

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**Meeting Minutes
City Council Emergency Meeting**

City Hall Complex
105 Main Plaza
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

10:30 AM

Municipal Plaza Building

ROLL CALL

The City Council convened in an Emergency Meeting. Acting City Clerk Tina J. Flores took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Councilmembers present:

PRESENT: 7 - Mayor Nirenberg, Treviño, Andrews-Sullivan, Rocha Garcia, Sandoval, Courage, and Perry

ABSENT: 4 - Viagran, Gonzales, Cabello Havrda, and Peláez

1. Briefing and possible action regarding response and preparedness to COVID-19, including placement of third cohort of evacuees at Joint Base San Antonio.

Erik Walsh, City Manager, stated that on March 7, 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) notified the City that additional individuals from the cruise ship located off the coast of California would be brought to Lackland Air Force Base (LAFB). He noted that the City expressed concerns with six issues which the Federal Government had committed to resolve. City Manager Walsh reported that the six issues of concern raised by the City included: 1) Request for additional testing kits; 2) Request that evacuees from the cruise ship be flown in and out of LAFB; 3) Request for procedures for testing, quarantine, and the transfer of patients; 4) Request for a senior level Federal representative to be located in San Antonio; 5) Request for the location of the Federal property where individuals who tested positive to the Coronavirus without requiring hospitalization would be housed; and 6) Request for the number of individuals which would be brought to San Antonio for quarantine.

City Manager Walsh noted that the City was notified yesterday that individuals from the cruise ship would be arriving in San Antonio. He stated that at 8:45 pm yesterday, a plane arrived at LAFB with 98 individuals, 91 of which were from Texas. City Manager Walsh reported that according to HHS, all were asymptomatic, had not been tested, and were screened before boarding. He stated that the City was notified that these individuals would not be tested once they arrived in San Antonio unless they exhibited symptoms. City Manager Walsh added that a second plane carrying up to 120 individuals would arrive today. He noted that several news reports aired last night which showed that the number of individuals that would arrive was 380. City Manager Walsh stated that the City had attempted to confirm or deny those reports with HHS but had not received a reply. He noted that the City wanted to coordinate the release of individuals from LAFB.

City Manager Walsh stated that the City was aligned with the Governor's Office regarding requests from the Federal Government and would ensure that the local community businesses as well as residents received the latest information. He reported that there were 16 confirmed cases of Coronavirus in the State of Texas and that the City would continue to monitor the number of local cases and provide updates to City Council and the community.

City Manager Walsh reported that Metro Health had the capacity to conduct tests on 500 individuals and additional tests had been requested. He noted that the Health Department received 60 calls in the last 24 hours on their hotline and that there was an increase in 9-1-1 calls from individuals with flu-like symptoms. City Manager Walsh stated that a number of emails had been sent to employees to update them on conditions and that the Building and Equipment Services Department had elevated the levels of cleaning in public facilities.

City Manager Walsh noted that the San Antonio Fire Department had visited or planned to visit every senior facility and care home in the City to provide information related to the Coronavirus. He recommended that the City Council be prepared to attend a special City Council meeting within 72 hours of posting the meeting agenda.

Mayor Nirenberg stated that the City would ensure containment of community transmission.

Councilmember Sandoval stated that she would support a budget amendment, if needed, to provide temporary staff or additional assistance in order to keep the public informed. City Manager Walsh stated that staff had discussed procuring contractual assistance for messaging which would be pursued. He noted that expenses related to the Coronavirus would be tracked and if additional authority was needed, he would address that with the City Council.

Councilmember Courage asked if the City had the authority to test individuals coming to LAFB. City Manager Walsh replied that the City did not have the authority to test individuals going onto Federal property.

Councilmember Perry asked how many beds were available at the Texas Center for Infectious Disease (TCID). City Manager Walsh replied that 27 beds were available at TCID. Councilmember Perry asked what the first priority was at the current time. City Manager Walsh replied that the first priority at the current time was to ensure that correct information was being provided to the community. Fire Chief Hood added that the objectives of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) were to protect the local community, coordinate operations between the City and Bexar County, and provide the community with accurate and timely information for proper prevention.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan asked if the San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) was partnering with LAFB to transfer patients testing positive for COVID-19. City Manager Walsh stated that the Governor ruled that patients from LAFB could only be transferred to TCID if they were Texas residents. He added that the City was awaiting a response from the Federal Government regarding the transfer of non-Texas residents. Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan asked of the number of individuals (non-travel related) who were quarantined in the City. City Manager Walsh stated that he would provide that information.

Councilmember Treviño requested the City to do what it could to ensure that vulnerable populations continue to receive medical care and that CPS Energy and the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) issue a moratorium on disconnections.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia spoke of the need for outreach to seniors and other residents which did not have access to information. She requested a crisis communication plan be developed. City Manager Walsh reported that there was a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in place.

Laura Mayes stated that the Government and Public Affairs (GPA) Department was distributing timely and accurate information to the public in several languages including American Sign Language (ASL). She noted that daily media emails were sent out and social distancing had been promoted. She added that staff was focused on providing communication to seniors and that pre-written social media posts were being provided in English and Spanish. She welcomed the Mayor and Councilmembers to contact GPA for more focused outreach.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked of the process for disinfection at the City's public facilities. David McCary stated that four levels of cleaning have been established by the American Physical Plant Association (APPA) with level four having the lowest level of cleaning. He noted that City public facilities were disinfected at level two with the exception of Pre-K 4 SA which was cleaned at level one. He stated that all public facilities cleaned at level two could be cleaned at level one if needed.

Mayor Nirenberg asked for guidance on the use of masks. Fire Chief Hood stated that masks should be utilized if an individual was exhibiting symptoms.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting at 11:38 am to discuss the following items:

- A. Discuss legal issues relating to COVID-19 preparedness pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney].

Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting at 12:16 pm and announced that no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg adjourned the meeting at 12:16 pm.

APPROVED

RON NIRENBERG
MAYOR

Attest:

TINA J. FLORES
Acting City Clerk