



**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**  
**March 23, 2020 – 3:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding  
Alderwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, Post 1, Chairman  
Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2  
Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2  
Aldermen Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3  
Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice Chairman  
Alderwoman Dr. Estella E. Shabazz, District 5, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**OTHERS PRESENT:**  
Interim City Manager Patrick C. Monahan  
City Attorney Bates Lovett  
Assistant City Manager Health Lloyd  
Deputy Assistant to the Mayor Marty Johnston  
Director of Public Communications Nick Zoller  
Clerk of Council Mark Massey

The Special Called Meeting was held at 3:00 p.m. via a Conference Call (1-425-436-6365=Access Code 109735). The invocation was offered by Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz.

**Opening Remarks by Mayor Johnson:**

Mayor Johnson stated not much has changed over the weekend and gave the statistics for the State of Georgia as it relates to the coronavirus. He thanked all the businesses and Churches for taking precautions.

Mayor Johnson stated the budget is "Dead on Arrival". He indicated the City is spending \$150,000 per day but not receiving any revenue.

Mayor Johnson met with City Staff earlier today and discussed managing the City's resources to keep the City safe. The Governor of Georgia has called a press conference for 5:00 p.m. today, and the decision was made to wait until that press conference has aired before the City made any changes to its operations.

City Manager Monahan reported that the City of Savannah is still open for business. He stated all facilities are open but restricted by appointment with staff distancing themselves for safety.

Aldermen gave comments in the round-robin fashion:

- Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz – essential businesses such as pest control & daycare are inquiring as to their status. Mayor Johnson indicated that in his



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Emergency Declaration he identified 22 categories as essential and daycare and pest control are part of that number.

- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter – receiving calls related to landlord issues of people being laid-off and not paying rent; calls regarding City staff concerned with working and going back home to family members that are high-risk; making provisions for staff to work from home or telecommute if possible; and give some consideration to employees with children with no childcare at this time. She would like to inquire about a stimulus package for local businesses. Mayor Johnson indicated that staff will be looked at on a case-by-case basis. A letter is being prepared to the Governor concerning a stimulus package but after the press conference today, the letter might not be necessary.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter - We should be mindful of how we are treating our City staff. Staff should not be made to use vacation or sick time in this situation. Local businesses are watching the City and may mimic the decisions. The City should show some concern with the situation and how we treat our employees.

- Alderwoman Miller Blakely – mirrored what Mayor Pro-Tem and Alderwoman Gibson-Carter has said as it relates to small businesses and the City staff. She is hoping there will be a stimulus package that will assist the City in the coming weeks.
- Alderwoman Lanier – concerned with the impact on those already struggling with rent/mortgage – some type of program should be prepared to address this issue when this is over; and what it would look like if employees worked from home because it might come to people being quarantined. Mayor Johnson expressed his concern and indicated the City Manager is working on a plan for continuity of government in the case of no administration.
- Alderman Leggett – We all need to continue to be safety oriented. We need to work with the County and local schools for continuity of care. Mayor Johnson said they are coordinating with Chatham County and the local school systems on plans of operation.
- Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan – Thanked all staff and Mayor Johnson for the work the City is doing. She is concerned with price gorging at the stores. She has received calls concerning Memorial Hospital negative behavior. We should use this opportunity to revamp the budget. People are afraid and we should be mindful of how we treat people including sanitation employees.
- Alderman Palumbo - commended City staff for all their work. He is hoping for assistance from bail-out funds. In regards to budget, we will be challenged but we can overhaul the budget as many times as needed. He inquired concerning the alcohol sales.
- Alderman Purtee - met with neighborhood associations and businesses who are complying with the City's Declarations. He is concerned with the homeless and alcohol sales.



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Mayor Johnson ended on a positive note that the communities are coming together to feed the less fortunate. There should be mask and gloves for employees in the days ahead.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely received a call concerning the City dump and employees with no protection. Mayor Johnson indicated the City Manager is handling the protection for those employees.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter requested information on the City's current Fiscal Reserve and the policy/restrictions from the City Manager. The City Manager stated the City has seventy-five days of unrestricted Fiscal Reserve.

**Closing:**

Mayor Johnson thanked all in attendance and encouraged the public and staff to stay vigilant and safe.

With no further business coming before the assembly, Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:47 p.m.

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_