

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Cedar Falls Council Chambers

August 31, 2020

The City Council held a special work session at City Hall via teleconference at 5:00 p.m. on August 31, 2020, with the following persons in attendance: Mayor Robert M. Green, Frank Darrah, Simon Harding, Daryl Kruse, Mark Miller, Dave Sires and Kelly Dunn. Absent: Susan deBuhr (Meeting scheduled at a time she couldn't attend). Staff members attended from all City Departments. Amie Rivers from the *Waterloo Courier* attended, as well as members of the community teleconferenced in.

Mayor Green introduced the only item on the agenda, COVID-19 Mitigation Options Discussion. Mayor read an opening statement regarding tonight's work session. Councilmember Harding stated that he'd like to find out if we have a consensus to push forward on the mask mandate education and compliance. If we don't have consensus we can't do anything. Mayor Green explained that we are not voting on the mandate, that we are seeing who's in agreement and then staff can create formal documents or a resolution for council to vote on at a later date. Mayor Green reiterated Councilmember Harding's support for the mandate. Councilmember Sires met with the governor and he explained that no city, county or municipality has the authority to do this. Councilmember Sires stated he had handouts for the all Councilmembers from the governor's office. Councilmember Sires supports the governor and would like to follow along with her guidelines. Mayor Green referred to Step Up Mask Up Iowa and it was released July 23rd and numbers are still on the rise. Mayor Green stated that cities have the authority to create rules and regulations that are stricter than state mandates we simply can't go more lax than the state requires. Attorney Rogers confirmed that some cities have taken that position. Attorney Rogers discussed concepts that are not addressed in the latest governor's proclamation and any enforcement by the attorney general. Councilmember Darrah discussed strongly encouraging our residents to be responsible, education and we need to work with the bar owners. Councilmember Sires agreed with Councilmember Darrah. Councilmember Harding discussed the bar owners are under restrictions on how many patrons they are allowed in. Councilmember Sires recommends we do what the governor says and to do a video. Councilmember Dunn stated what the governor has done has not gotten us in a great place. We need to use the word mandate and we need to educate. Waiting till the next council meeting is concerning. Councilmember Dunn discussed handing out masks to people and expressed her concern about people not wearing masks. Councilmember Miller agreed the time is now that we need to do something and agrees it should be a mask mandate. When you can't social distance, you need to wear a mask. A mask outside is not necessary. Mayor Green commented that we need to look at the numbers after trusting Iowans to do the right thing and what we are doing isn't enough. We have the highest COVID risk in the nation for COVID spread. Councilmember Miller stated that we need to get back to normal and we are not getting the leadership from above. Councilmember Kruse discussed the cases and if the mask mandate has been effective. Councilmember Kruse stated he's in favor of education and suggesting mask wearing. Councilmembers Harding and Darrah stated that we need to do something. Mayor Green believes we have a consensus with four councilmembers that are

interested in proceeding forward with a mandate. Councilmember Sires believes in individual/businesses rights, but wants everyone to be healthy. Mayor Green stated most cities proclamations are the same language. Councilmember Miller discussed if the city had money in the budget that we could offer masks and signs to business owners. Councilmember Harding commented that he doesn't want to see schools or businesses close again. Mayor Green asked if there would be a consensus to keep the mandate in effect until September 20th and then re-evaluate. Councilmember Dunn stated information about the 5% threshold. Councilmembers would like to see the infections breakdown by county. Councilmembers discussed the expiration of the mandate. Mayor Green stated that we will have something ready for the September 8th City Council Meeting for council to evaluate and vote on. Councilmember Harding recommended a similar mandate as Waterloo. Mayor Green stated Des Moines mandate is identical to Waterloo. Councilmember Miller suggested expanding Main Street into the street and re-evaluate liquor licenses. Councilmember Dunn suggested doing this for College Hill businesses as well. Director Sheetz stated this has been discussed with Community Main Street and there was concern about increased costs, would the streets be utilized and it was determined it wouldn't be worthwhile at this time. Councilmembers discussed the survival of businesses. Mayor Green believes we have a consensus to move forward on a resolution with no enforcement. Councilmember Harding suggested a commercial/PSA to keep the Cedar Valley open. Councilmember Dunn suggested reaching out to our local experts. Mayor Green will email COVID numbers to councilmembers.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Green adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Minutes by Kim Kerr, Administrative Supervisor