

CALL TO ORDER

A Virtual Regular Meeting of the Redondo Beach Disaster Council was called to order by Chair Brand at 3:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chair Brand, Vice Chair Hoefgen, Witzansky, Kauffman, Metzger, Semaan, Stratton, Gausche-Hill, Keller, Bakaly, Knoll, Elder, Ahn (signed in via teleconference at 3:31 p.m.), Sharifi, Alderson, Sanford, McKenzie

Officials Present: Eleanor Manzano, City Clerk
Michael Webb, City Attorney
Vickie Kroneberger, Chief Deputy City Clerk

SALUTE TO FLAG

Chair Brand led the assembly in the Salute to the Flag.

A. APPROVAL OF ORDER OF AGENDA

Chair Brand announced there will be no roll call votes on matters of routine but rather will be recorded by consensus; addressed the purpose of the Disaster Council; acknowledged City Officials, present and discussed the format for the meeting.

Motion by Chair Brand, seconded by Member Sharifi, to approve the Order of the Agenda. Motion carried, unanimously, by consensus.

B. BLUE FOLDER ITEMS – ADDITIONAL BACKUP MATERIAL

B.1 *For Blue Folder Documents Approved at the Disaster Council Meeting*

Vice Chair Hoefgen discussed Public Participation items as part of Blue Folder Items which were distributed by the City Clerk earlier.

Motion by Member Elder, seconded by Assistant Director Witzansky, to approve the Blue Folder Items. Motion carried, unanimously, by consensus.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

C.1. APPROVE AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING FOR THE REDONDO BEACH DISASTER COUNCIL REGULAR OF APRIL 9, 2020.

CONTACT: ELEANOR MANZANO, CITY CLERK

C.2. APPROVE MOTION TO READ BY TITLE ONLY AND WAIVE FURTHER READING OF ALL RESOLUTIONS LISTED ON THE AGENDA.

CONTACT: ELEANOR MANZANO, CITY CLERK

City Clerk Eleanor Manzano announced there were no public comments received on the Consent Calendar.

Motion by Member Sharifi, seconded by Member Bakaly, to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried, unanimously, by consensus.

D. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS - NONE

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

E.1. *For Receive & File Documents Received from the Public at the Disaster Council Meeting*

Chief Deputy City Clerk Kroneberger read an email into the record, received from Wayne Craig wherein he suggests that Members of the Disaster Council should not be political appointees and opined the City Manager has excluded well-qualified individuals to represent Redondo residents; felt that the North Redondo Beach Business Association should not be represented over other Redondo Beach business associations, alleging they have refused to provide proper financial documentation and have engaged in illegal, political fundraising. He noted that Riviera Village Business Association was omitted from the Disaster Council; stressed that they need to be represented and suggested members who would bring expertise and value to the Disaster Council.

Chief Deputy City Clerk Kroneberger read an email from Mel Samples, registering a complaint about accessibility to the streaming video.

There were no other public comments.

Chair Brand reported the Disaster Council is prevented from commenting on comments regarding non-agenda items.

F. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION PRIOR TO ACTION

F.1. OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THE REDONDO BEACH DISASTER COUNCIL

F.2. CITY OF REDONDO BEACH RESPONSE TO COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS

F.3. DISCUSSION OF THE ANTICIPATED DURATION OF THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS - ADVISING MEMBERS OF THE DISASTER COUNCIL

Vice Chair Hoefgen provided an overview of the Redondo Beach Disaster Council; thanked Members for their willingness to serve; noted the purpose of the Council is to assist the City in response to the COVID-19 crisis; addressed actions taken by the City so far to protect City employees and residents; spoke about the process for choosing members and commented on the Disaster Council's collective charge. He deferred to attending health professionals to comment on the anticipated duration of the pandemic and whether the City should change its message from, "Safer at Home" to "Stay at Home".

Member Dr. Gausche-Hill, Medical Director, L.A. County EMS, reported people need to have access to food and other items; agreed that people are safer at home; noted challenges with complete lockdowns; urged the public to practice social distancing when away from home and discussed difficulties in predicting how long the virus will last.

Member Dr. Stratton, Medical Advisor to the Redondo Beach Fire Department, agreed with Member Dr. Gausche-Hill's comments; believed "Safer at Home" is still an appropriate message; noted the need to be realistic in terms of expectations and messaging and urged the public to continue with social distancing protocols, wearing masks and washing hands often. He discussed the importance of flattening the curve and availability of testing relative to the duration of the virus.

Member Dr. Gausche-Hill noted the number of EMS calls have gone down, substantially, including for serious illnesses like heart attacks and strokes, as people are afraid to go to hospitals for fear of being infected with COVID-19. She discussed the importance of messaging to let people know if they are really sick, it is acceptable to get emergency transport to the hospital.

City Attorney Mike Webb noted "Safer at Home" means different things to different people and stated that while the messaging is important, it is more important to define, clearly, what is meant.

Member Bakaly introduced Dr. William Kim, Chief Medical Advisor, Beach Cities Health District, discussed the importance of encouraging social distancing while still staying connected and reported that stress and anxiety have risen, making the messaging even more important in terms of defining "Safer at Home".

Dr. William Kim discussed the anticipated duration of COVID-19 noting there are many things in the mix including testing, masks, the "Safer at Home" messaging, hand-washing and social distancing. He added that the "Stay at Home" message, as defined by Chair Brand, is more like the "Safer at Home" messaging.

Assistant Director Witzansky referenced a recent Stanford study regarding herd immunity and asked how that data could disrupt the analysis in terms of rolling back the various restrictions and returning to normalcy.

Member Dr. Gausche-Hill discussed looking at the prevalence and who is and is not immune noting that type of population-based testing would be extremely useful to allow those who appear to be immune to return to work. The challenge is that the length of that immunity is unknown and there have been reports out of China that reinfection could occur. She noted the need to develop algorithms on how to use the available data in order to have a return-to-work policy.

Member Elder asked about what could be done to gain access to tests.

Member Bakaly reported there is a public testing site at the Galleria which conducts approximately 250 tests per day and hoped those tests could be expanded in the near future.

In reply to Chair Brand's question regarding the accuracy of the mouth-swab tests, Dr. Kim reported the nasal swab has about a 28% false negative rate and reported people who are symptomatic with negative test results are encouraged to stay at home and get retested if they continue to be ill. He added that newer platforms may have a better sensitivity and the medical industry is excited about the prospect of expanded testing.

Member Dr. Gausche-Hill discussed two tests, that are not widely distributed, that have better profiles than the tests being currently used including one by Abbott and another by Cellex and believed those will be a game-changer, once there is wide distribution.

Member Bakaly added those tests are being pressed at the State level.

Vice Chair Hoefgen discussed the State's order requiring members of the public to wear masks except in limited circumstances; noted the State's order does not have jurisdiction in the City and as a result, he is in the process of issuing a similar order and reported the County is considering issuing a similar order.

Assistant Director Witzansky asked about specific metric changes relative to impacts on hospitals and ICUs that would result in a rollback of some of the social distancing restrictions.

Member Dr. Gausche-Hill noted a scarcity in ICU beds and ventilators; reported hospitals and systems are working together to ease some of the COVID-19 surge and once there is data that the number of patients being admitted and ventilated are going down, then medical professionals can begin to think about opening up those beds.

Member McKenzie asked about the availability of demographic information related to groups that are the hardest hit and Dr. Kim reported there are no hard studies, but the elderly seem to be the most affected.

Member Dr. Gausche-Hill listed COVID-19 resources including CDC.gov, the L.A. Public Health website and reported that children seem to be the least affected.

Chief Deputy City Clerk Kroneberger read an email from Mel Samples noting the importance of consistent messaging.

There were no other public communications.

F.4. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS

Vice Chair Hoefgen addressed the City's significant losses of revenue and reported the City is in discussion with all Departments relative to their budgets and asking them to prepare reduction plans. He added the private sector has been most-hit and asked for input from the Council.

Member Elder discussed impacts to the hospitality industry; reported Los Angeles County is running about 30% occupancy; stated many hotels have closed and/or furloughed staff; spoke about other relevant metrics and noted the industry is looking forward to reopening.

Member Alderson thanked BCHD for the COVID-19 testing site in the Galleria and City staff for their efforts in getting that done; reported every tenant has closed, except for food operators; noted more than half of their tenants have asked for rent forgiveness and stated duration will impact their ability to collect rent from their tenants.

Member Elder spoke about cancellations, refunding deposits and efforts to relocate/reschedule groups that cancel to future bookings.

Member Knoll discussed impacts to the Chamber of Commerce; agreed many businesses are now in a zero-revenue situation; reported pick-up orders were high at the start but are starting to decrease and indicated the Chamber is trying to be as proactive as possible; addressed launch a website, redondotogo.org, with information about businesses that are still in operation and offering local resources.

Member Sharifi provided an overview of impacts to the real estate industry noting business is down about 80%; referenced guidelines issues by the California Realtors Association and reported lately, his work has been to intervene between landlords and tenants to discuss the possibility of a rent-deferral program.

Member Sanford discussed issues related to business interruption and insurance, noting all claims have been denied as there have been no physical losses to property. He addressed efforts by the restaurant industry in terms of salary cuts and furloughs; felt that getting a sense of long-term consequences would be helpful and spoke about worst-case scenarios and getting back to work and noted economic impacts will be felt long after restrictions are lifted.

Member Dr. Stratton opined that changes will probably last into next year; felt restrictions will last until late May or throughout summer and noted there will be a gradual return to normalcy. He added that herd immunity is still far but with hotter and drier weather, the virus may attenuate.

Member Bakaly discussed rebuilding, as a nation, while the threat is still present and stated a strategic framework is needed to phase back operations, based on medical data, in a regional approach.

Member Ahn reported Northrup-Grumman has implemented telecommuting and flex time; reported being in contact with the Department of Defense to address Federal customers; noted sustainability of long-term measures are not doable, but they have disaster recovery plans in place. He addressed challenges in terms of needing to supply customers and stressed the need for a regional approach in terms of an economic framework to restart normal operations.

Member Bakaly provided information regarding the BCHD Hotline whereby they offer resources and help to seniors and residents.

Chair Brand noted the testing site at the Galleria is an example of cooperation and coordination and reported it is extremely valuable.

Member Knoll agreed that the worst is yet to come; noted all industries will be impacted and discussed SBA loans.

Chief Deputy City Clerk Kroneberger read an email from Steven Diels, Redondo Beach City Treasurer, with recommendations regarding items the Disaster Council should consider.

Chief Deputy City Clerk Kroneberger read an email from Mel Samples recommending scheduling an emergency meeting of the Budget and Finance Commission.

There were no other public communications.

Chair Brand noted any member of the Budget and Finance Commission is encouraged to contact the City Manager, Council or the City Clerk with comments.

Vice Chair Hoefgen discussed preparation of the budget; reported comments are welcomed; noted the budget process is a very public process and spoke about challenges in reinstating one commission over another.

F.5. FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE REDONDO BEACH DISASTER COUNCIL

Vice Chair Hoefgen noted the need for flexibility in terms of scheduling future meetings and reported members will notified of upcoming meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Witzansky, seconded by Member Sharifi, to adjourn the meeting at 4:37 p.m. The motion carried, unanimously, by consensus.