

THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA
SPECIAL ASSEMBLY MEETING
Meeting Minutes – June 3, 2020

Meeting No. 2020-30: The Special Assembly Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly was held virtually via Zoom Meetings, and was called into order by Mayor Beth Weldon at 6:00p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Assemblymembers Present: Maria Gladziszewski, Loren Jones, Carole Triem, Rob Edwardson, Michelle Hale, Wade Bryson, Alicia Hughes-Skandijs, Greg Smith, and Mayor Beth Weldon

Assemblymembers Absent: None

Special Guests: Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anne Zink, Commissioner Adam Crum

Staff Present: City Manager Rorie Watt, Deputy City Manager Mila Cosgrove, City Attorney Robert Palmer, Municipal Clerk Beth McEwen, Deputy Clerk Di Cathcart, BRH CEO Chuck Bill

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

III. AGENDA TOPICS

Dr. Zink and Commissioner Crum joined the Special Assembly meeting to answer Assemblymembers' questions and provide information regarding the pandemic.

Mr. Edwardson asked Dr. Zink to explain the reasoning behind expecting travelers to test 72 hours before travel. Dr. Zink said that testing 72 hours prior to travel creates a "point in time" that shows whether a person has been exposed to the virus at that time. She added that they are additionally asking travelers to quarantine and restrict their social activities for 7-14 days, and to avoid interacting with others in indoor spaces during that period of time.

Ms. Alicia Hughes-Skandijs asked Dr. Zink to clarify what mitigation strategies she would recommend for Juneau in the case of our healthcare capacity reaching its limit.

Dr. Zink said that Juneau should be watching their numbers and be aware of any potential increase in case counts prior to over-capacity. She encouraged the Assembly that, in the event of a future spike in cases, to focus on spreading risk mitigation messaging to the community: promoting mask wearing and discouraging large gatherings. She added that if cases continued to increase, then they should consider implementing mandates to put restrictions in place until the case numbers decrease.

Mr. Smith asked Dr. Zink to explain the Governor's decision to no longer require travelers to receive testing. Dr. Zink said that the State cannot mandate testing to be required prior to coming into the State of Alaska, as doing so would be a violation of the Commerce Clause. She added that the state also cannot forcibly require someone to undergo a procedure against their will, and people do have the right to refuse a medical test.

Ms. Triem mentioned that some residents have been non-compliant and opting out of receiving a COVID-19 screening, and asked Commissioner Crum if the State could provide any guidance or resources to help enforce the Health Mandate. Commissioner Crum mentioned that airlines are now requiring passengers to wear masks as they travel, and there is currently a communication campaign that informs travelers of Alaska's travel guidelines and mandates prior to their arrival. As for enforcement, Commissioner Crum stated that the State cannot legally force travelers to undergo a medical test, but collaborating with local EOCs across the state could help get people to take this seriously.

Ms. Gladziszewski asked Dr. Zink about her recommendations regarding small vessels operating in Juneau and Southeast Alaska this upcoming summer.

Dr. Zink mentioned that British Columbia is not allowing any ships larger than 100 passengers, about 98% of the ships that travel to Alaska that carry 100-250 passengers are licensed in British Columbia. She mentioned a few small vessel companies who are considering various quarantine and testing strategies.

Mayor Weldon asked Dr. Zink about anticipated testing turnaround time for results with the increase in testing capacity. Dr. Zink said that Juneau is a harder situation due to its geographic location, and the testing turnaround time is expected to be varied because of that. Mayor Weldon also asked if employees who are part of critical infrastructure would be able to have a less restrictive approach towards quarantining. Commissioner Crum said that they are hoping that individuals who are employed through critical infrastructure would still pursue testing and be cautious about their actions after travel.

Ms. Gladziszewski asked Dr. Zink to explain to the concerned public why they are deciding to take these next steps moving forward. Dr. Zink explained that the main goal is the health and wellbeing of Alaskans in general, which includes mental health, physical health, and emotional health. She added that travel is a regular part of Alaskan life, and she is trying to meet people where they are comfortable when moving forward with her approach.

Mr. Watt asked Dr. Zink to confirm the messaging within the Health Mandate that requires travelers to continue to quarantine. Dr. Zink confirmed the quarantine is still being enforced with the revised Health Mandate.

Ms. Cosgrove asked them to clarify what steps the State is taking to make sure this information is being pushed out to states in the Lower 48. Commissioner Crum said that they have been working with the Alaska Tourism Industry Association to actively push messaging on Alaska's

Travel and Health Mandate down to tourism bureaus in the Lower 48. They also have published a Frequently Asked Questions that can be reached online by potential travelers. Dr. Zink added that airlines are also informing travelers of Alaska's mandates after they book their flights, as well as spreading the messaging while on the flight. She also said that they have been working with the Health Departments of California, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Hawaii, and Washington to notify travelers of Alaska's mandates.

Mayor Weldon thanked Dr. Zink and Commissioner Crum for attending this first part of the Special Assembly meeting.

A. PUBLIC HEARING: Emergency Ordinance 2020-27 An Emergency Ordinance Ordering People to Quarantine When Traveling Into The City and Borough of Juneau from Another State or Country.

This Ordinance, which would enact a local 14 day quarantine, was introduced and set for public hearing because the Assembly did not know what the Governor would do to update Health Mandate 10, which was set to expire June 2, 2020. On Friday night, May 29, the Governor announced that he would extend Health Mandate 10 until Friday June 5th and that he would issue guidance documents by June 1 on new protocols which would rely on a level of testing in lieu of quarantine. Health Mandate 10 updated on June 1 is included in this packet and is scheduled to expire on June 5th at 11:59p.m. When they do become available, additional guidance documents are anticipated to be posted on the state's website.

The Assembly considered this ordinance at a special meeting on June 1, 2020 and took public testimony and continued this ordinance to the June 3, 2020 Special Assembly meeting for additional review and action.

As this is a policy matter the City Manager has no recommendation.

MOTION by Ms. Gladziszewski for the Assembly to adopt Ordinance 2020-27 for purposes of discussion and voting.

Objection by Mr. Bryson, and in speaking to his objection, he asked for clarification on the reasoning behind the City enforcing a quarantine mandate on top of the existing State quarantine mandate.

Mr. Palmer shared that he wrote this ordinance over the weekend, prior to the Governor's press conference today. He added that this ordinance, similar to the Governor's plan, requires travelers to quarantine; the difference being the Governor's plan has some exceptions when it comes to testing.

Mr. Bryson said that the purpose of hunkering down was not to eliminate the virus from our community, but to flatten the curve. He believed that this has been successfully done by sticking with the plan put in place by the Governor, Dr. Zink, and Commissioner Crum.

Ms. Hale agreed with Mr. Bryson, and will be voting against the motion. She said that she supports the Governor's plan and the testing capacity within it.

Mr. Edwardson said that he understood the motion, however, he added that if the City plans to stray from the Governor's plan, their plan should feature several different aspects.

Ms. Gladziszewski agreed with those who spoke before her, saying that she thinks that the Governor's mandate is a reasonable plan. She also said that she will vote against the motion, and she will support the Governor's proposal.

Ms. Triem asked Mr. Bill if the hospital had the capacity to care for residents if Juneau were to have an increase in cases. Mr. Bill said the hospital is very capable to respond to a potential surge, saying that they are more prepared now than they were a month ago. He added that Juneau has done a good job of flattening the curve to allow the hospital time to create the infrastructure needed to deal with a surge. Mr. Bill mentioned that the 14-day quarantine is causing challenges in treating the patients of Juneau, since a number of their providers come from the Lower 48.

Ms. Hughes-Skandijs shared that she will be voting against this motion, saying a quarantine mandate with exception is a reasonable next step to take.

Mr. Smith asked Ms. Cosgrove if Juneau has enough available PPE and supplies to conduct more testing with this mandate. Ms. Cosgrove answered that at this point in time, Juneau does have an adequate amount of PCR kits and supplies for an increased testing capacity and the State EOC has offered to provide any additional supplies if needed.

Mr. Smith shared that he will be voting against this motion, he said that Dr. Zink's message of meeting people where they are is a good plan.

Mayor Weldon said that she will also be voting against this motion, saying that it would be more practical and less confusing to the public if the City decided to go with the Governor's plan. She asked Juneau residents to continue social distancing, wearing a mask, regularly wash their hands, and implores businesses to use mitigation plans as they reopen.

Roll Call Vote on Ordinance 2020-27:

Ayes: Jones

Nays: Gladziszewski, Hale, Hughes-Skandijs, Smith, Triem, Bryson, Edwardson, Mayor Weldon.

Motion failed. One (1) Aye, Eight (8) Nays.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Triem mentioned the Black Lives Matter marches and movements have happened across the country and recently in Juneau. She requested the Assembly to schedule a meeting with JPD and allow the community to listen in. Mayor Weldon answered that she has already reached out to Chief Mercer of JPD to join their Regular Assembly meeting on Monday.

Ms. Gladziszewski asked if Chief Mercer could be prepared to comment on JPD's Use of Force policies at that meeting.

Mr. Watt wished to publicly thank Chief Mercer for participating in community events, and looks forward to the discussion on Monday.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Assembly, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24p.m.

Signed: _____
Elizabeth J. McEwen
Municipal Clerk

Signed: _____
Beth A. Weldon
Mayor