



CITY OF FOREST PARK
MAYOR & COUNCIL
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 30, 2020 5:30 P.M.

- Call to Order:** The Special Called Meeting of Mayor and Council of March 30, 2020 was called to order by Mayor Angelyne Butler at 5:30 p.m.
- Present** Mayor Angelyne Butler
- Present via Teleconference:** Councilmembers: Kimberly James, Hector Gutierrez, Latresa Wells, Dabouze Antoine and Allan Mears
- Also Present Via Teleconference:** Interim City Manager Chief Clark
- Also Present:** City Clerk Shalonda Brown and City Attorney Michael Williams
- Public Health Emergency Order #2:** Mayor Butler opened up the floor to Councilwoman James in regards to the Public Health Emergency Order #2.
- Councilwoman James stated Majority of this council needs more clarity for the purpose of implementing a Stay at Home Order and closing all non-essential businesses with the failure to comply resulting in penalties up to \$1000 and a misdemeanor charge. She stated in her estimation, which comes from communication with residents, business owners & community leaders are as follows:
1. too complex with several exemption for both businesses & residents - which leads to questions about compliance and we don't have anyone on staff at the moment to answer questions.
 2. This can lead to more residential anxiety being ordered to remain indoors as appose to information sharing why they should be indoors
 3. This will drive people to seek to service outside of Forest Park because our neighbors are open for business but also practicing the rules of social distancing.
 4. This can lead to unnecessary first responder resources being used on potential violators.



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Councilwoman James stated these are unprecedented times and she believe the key is flooding people with information so they are informed about Forest Park and the number of case so they can make their own judgement about Sheltering in Place for the sake of their family and their neighbors. Please see the attached with more important points made by Councilwoman James. (See attached).

Mayor Butler asked Councilman Antoine did he have any comments. There was no response.

Mayor Butler asked Councilman Mears did he have any comments. There was no response.

Councilwoman Wells stated she agrees with what Councilwoman James said. We put out the curfew but the feedback is that she has gotten is that the virus just doesn't come out from 10pm – 5 am. The people are not taking the social distancing serious. She stated she doesn't think we should wait until the death toll has risen. We need to be proactive and a lot of other cities are following what the city is doing now. If we sit back and do nothing that is not enough. The safety of the community is first and foremost. Councilwoman Wells stated the people elected us as their voice and to make decisions in situations like this and what we are doing is what we need to do. She stated she doesn't want to wait until the number keeps increasing. Councilwoman Wells stated she rather for a person to have anxiety rather than to lose their life and a kid to lose a parent. She stated what the Mayor is doing is the right thing for the people in Forest Park.

Councilman Gutierrez stated he agrees with Councilwoman James with sharing information and letting constituents know everything that is going on. He stated the governing body as well as the Interim City Manager have been reaching out to the community getting the information out. He stated as Councilwoman Wells stated it is a time to be proactive. He stated he has been answering a lot of phone calls



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and as elected officials we must educate our constituents. The \$1000 fine is for a habitual offender, someone that just doesn't care. He stated he agrees with the Mayor as far as taking the lead since Forest Park is the biggest city in Clayton County. He stated he was informed that Southern Regional is already overcrowded and he doesn't want to put his constituent's life in danger. He stated he has a friend that told him that people are dying alone and it is sad.

Mayor Butler asked Dr. Diaz did she want to add anything. She thanked the Mayor for what she is doing, and she advised everyone that she is calling in from Southern Regional Medical Center. She stated there are many cases coming in their hospital. Their main needs are they don't have enough gowns nor nurses. She stated they really need help to protect their personnel/staff. Dr. Diaz stated a Shelter in Place order will be good to help them to control and help the patients already there that need more care. She stated she is not sure what is needed from their hospital but please let her know how they can help. Dr. Diaz stated Piedmont Henry has 31 cases and 16 on the vent.

Mayor Butler made her statement. Please see her attached comments.

Mayor Butler asked if there is a motion to adjourn. There was issue with the audio in which individuals were not able to unmute themselves. Eventually the lines opened up and Councilman Mears could be heard saying he is on the line listening to this BS, unaware that he was no longer muted.

Councilwoman James stated to the Mayor that the governing body needs to have the host information because she couldn't unmute herself. Mayor Butler asked did she have any comments. Councilwoman James stated yes, she agrees with her however it is hard to follow and hard for anyone to know what the right thing to do is. She stated there are a lot of exceptions in the order but what are the restrictions. She stated there



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are a lot of exceptions for the businesses that is confusing, and it doesn't make sense to put this policy in place when it is not enforceable. She stated we have to lead with education and information. Mayor Butler stated a press release was sent out and Chief Clark gave handouts to give out. Mayor Butler stated several conscious attempts have done to spread the word on preventative measures.

Councilwoman Wells this is about keeping the people safe. Putting the Shelter in Place will keep people safe. She asked Mayor Butler to explain what essential means. Mr. Williams stated the order what the Mayor signed is what has been adopted across the state and is similar to Gwinnett County and City of Atlanta. It does allow individuals to leave their house for certain essential activities necessary for health and safety. This allows for individuals to engage in some activity. It does not shut down of all businesses.

Mayor Butler asked are we trying to make profits or save lives. She stated everyone has had to make adjustments and if our lives are impaired temporarily then it is just temporary. She stated she would rather be cautious with our residents than not.

Councilwoman James stated she was flooded with calls and the way the message went out she feels it could have gone out a better way. She stated she is not opposed to having something in place, but she is opposed to ticketing. She stated she does want someone to answer calls because they are going to call city hall and want to know if their business will be open. Councilwoman James stated the reason for this special called meeting was to rescind this order but she is not going to propose that because she see where everyone is leaning, but she wants to be clear someone has to answer the phones when the residents and businesses with questions.

Councilwoman Wells stated she has not received any negative feedback at all and she has sent it out on social



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media and she has not had anyone call and ask why do they have to stay at home. Councilwoman Wells read a message from a resident in Ward 4 commending the city on their efforts and what they are doing to keep the city safe. As she was reading the message Councilman Antoine stated “Blah, Blah, Blah” and Mayor Butler advised him that he was out of order. Councilwoman Wells stated to hear Councilman Mears state that he is on the phone listening to BS is absurd and that should let the people know where he stands.

Councilman James stated she spoke with a business owner and he is ok with either way we have to go because we all are concerned about our health. She stated she understands the seriousness of it. She stated we have to educate the people. She stated as the governing body they need to have a better way of handling meetings because she doesn’t think that Councilman Mears realized he was on the call.

Adjournment:

Councilwoman James made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Councilwoman Wells. Voting for the motion was unanimous.