

CITY WAITE PARK PROCLAMATION AND DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the virus named “SARS-CoV-2,” is a new strain of coronavirus that has not previously been identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person and which causes a disease named “coronavirus disease 2019,” commonly known as “COVID-19,” which is a respiratory disease that can result in serious injury or death; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the United States; on March 6, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the State of Minnesota; and as of March 16, 2020, there continues to be an increased number of cases of COVID-19 in Minnesota, including cases in Stearns County; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19, beginning on January 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a National Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Tim Walz declared a Peacetime State of Emergency to authorize and all necessary resources to be used in support of the COVID-19 response; and

WHEREAS, as of March 15, 2020 the World Health Organization Situation Report confirmed a total of 153,517 cases of COVID-19 in over 135 countries, including 5,735 deaths; and as of March 15, 2020 a total of 35 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Minnesota including a number in Stearns County; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been identified by the World Health Organization as a pandemic, and the United States Centers for Disease Control has provided guidance for individuals, healthcare professionals, and businesses to slow the spread of COVID-19, which include cancelling or postponing in-person events that involve more than fifty people for eight weeks; and

WHEREAS, additional local cases will trigger a more aggressive public health response and are predicted to impact residents of Waite Park and those who work in or travel through the City, including City employees; and the need for social distancing, school closings, and quarantine methods to stop the spread of COVID-19 is expected to cause significant challenges; and

WHEREAS, the City Administrator and Emergency Management Director find that this situation threatens the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the community and will cause a significant impact on the ability of public safety personnel to address any immediate dangers to the public as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the City Administrator and Emergency Management Director find that traditional sources of financial aid, assistance and relief will not be able to compensate for the potential impact of COVID-19, and have determined that the necessary resources to respond to and recover from this pandemic will exceed those resources available within the City of Waite Park, and additional resources will be needed from Stearns County and state and federal sources.

NOW, THEREFORE, MAYOR WAITE PARK OF THE CITY OF WAITE PARK PROCLAIMS, DECLARES, REQUESTS, AND DIRECTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Under the authority given by Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, declares that a local emergency exists within the City of Waite Park, effective March 16, 2020, with all the powers and responsibilities attending thereto as provided by Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 12 and further proclaims that such emergency constitutes a declared emergency pursuant to Ordinance 23, Section 23.5, Local Emergencies.
2. Directs City Staff to review ordinance and regulatory requirements, operations, civil and legal proceedings, events, and resources to determine whether the foregoing should be adjusted or suspended, and to make recommendations regarding additional emergency regulations to support the employees and residents of the City of Waite Park.
3. Directs all City departments and offices to operate and support the response to this incident, under the direction and coordination of the City Administrator, Emergency Management Director and Emergency Management Team, including implementing new employee protocols, strategies, and processes to ensure that public services are maintained as necessary.
4. Directs the City's Administrator, and Emergency Management Director and other appropriate City staff to request and coordinate appropriate aid and resources from surrounding jurisdictions, Stearns County, the State of Minnesota, and the Federal government, as needed.
5. Declares, under Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.021, that in-person meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission, and other advisory commissions of the City of Waite Park are not practical or prudent due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and the peacetime emergency declared by Governor Walz pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 12, and hereby directs that meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission, and other advisory commissions of the City shall be conducted by telephone or other electronic means, and hereby directs City Staff to take such action as may be necessary to enable such meetings to occur via telephone or other electronic means pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.021, until such time as it is no longer impractical or imprudent for the City Council, Planning Commission, and other advisory commission to resume in-person meetings.
6. Requests that the City Council convene an emergency session at its earliest convenience to discuss the situation and this declaration. This emergency declaration shall continue for a period of 72 hours from its effective date of March 19, 2020, unless further extended by or with the consent of the City Council pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, subd. 1.
7. Orders that this declaration be given prompt and general publicity and that it be filed promptly by the City Administrator.

Dated this 19th day of March, 2020



Mayor Richard E. Miller