

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Columbia, Illinois  
held Friday, March 27, 2020 in the Council Room of City Hall.**

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**A. Call Meeting To Order**

Mayor Pro Tem Ebersohl called the City Council of Columbia, Illinois to order at 4:35 PM.

**B. Roll Call**

**Present:** In-person:

Aldermen Ebersohl, Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Martens, and Riddle.

Virtually:

Alderman Holtkamp.

**Absent:** Mayor Hutchinson.

Quorum present.

**Administrative Staff present:**

In-Person:

IT Support Mgr James Mitchell

Chief of Police Jerry Paul

Virtually:

City Clerk Wes Hoeffken

City Administrator Douglas Brimm

City Attorney Terry Bruckert

Acctg. Mgr. Nicole Guile

Dir. of Community Dev. Scott Dunakey

Head Librarian Annette Bland

Comm. Relations Coord. Sue Spargo

EMS Chief Kim Lamprecht

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**D. Proclamations/Recognitions/Presentations**

There were no proclamations, recognitions, or presentations.

**E. Public Input**

There was no public input

**F. Comments & Announcements - Mayor**

There were no Mayor Comments & Announcements

**G. Comments & Announcements - Aldermen**

There were no Aldermen Comments & Announcements.

**H. Comments & Announcements - Department Directors**

There were no Department Director Comments & Announcements.

**I. Consent Agenda**

There was no Consent Agenda.

**J. Unfinished Business**

There was no Unfinished Business

**K. New Business**

1. Ordinance No. 3506 – Declaration of Emergency

Mr. Brimm provided the following:

- Thanked the Mayor and members of the Council for supporting Staff as they work to continue providing services to our residents, businesses, and visitors during this unprecedented time.
- Thanked all City employees at all levels of the organization for their continued dedication, especially IT Systems Engineer, James Mitchell, who has worked tirelessly to ensure that Staff has resources and systems in place to work remotely where appropriate, and are able to execute events like this council meeting with a hybrid approach to ensure business of the City continues uninterrupted.
- Thanked the public for their patience and understanding.
- Staff has closely monitored information on the COVID-19 pandemic, have participated in biweekly conference calls with Governor JB Pritzker, which include updates on the State's efforts to control COVID-19 through the Illinois Department of Public Health, and Illinois Emergency Management Agency.
- The City has implemented new ways to communicate relevant information to all of the City's stakeholders. The platform we are currently utilizing has been adopted for public meetings. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach in ensuring open and transparent government.
- An automated call system has been implemented to communicate information to the City's bars and restaurants regarding Governor Pritzker's executive orders impacting their operations. Additionally, today, an e-mail distribution system was implemented to push information on the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Small Business Assistance programs to all Columbia businesses. I encourage everyone to continue checking the City's website, [columbiaillinois.com](http://columbiaillinois.com), for information on COVID-19.
- The purpose of Mayor Hutchinson's emergency declaration issued last Friday was not to incite fear or panic throughout the City. This measured approach reemphasized the attention owed to the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed the City to take steps necessary to protect the safety of the public and City personnel. As a result, City facilities have been closed to the public since Monday. Additionally, although a Federal and State disaster declaration has been approved, the City felt it prudent to issue its own declaration to ensure it is eligible to receive any Federal or

State reimbursement for expenses incurred by the taxpayers of Columbia related to COVID-19.

- The ordinance being considered at this meeting extends the Mayor’s declaration for up to a 60-day period, unless repealed or amended by the City Council.

Additionally, it contains the following provisions:

- City Council meetings may be held via electronic means (in accordance with direction from the Governor’s office);
- Allows the cancelation of Board/Commission meetings, and provides for the extension of deadlines established by City Code;
- Allows the suspension of licenses/permits that could impact the public health or well-being of residents or visitors to the community;
- Allows the continued closure of City facilities to the public;
- Authorizes the extension of payments due to the City, including ordinance violations, utility bills, and lease payments; and
- Postpones the April 9, 2020 Administrative Tow Hearing until May 14, 2020.
- This will impact the Public Hearings scheduled before the Plan Commission on April 13, 2020. If approved, Mr. Dunakey will reach out to affected parties with due notice.
- All other non-essential events and meetings have been postponed.

Mr. Brimm then offered to answer any questions.

**Motion:**

It was moved by Alderman Roessler, and seconded by Alderman Martens, to pass and approve Ordinance No. 3506, an ordinance related to the emergency created by the impact of the COVID-19 Virus.

Motion Passed.

Roll Call vote results:

8 Aye: Ebersohl, Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Holtkamp, Martens, and Riddle

0 Nay:

0 Absent:

0 Abstain:

**L. Closed Session**

There was no business addressed in Closed Session.

**M. Announcements**

Mr. Brimm stated the Regular Council Meeting for April 6, 2020 will occur as scheduled.

**N. Adjournment**

**Motion:**

It was moved by Alderman Niemietz, and seconded by Alderman Agne, to adjourn the Special City Council meeting held Friday, March 27, 2020 at 4:43 PM.

Motion Passed.

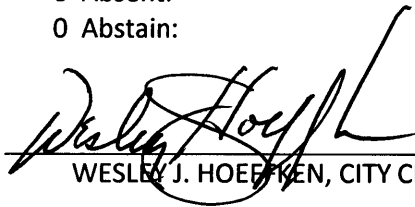
Roll Call vote results:

8 Aye: Ebersohl, Agne, Niemietz, Roessler, Huch, Holtkamp, Martens, and Riddle

0 Nay:

0 Absent:

0 Abstain:

  
WESLEY J. HOEPFKEN, CITY CLERK

  
MAYOR PRO TEM GENE EBERSOHL