

**Mayor**  
Richard Beneville  
**Manager**  
Glenn Steckman  
**Clerk**  
Bryant Hammond



**Nome City Council**  
Jerald Brown  
Doug Johnson  
Mark Johnson  
Adam Martinson  
Jennifer Reader  
Meghan Sigvanna Topkok

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**NOME COMMON COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA  
FRIDAY MAY 15, 2020 @ 6:00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS IN CITY HALL**

- I. ROLL CALL
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- III. CITIZENS' COMMENTS
- IV. NEW BUSINESS

**EMERGENCY ORDINANCE**

- A. O-20-05-03 An Extension of a Local Emergency Authorizing the Nome Common Council to Direct the City Manager to Take Necessary Actions to Reduce the Impact and Spread of COVID-19 Throughout the City of Nome,  
**FIRST READING/PUBLIC HEARING/FINAL PASSAGE**  
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- V. ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES  
NOME CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
MAY 15, 2020**

The special meeting of the Nome City Council was called to order at 6:01 PM by Acting Mayor Brown in Council Chambers located at 102 Division St in Nome Alaska.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Jerald Brown; Doug Johnson (telephonic); Mark Johnson; Adam Martinson; Jennifer Reader; Meghan Topkok (telephonic)

Members Absent:

Also Present: Glenn Steckman, City Manager; Bryant Hammond, City Clerk

In the audience: Emily Hofstaedter (KNOM); Diana Haecker (Nome Nugget); Kenny Hughes; Janet Balice; John Schneider

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

- 1) Kenny Hughes thanked City staff for the difficult job they're doing and discussed subsistence concerns vis-à-vis quarantine requirements and messaging among residents. He requested the City develop metrics to define when the emergency ended. He finished by requesting the Council not pass the ordinance, rather that they retool it to declare an economic disaster and include measures to mitigate.
- 2) Janet Balice thanked Manager Steckman for his work and asked a few clarifying questions.
- 3) Aaron Blankenship (telephonic) explained he put his trust in the Council to protect him and the public. He asked citizens to be mindful of others time and contended the Council was raising procedural issues in how it allowed public comments to extend for hours. He spoke in support of the ordinance and urged the Council to run effective meetings.
- 4) Gay Sheffield noted Nome is the hub for smaller communities in the region and contended the City had a responsibility to step up and protect the regional community to slow the spread of COVID-19.
- 5) Paul Kosto of the Nome Chamber of Commerce took issue with the enforcement section, saying it was not related.

- 6) Anna Ashenfelter (email) asked the Council to watch a video she forwarded concerning the lack of regional capacity in handling a COVID-19 outbreak. She explained she supported opening, but with restrictions.
- 7) Katie Kruschek supported removing the quarantine requirements and the permit process, contending the permit was invasive.
- 8) Colleen Johnson argued the lack of communication from the City and the ordinances were confusing. She noted she wasn't opposed to quarantines, but did oppose the permit process and took issue with the interdiction on alcohol sales restrictions.
- 9) Darlene Trigg (telephonic) asked the City to keep some form of travel restrictions in place to keep Nome and the Bering Strait Region safe, noting the State's relaxing of restrictions would cause an increase in active cases.
- 10) Judy Martinson contended the quarantine requirements by the City of Nome were unreasonable and unconstitutional. She gave an example of an essential worker stopped by NPD after being tracked and called Nome a police state. She noted that many people died for the public's rights and asked that the quarantine be lifted.
- 11) Jessica Farley noted a screen capture of the Norton Sound teleconference minutes from their website, alleging that Manager Steckman and Dr. Peterson have already agreed on an authoritarian track.
- 12) Keith Morrison (telephonic) spoke in support of the travel restrictions remaining as currently written. He cited Alaska's restrictions as reason for the low case count and questioned a sign hanging on a local business saying "Freedom for Nome," arguing people in Nome are still free.
- 13) Sari Martinson expressed concern for children in blended families traveling to Nome at the end of the school year and called the permit requirement heavy handed. She pointed to airline attendants and her experience of working on planes during the height of the pandemic as evidence of low transmission rates and contended that test-based methods for reducing quarantine as unnecessary.
- 14) Gwendolyn Trigg-Kimoktoak (telephonic) characterized lifting the travel restrictions as reckless.
- 15) Kirsten Timbers (letter) thanked the Council for their leadership, citing their proactive actions as keeping Nome safe. She requested the travel restrictions remain in place arguing that economic hardship, while difficult, was preferable to widespread illness and death.
- 16) Michael Burnett requested the Council reduce the quarantine to seven days for Anchorage trips, stating the people know how to keep the risks low.

- 17) Sue Steinacher clarified that the emergency ordinance extended the power and authority of the Council through the City Manager and that it didn't necessarily mean travel restrictions would continue through July 14.
- 18) John Schneider expressed concern there would be no going back to normal until a vaccine was produced, arguing vaccines aren't always possible. He contended the community must learn to live with the virus. He argued that the travel restrictions were putting people at risk for not developing immunity to virus, stating now was the perfect time to allow a little bit of the virus in. He opposed the ordinance and asked for a metrics based means of defining when to reopen.
- 19) Elizabeth Brennan thanked the Council and asked that the permit system remain in place to protect Nome and the surrounding communities.
- 20) Judy Martinson asked for the science behind the travel ban, saying continuing the ban would destroy small business. She asked that the town reopen and those that were concerned stay home. She began to ask the Council, one by one, if they would swear on a bible to uphold the constitution.

C. D. Johnson called a point of order, noting such demands were not appropriate during Citizens' Comments.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **EMERGENCY ORDINANCE**

- A. O-20-05-03 An Extension of a Local Emergency Authorizing the Nome Common Council to Direct the City Manager to Take Necessary Actions to Reduce the Impact and Spread of COVID-19 Throughout the City of Nome.

For the purpose of holding a public hearing, the Council recessed at 6:55 PM.

- Ken Hughes agreed with Mr. Schneider's comments and requested the Council change the ordinance to one of economic emergency and quickly focus on speeding up recovery.
- Janet Balice appreciated the public comments and looked forward to hearing the concerns meshed in modifying the ordinance.
- John Schneider expressed concern over the changes between the ordinance read on Monday and the current ordinance.

The Council reconvened at 6:59 PM.

A motion was made by C. Reader and seconded by C. Topkok to adopt O-20-05-03.

Discussion:

- Council Member Reader asked if the ordinance would address the concerns related over travel.
- Manager Steckman summarized the actions taken so far, reiterated coordination between the City and other businesses and organizations, and the plans to gradually ease restrictions in areas of lower risk. He recommended passing the ordinance and allowing staff to step down the restrictions carefully and methodically. He explained the ordinance did not change quarantine requirements but that staff was looking at a possible shortened test based quarantine strategy.
- Council Member Doug Johnson noted two issues: a general misunderstanding of State of Alaska mandates and authority granted by the ordinance. He explained the ordinance needed to give Manager Steckman the authority to act quickly, but the Council could require ratification of the actions at the next meeting.
- Council Member Mark Johnson noted the need for a declared emergency to receive state and federal disaster relief funds. He clarified that the City Manager was always designated as the Incident Commander in the Emergency Operations Plan – it was not new. He noted the State was still requiring a 14 day quarantine for out of state travelers and that City of Nome needed to come to an agreement as to how it would institute its own restrictions. He noted the need for a plan B if cases were to flare up again.
- Council Member Doug Johnson requested, and the rest of the Council agreed to, a standalone economic disaster declaration. He explained that business should begin to return to normal, but the City Manager needed the ability to make swift decisions.

A motion was made by C. M. Johnson and seconded by C. Martinson to eliminate Section 3 1(d).

At the roll call:

Aye: Martinson; Reader; Topkok; Brown; D. Johnson; M. Johnson

Nay:

Abstain:

The motion to amend **CARRIED**.

Returning to the main motion

A motion was made by C. Reader and seconded by C. Martinson to amend Section 5. Enforcement by inserting “per NCO 1.20.010 and 1.20.020” between offense and subject.

At the roll call:

Aye: Reader; Topkok; Brown; D. Johnson; M. Johnson; Martinson

Nay:

Abstain:

The motion to amend **CARRIED**.

Returning to the main motion

At the roll call:

Aye: M. Johnson; Martinson; Reader; Topkok; Brown; D.  
Johnson

Nay:

Abstain:

The motion, as amended, **CARRIED**.

A motion was made by C. M. Johnson and seconded by C. Martinson to call a special meeting on Tuesday May 19, 2020 at 5:30 PM to discuss COVID-19 related emergency orders and policies.

At the roll call:

Aye: Topkok; Brown; D. Johnson; M. Johnson; Martinson;  
Reader

Nay:

Abstain:


The motion **CARRIED**.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by C. Martinson seconded by C. Reader that the meeting be adjourned.

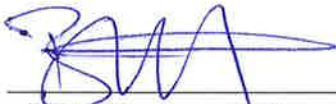
Hearing no objections, the Nome Common Council adjourned at 8:03PM

**APPROVED** and **SIGNED** this 8<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020.



**JERALD BROWN**  
Acting Mayor

**ATTEST:**



**BRYANT HAMMOND**  
City Clerk