plants. There is always a fine mist due to the aeration process at the plant. Employees always have PPE but only so much can be done.

Assistant Street Superintendent Greg Elkins said if there is always a mist at the plant, should the compactor be shut down to the public?

Councilman Piercefield said they are dealing with this in Franklin. He encouraged the department to mirror other communities in the area. If the communities can work together and standardize

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procedures this whole process will run smoother. He believes we need to eliminate non-essential functions. Franklin has gone to a locked fire station. He said we need to limit our exposure to the public for the safety of our staff. We need to be as proactive as we can.

Mr. Finley said he is working with the software system to eliminate the \$1.25 fee charge for people paying utility bills online. A note will be placed on the office door encouraging people to pay online, over the phone, or through the drop box. He said he has been working with IT to get remote access to the network so that vital functions like payroll can be done remotely. He believes person to person contact should be limited as much as possible.

Parks Director Daniel Teter asked if weekend rentals should be cancelled.

Councilwoman Rooks said she believes we should cancel rentals and especially any senior events and activities.

Councilman Piercefield recommended cancelling non-essential functions until April 13th and then re-evaluate at that council meeting.

Discussion was held regarding Timbergate operations.

Mr. Elkins asked if it could be spread by mosquitos.

Mr. Herron said they do not believe that is that case.

Mr. Huddleston said the council has touched on most things on his list. The key is communication with the public and departments. He recommended drafting a communication and a policy explaining the steps the council will be taking and the protocols for public processes and posting that in public places and through social media and the website.

Councilwoman Rooks said we need to let employees know that their jobs are not going to be in jeopardy if they need to stay home sick. We really need to work on mitigating the spread of this virus.

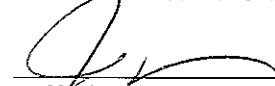
Ms. Frakes said she has a couple employees still on a probationary period without sick time. She wanted to make sure those employees were able to stay home in the remote chance that had to deal with this virus.

Mr. Finley said the council could grant sick days on a case-by-case basis if needed.

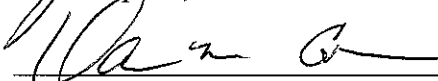
President Simpson thanked all the department heads for attending this meeting and information will be disseminated as it is received.

Being no further business or comments, Councilman Piercefield made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Graham seconded. Motion carried.


EDINBURGH TOWN COUNCIL



Jeff Simpson, President



Dawn Graham, Vice President



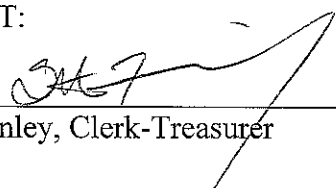
Debbie Buck



Ryan Piercefield

Miriam Rooks

ATTEST:



Scott Finley, Clerk-Treasurer