

A regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Tuesday, March 24, 2020, at 7:30 p.m. at City Hall in the Auditorium, 3rd floor.

President Lori Wilshire presided; City Clerk Susan Lovering recorded.

Prayer was offered by City Clerk Susan Lovering; Alderman Patricia Klee led in the Pledge to the Flag.

The roll call was taken with members of the Board of Aldermen present President Wilshire, Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Patricia Klee; the following member via Webex: Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Laws, Alderman Tencza, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Lopez, Alderwoman Harriott-Gathright, and Alderman Jette

Alderman Caron, Alderman Skip Cleaver and Alderman Clemons were recorded absent.

The roll call was taken with 12 members of the Board of Aldermen present.

Mayor James W. Donchess, Corporation Counsel Steven A. Bolton were also in attendance/or participated via Webex or via conference call.

President Wilshire

Acknowledged that those present could hear everyone participating either by Webex or by conference call and under the terms of the State law that allows them to do so and explained that those not physically attending the meeting were due to the Covid-19 virus.

Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderman Jette, Alderman Laws, Alderman Schmidt, and Alderman Gathright were not physically but attended via phone.

Alderwoman Kelly

There is no one in the room with me; I am quarantined and I can hear everybody.

Alderman Dowd

I'm here and I am by myself and I am practicing the good graces by staying independent of crowds.

Susan Lovering, City Clerk

I can hear you as well.

Alderman Lopez

I'm here, can you hear me?

Ms. Lovering

I can hear you, can you state why are not able to attend and who is with you if anyone, please?

Alderman Lopez

Yeah, no one is with me, I am here because of the physical distancing; I have a really high exposure rate working with people.

Ms. Lovering

Thank you. Alderman Tencza,

Alderman Tencza

Present. I am here; I am also taking the recommendations of public health officials not to expose myself or my family to the potential sickness.

Alderman Jette

Here and I am alone, and I am following the advisory to stay at home.

Ms. Lovering

Thank you. Alderman Schmidt?

Alderman Schmidt

Hello yes I am here, I am alone and I am staying at home because I am in quarantine.

Ms. Lovering

Thank you. Alderman Laws?

Alderman Laws

I am here, I am alone and I am also just social distancing.

Ms. Lovering

Thank you.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I am in the room alone and I am also keeping a social distance, after all with my 12 beautiful grandchildren I don't want to pass anything on.

Alderman Wilshire

I am here.

Ms. Lovering

You have a quorum Madam President.

President Wilshire

I need to make an announcement; even though there is no one in the public here right now but due to the COVID-19 it is our civic responsibility to maintain the health and well-being of all Nashua residents. We are asking that if you've had cold symptoms, fever, cough, headache, or diarrhea within the last 72 hours that you please leave the meeting. Maintain social distancing of six feet, we are asking all to sit in the seats identified and not move the chairs or otherwise disrupt the social distancing. We ask everyone please refrain from making hand contact and respect our not shaking of hands. In the event that you need to cough or sneeze, please cover your cough and/or sneeze using tissue or by coughing or sneezing into your sleeve. Please dispose of the tissue in the trash bin and please wash your hands afterwards. Thank you for working together to break the chain of infection and prevent the spread of disease.

Mayor, do you wish to address the Board?

REMARKS BY THE MAYOR

Yes Madam President. First thank you for arranging this meeting so that many people could participate remotely. This is consistent with what we are trying to do throughout the community. And I had a couple of things that I wanted to address tonight. The first being the Coronavirus and the City response, our community's response to this pandemic. Of course our goal along with social distancing we are talking about and all of the other steps we are taking is to limit or contain the spread of Coronavirus, protect as many people in our community as we possibly can, keep people safe and disease free. So we have instituted a number of measures. First of all, Madam President, right here the Board of Aldermen is having a remote meeting so that people do not get exposed to others. But we also have taken the steps which we discussed before of the City Hall that is closed to the public, is working remotely, most employees are working remotely, except for essential employees who are coming and working on the job. Those, of course, include Police Fire, First Responders, as well as our Street Department picking up the garbage and the people plowing snow like this morning and people who work at the sewage treatment plant.

We have also taken other steps and we are working very closely now with a number of people in the City. First of all with our hospitals; Southern New Hampshire Medical Center and St. Joe's and the medical people there and the National Guard which I will detail in a moment as well as, of course, our own employees, our Public Health Director Bobbie Bagley and Emergency Management Director Justin Kates and their respective staffs. We attended a meeting yesterday at Nashua High School South involving all of these participants including the hospitals and doctors and medical people. The purpose there was 1) with the State of New Hampshire, the Department of Health & Human Services to open up an alternative care site at Nashua High School South where people could stay if the hospitals become overwhelmed. And that will be a site and the second site will be Nashua High School North.

Now what the Medical Director of Southern laid out at the time, I think he's just telling us what is within the realm of possibility, maybe probability but probably just possibility, he pointed out that there is some modeling down out of the University of Pennsylvania suggesting that Nashua could get, the Nashua Region could get 2,500 cases of people who need to be hospitalized because of severe symptoms, mostly pulmonary distress. These people would all be at risk because if breathing stops obviously, a person can't survive that. The two hospitals are gearing up as much as they possibly can and increasing their bed counts. Once they do that, Southern will have about 200 beds and St. Joe's about 175. So 375 people, it would be possible to take care of 375 people in the two hospitals, assuming no one else is there for any other serious and acute emergencies. Dr. Scherer the Medical Director pointed out that the hospitals could never care for 2,500 people at the same time. Now this may sound extreme and maybe it is. But as we have seen what is happening in Italy where the death count went up again today, Tuesday they are a little ahead of us and in New York where the number of cases has been doubling every 3 days and is up to 25,000 and climbing rapidly. If we don't take steps to contain the disease and it begins to spread freely, the number or the impact on the community can be very, very dire. So we are trying to avoid that.

Hence the steps to work remotely from City Hall, closing City Hall and the like, the Governor has ordered all restaurants and bars to be closed. That, of course, has worked a great hardship on a number of people but we are trying to save people's lives. Also our schools are closed and the School Department, Dr. Mosley, is instating remote learning, which involves computer and also hand out of paper homework and lesson plans and the like. Now here in New Hampshire right now, we have 101 cases, that's as of yesterday but the testing is behind; only one positive case so far in Nashua. There are seven in Manchester. But the testing is behind because some of the people in Nashua, there's a couple a family of the person that has the virus, when the tests were taken on Thursday the results aren't in yet. So the testing is definitely behind. The 101 number comes from yesterday and we don't know what the number is today; I don't think it has been announced today. A number of other people in Nashua have been tested and we will have to see.

Again it is very important that we limit public gatherings according to the Government no more than 10; so a step that after meeting with all of these medical people that I felt we needed to take was to suspend the fixed route bus system because as we talk this through, the buses are a relatively small space where there

can be a lot of people gathered together. If any one person on the bus happens to be infected, and we know that people can be infected without having symptoms or mild symptoms, they could potentially infect a lot of other people. There have been cases down in Connecticut where one person attends a gathering, spreads it to others, it gets to others, so we suspended the fixed route bus system until the epidemic passes a bit. We have though beefed up on the paratransit or call for ride system so that people who need to get to an essential appointment which would include medical, pharmacy, going to the grocery can call and get a ride and they would be charged. So expanding that number of people who are eligible for this service; usually it is just ADA or disability qualified. It will be expanded to include the essential trips that I mentioned and people would be charged normal price of \$1.25 per trip. So we hope that will help with the need for people who really have to get ... in order to limit the disease and limit the spread of the disease. It just seemed like contained buses which carried a number of people could be a very likely place where the virus could spread.

We have many people who are working very hard on this in addition to all of those that I mentioned, I mean we definitely have heroes in Nashua and those include, of course, our medical workers who are going to work every day and potentially get exposed to the virus and have to come home and wonder about how their family would fare if they did get the virus. We have our First Responders, Police, Fire, we have people working in the pharmacies, even the people who work in the grocery stores, because the supermarkets we see many, many people, the essential service, of course, to keep the supermarkets open.

So those are some of the steps we are taking, Madam President. And we are praying that the steps I described and the others that we may take in the future will help keep the number of infections in the City of Nashua and this entire area to a manageable level. I would just urge everybody to take care of themselves like we are here, please wash your hands, use hand sanitizer which I will do right now and keep your distance; no hand shaking, try to work remotely, do anything you can to limit contact with a lot of other people. So I think that concludes what I had intended to say about the City's response to Coronavirus. We owe thanks to a lot of people, we have volunteers, I didn't mention this yet, but we have many volunteers who are working hard to reach out to the students who don't have enough to eat and who are distributing hundreds of meals every day at various schools around the City. And in addition, some of the fixed route buses will be used to go to three locations beyond where or away from any short trip to the school and that is going to start I think sometime this week, so there will be three additional sites using the fixed route buses to carry the food.

So again, thank you to everyone who is involved. It has been a huge community effort, everybody is pitching in and it is just wonderful to see that happening.

Madam President, the other item that I wanted to address is one that I wouldn't normally get into in great detail but I know that the Board of Aldermen is not holding many Committee Meetings during this time and therefore I at least wanted to outline the details of O-20-011. The reason I need to do this tonight is to give those who are attending either in-person or remotely a sense of what it is that we are trying to accomplish here. As you all know and we have discussed this many times, City Health Care costs have gone up considerably, \$3.3 million the current fiscal year and are projected to go up \$3 million next year. This \$6 million dollar increase is a major expense, a major increase in itself; it represents a 3% tax increase. The causes are multiple, increased claims, increased prescription drug cost, a workforce that is aging and other price increases. So I asked the Administrative Service Division and Financial Services to come up and work with our consultants, Work Place Benefit Solutions to come up with what are called Plan Design Changes to see if we could bring costs down or reduce the rate of increase.

So they have met and they have come up with recommendations that could save considerable money for the City and for the Employees as well. The first group that we are proposing that we ask to meet these plan design changes for are the unaffiliated or the so-called merit employees. These are a group of employees that we did pass merit legislation, in the last couple of years and they benefited significantly from it. We met with them about the changes that I am going to prescribe back earlier in the month on March 12th here in the Auditorium and it was attended by many people and there were very few comments and it seemed that all questions were successfully answered.

The primary goal is actually to get people to switch to the high deductible because if you know somebody on that plan you can benefit significantly. You get paid to be on the plan, and that's \$3,000.00 a year; you have a \$4,000.00 deductible, family deductible and pay very little after that. But the gap between what you save in cash and the deductible is only \$1,000.00 but it creates great incentives to try to ensure quality care while at the same time paying more affordable rates for things like lab tests and things like that.

In any event, if you talk with people who have the high deductible plan right here in City Hall, some of them have been able to accumulate thousands of dollars, \$10,000.00 or more over a period of 5 or 6 years and that is money that you can take with us to another employer or if you leave ultimately it is treated like a retirement plan. So there's a lot to be gained. But for those who stay with the HMO once the plan changes are incorporated, their working rates would actually go down by 15%, meaning monthly amount would come out of your check and would go down by about 15%. The changes are relatively simple; pharmacy co-pays are increased from \$5/\$15 and \$35 to \$10 / \$30 and \$50, those are the deductibles. The major increase is the increase in the deductible for the people who have in-patient hospital visits or out-patient hospital or urgent care visits. Those deductibles would go from \$250.00 for an individual and \$500.00 for a two person or family plan to \$1,500.00 and \$3,000.00 respectively. But again, this accomplishes two things. First of all for the employees it encourages them to go to the high deductible plan, which even though the title of it sounds very negative, it's not. If you look into the details people really benefit from it. There are certain groups of employees we have where 50% of the employees are on the high deductible plan. Number two, even if you stay with the HMO's your weekly deduction from your paycheck, the employee's paycheck would go down by 15%. And the City would also save money.

The reason I am mentioning this at length tonight is the enrollment period for the unaffiliated employees and all employees is Mid-April, so if we are going to institute this we need to do it by the first meeting in April, I know that we have limited Committee Meetings. There are other groups of employees that are probably going to accept, at least one group of employees is going to accept this in the near future as well through negotiations and I think it is something that we have to incorporate in all of our labor contracts.

In any event, I apologize for the length of this, Madam President, but again I knew that you are not holding a lot of Committee Meetings and I think it is something that will benefit the City Budget as well as bring working rates down and encourage people to move into a more advantageous plan, the high deductible plan. So I am hoping the Board of Aldermen will adopt this within the month, in other words, two weeks from now. And I wanted to give the details so people would hear about it because of limited committee meetings or if they are remote or if people can't attend those meetings.

In any event, thank you for your indulgence, Madam President. That concludes my remarks.

President Wilshire

Thank you Mayor. Did I hear you say that you don't need this until our second meeting in April?

Mayor Donchess

The first meeting, two meetings from now. Two meetings from now.

President Wilshire

Two meetings from now. No you mean our next meeting. One meeting.

Mayor Donchess

We need it at the next meeting, I am sorry.

President Wilshire

Very good. Responses to the remarks of the Mayor?

RESPONSE TO REMARKS OF THE MAYOR

Alderman Lopez

I just wanted to thank the Mayor for all of his efforts in addressing the Coronavirus and making sure that we are flattening the curve as much as possible in advance of the event. I think a really effective and early action and I think the public may not have fully understood the magnitude of what we were facing. So it took a lot of courage and willpower to say well we are listening to the experts.

President Wilshire

Tom, can you speak a little louder or close to your mic? Thank you.

Alderman Lopez

Sure. I think it took a lot of courage to say we are listening to our Public Health Officials and we are doing what is right for our constituents and our residents whether or not is it popular or not. So I just wanted to thank the Mayor for taking that.

President Wilshire

All set Alderman Lopez?

Alderman Lopez

Yeah.

President Wilshire

Thank you. Anyone else, response to the Mayor? Alderman Dowd?

Alderman Dowd

Yes Jim I know you are extremely busy right now but could you, in the next couple of days, touch base with me by phone so we can talk about the Budget Meetings?

Mayor Donchess

Yes, of course, no problem.

Alderman Dowd

Thank you.

President Wilshire

Anyone else, response to the Mayor?

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. There was a lot I couldn't hear Mayor Donchess. Can you hear me OK?

Mayor Donchess

I can, I am sorry if you couldn't hear me.

Alderwoman Lu

No that's OK, I was just checking before I started. Did you say this represents a 3% decrease to something, I didn't ... or an increase?

Mayor Donchess

(inaudible)

President Wilshire

Jim is your mic, are you unmuted?

Mayor Donchess

I said that the amounts, that the employee pays, the so-called working rate for the employee will likely decline 15%. That was the decline I was speaking of.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, I guess that is it.

RECOGNITION PERIOD - None

READING MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the minutes of the Board of Aldermen meetings of March 10, 2020 and March 16, 2020 accepted, placed on file, and the reading suspended.

COMMUNICATIONS REQUIRING ONLY PROCEDURAL ACTIONS AND WRITTEN REPORTS FROM LIAISONS

From: Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu

Re: Boards and Commissions the Aldermen are Members of and which they are Liaisons

There being no objection, President Wilshire accepted the communication, placed it on file.

From: Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu

Re: Liaison Report on the Nashua Arts Commission

There being no objection, President Wilshire suspended the rules and accepted a communication from Alderman Lu regarding her Liaison Report on the Nashua Arts Commission.

PERIOD FOR PUBLIC COMMENT RELATIVE TO ITEMS EXPECTED TO BE ACTED UPON THIS EVENING - None

COMMUNICATIONS REQUIRING FINAL APPROVAL - None

PETITIONS - None

NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS - None

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Human Affairs Committee..... 03/09/2020

There being no objection, President Wilshire declared the report of the March 9, 2020 Human Affairs Committee accepted and placed on file.

CONFIRMATION OF MAYOR'S APPOINTMENTS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-20-025

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael O'Brien
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman Richard Dowd
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

RELATIVE TO THE APPROVAL OF FUNDING FOR THE REBUILD OF THE SOLID WASTE CAT COMPACTOR FROM THE CAPITAL EQUIPMENT RESERVE FUND (“CERF”) DURING FY2020 IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$500,000)

Given its first reading; assigned to the BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE by President Wilshire

R-20-026

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Linda Gathright
Alderman-at-Large Michael O'Brien
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman Richard Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

ADOPTING THE 2020 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPLY FOR AND EXPEND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (“CDBG”) AND HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

Given its first reading; assigned to the HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE by President Wilshire

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES

O-20-011

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael O'Brien
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman Richard Dowd

REVISIONS TO THE HEALTH PLAN SECTION OF THE UNAFFILIATED EMPLOYEES PERSONNEL POLICIES

Given its first reading; assigned to the PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE by President Wilshire

President Wilshire

What is the Committee's pleasure? This is something that the Mayor has brought up to us a couple of times that this needs to be passed expediently in order to have the open enrollment and everything for the month of April. I am wondering if anyone has any desire to pass this forward tonight.

Alderman O'Brien

Would I be in order to make a motion for final passage?

President Wilshire

I think we have to suspend the rules to allow for a second reading.

Alderman O'Brien

Can I make a motion to suspend the rules so that we can have a second reading?

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR A SECOND READING OF O-20-011

ON THE QUESTIONAlderwoman Lu

I haven't heard this discussed in detail and from – I think it's the first reading, you folks, it may have been admitted or brought to the Board before but it is the first reading so I would like to review it before voting on it.

President Wilshire

Ok further discussion, Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. I appreciate the City going back and looking at this and giving us some revisions because I know this was a big item from a budgetary standpoint. I do echo that I would like to hear a little bit more than just the Mayor's remarks in terms of what the changes are before we just make a decision on this.

President Wilshire

Very good. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

We are just suspending the rules to have the discussion, is that correct?

President Wilshire

Correct, yes.

Alderman Jette

I too agree this is a significant change and it may be very meritorious but I think to suspend the rules to allow a second reading and avoid sending this to a Committee for a full exploration of what it means and

what it provides for and provide for an opportunity for people to weigh in on this; I am opposed to that. I would be opposed to suspending the rules to allow for a second reading tonight. I think it ought to be referred to a Committee and if that Committee has to meet remotely like we are tonight, that's fine. But I think it deserves an opportunity for the Mayor to explain in detail what this is for. And also an opportunity for anyone who might be opposed to it to voice their opinion. So I would be against suspending the rules to have a second reading tonight.

President Wilshire

Very good. Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

Yes.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Don't forget Linda.

Alderman O'Brien

Oh Linda.

Alderman Gathright

I agree with all that spoke before me and that was my thought pattern, my thought was that we really need someone to weigh in, we heard our Mayor and I respect him, truly respect him, but I also would like to make sure that others, that that would affect, would have an opportunity to speak to it as well.

President Wilshire

Ok. Alderman O'Brien.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. I would like to ask a question of the Mayor through the Chair if that's ok?

President Wilshire

It is.

Alderman O'Brien

My question to the Mayor is that this is not a new-fangled idea. There are people currently that do have the high deductible and so it is just basically limiting the choices that are out there. This is not a new program it is already.

Mayor Donchess

For the in-patient hospital visits being for out-patient surgery and the like and urgent care, does increase the cost of the deductible considerably to \$250.00 to \$1,500.00 or \$500.00 / \$3,000.00. But it keeps people's working rates down. Now it is something we have talked about, at least some people. But this is the first reading tonight. We do need to get this past in early April, the first meeting in April. It doesn't need to be passed tonight. It is the same thing that Manchester offers; I believe. We have worked closely with Manchester to try to develop design changes that could save money. But I think the employees have a lot

to gain but can we go back to the buses because something just came in on e-mail. The announcement from the State, it is pretty interesting. When the Governor was talking today or whoever had their press conference, it turns out that an individual rode on a Concord Coach Line and was infected by Coronavirus and rode from Concord to Logan and a couple of other trips. It has been discovered that this person had Corona virus. So now any person who is on those buses and has developed symptoms should stay away from all other people and immediately contact their healthcare provider.

Now the point is that they might know who are on these Concord buses but in our case, on the fixed route system, we would have no way of knowing who was on, it would be impossible to track. So I just wanted to add that Madam President, just to demonstrate why this bus step I think was the right thing to do. In any event, I apologize for digressing. But I think I answered Alderman O'Brien's question.

President Wilshire

Anyone further, any discussion further on suspending the rules for a second reading?

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. I understand my colleague addressing what it may be limited to but I think without careful review of how the contract stands as it is as opposed to the 3 pages of changes, ok the one page of changes that it involves, I don't want to recap it as it is just a change to this or it is just a change to only that. And I don't feel comfortable I think we all know that we can have meetings remotely now. If it comes in for first reading, I would think it would be somewhat of an unusual thing to go to a second reading in the same night. And I just feel strongly that people that want to weigh in should be able to read in on this. Thank you.

President Wilshire

You are welcome. Alderman Klee.

Alderman Klee

My question is to Attorney Bolton, can you hear me? You can hear me, OK, I can't hear me, so my question to you is this still has to be a Public Meeting, even though they are doing it remotely, we still have to allow the public in so we would have to set something up like this or is that not?

Steve Bolton Corporation Counsel

I hope I am audible now. This is a public meeting. If you send this to a Committee, the Committee Meeting would have to be done in public, which it could be done in a similar manner that we are using this evening. You can table it at the Board level and discuss it at the next Full Board Meeting. It is really up to the Board how it wants to proceed from here. I guess some of you are inclined to pass it this evening and that would be appropriate also.

President Wilshire

Alderman Klee, did you have something further?

Alderman Klee

No I just wanted to make it clear that we would have to a public, so someone physically would have to be here so that the public, if they did choose to come, could speak. Because it sounds like my colleagues are looking to hear from those people.

President Wilshire

Further discussion on the motion to suspend the rules?

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

This is Linda and I just have a question. If we suspend the rules tonight, does that mean that it doesn't go to the Committee?

President Wilshire

Yes if we pass it tonight, it doesn't go to Committee.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Right and then it will come before the Full Board correct?

President Wilshire

It will be before the Full Board this evening and that will be, if we pass it tonight that's the end of it for us.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

OK you have answered the question, thank you.

President Wilshire

You are welcome. The motion is to suspend the rules to allow for a second reading of Ordinance 20-011.

Alderman Lopez

I just wanted to second reluctance that was needed to just move forward with this. I know it is a pandemic and we are all kind of bunkering down. At the same time, we don't want to make decisions now that we can't take back later. We are going to introduce processes that aren't well-vetted and I think a lot of that includes public trust. So it is a little precarious right now where we need to make it very clear that we are not doing anything without planning it out or really vetting it. So I am not really comfortable trying to approve a plan that I have barely seen at all.

President Wilshire

That's fair. Further discussion on suspending the rules?

Alderman Dowd

Since we are having a discussion that seems to be steering away from the motion on the floor, I think that if we defer this to a Committee that everybody that is concerned about this particular Legislation should review it thoroughly before that Committee Meeting so that Committee Meeting is not elongated by discussion that could be answered by researching the Legislation.

President Wilshire

The Motion is to suspend the rules. Anyone further.

Alderwoman Kelly

Is Alderman Caron on? This - it would go to Personnel correct?

President Wilshire

Yes. Alderman Caron is not on.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK I just wanted to know if she would be open to holding a remote meeting in the next week or whatever we would need to expedite this for the City.

President Wilshire

She's not on. We could check with her tomorrow, if she's willing.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK thank you.

President Wilshire

You are welcome, anything further.

Alderman Klee

Again I just have a question again for Attorney Bolton. He mentioned about that if we did do a second reading, we could table it to the next meeting at which time we could have a further discussion and it would give the opportunity of the public, those that would be affected to send an e-mail through that address or show up here, is that correct?

Attorney Bolton

That is correct.

Alderman Klee

Thank you.

President Wilshire

And I appreciate the fact that we don't want to hold more meetings because as the Mayor said, this, I don't know if he said it tonight or not but this pandemic locally is going to get worse before it gets better. The fewer meetings we need to have, the fewer times we have to have the public come in before us, I think the better. I would prefer not to hold Committee Meetings at this point, even if they are virtual, I would prefer not to have the public come in and speak. And I think that's really the message right now, is that we don't want to hold public meetings. If we have this, we could have 25, 30, 40 people come in and I would rather not do that either. So I will be supporting the motion to suspend.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, President. Well if we are going to refrain from sending, if there is going to be more second hearings, then rather than have a second hearing on the same night, things are – you have the first hearing. I think that if you are going to ask for a second hearing, it would be helpful to know that so that the

due diligence can be done ahead of the first Hearing, because the normal process has been that the first hearing sends it for review more thorough review.

President Wilshire

Are you referring to a first reading and a second reading?

Alderwoman Lu

That's what I meant; did I say "hearing"?

President Wilshire

You did.

Alderwoman Lu

Yeah I meant first reading, because I typically go and I review the discussion in the Committee meetings to get a sense of the scope of the subject. So I just think if we are going to try to have first and second hearings on the same day, then it is not hard to notify us, "Hey let's try to have the first and second hearing tonight". If not, then I'll do my due diligence but have a second hearing at the next BOA meeting, Full Meeting of the Board. Thank you.

Attorney Bolton

Can I say something here? It would be illegal for one of you to notify the rest of you in advance of the meeting of any intention of what you wanted to do at the meeting. So if I understood correctly the suggestion by way of telephone calls, series of telephone calls or e-mail or other communication, if one of you were to notify a majority or all of the rest of you of an intention to move to suspend the rules for a second reading, that would violate the Right to Know Law and it would violate it in a way that has not been suspended by recent action of the Governor.

President Wilshire

Thank you, Attorney Bolton.

Alderman O'Brien

And then Alderman Dowd.

Alderman Dowd

Yes, I have had conversation with Alderman Caron recently and she cannot come out for our meetings physically as she would be in the high-risk category. Also she does not have capability to do a meeting remotely. So you would either have to select another Committee to go to or whoever is second in line Deputy in that Committee would have to run the meeting.

President Wilshire

OK motion is to suspend the rules.

Alderman O'Brien

You've got Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

I had a question through the President to the Corporation Counsel.

President Wilshire

Could you speak closer to your microphone again Alderman Lopez. Thank you.

Alderman Lopez

If the Mayor were to... the Board to bring something in under suspension, would that violate it because he doesn't really have a vote per se? So he could indicate that that's his preference, even if that's not what we end up actually doing.

Attorney Bolton

The Mayor being a member of the Board has a constitutional right to contact any or all of us to suggest what he would prefer.

President Wilshire

All set Alderman Lopez? Alderman Tencza?

Alderman Tencza

Thank you, Madam President. So it seems to me that people don't want to take a vote on this tonight but also are worried that we are not going to get a Committee Hearing in before the next Board of Aldermen Meeting so I would, and maybe Attorney Bolton can correct me if I'm wrong here. But if we pass a motion for a second reading tonight and then table this piece of Legislation until the next meeting, potentially we could give notice to the public that we are taking it up next meeting without having to go through Committee? Is that correct?

Attorney Bolton

That's correct.

President Wilshire

OK so you have heard that, we can suspend the rules and then table it and take it up at the next Full Board Meeting and that would eliminate the need for a Budget Meeting in-between where I think things are going to be a little bit worse here in the City than they are now.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you, Madam President. I understand the conversation and what is going on tonight, but at the same time too I am very concerned, I don't think anybody really here is an insurance professional or completely understands what we need to do in this type of situation. And like the Mayor mentioned, so we have relied on it sounds like a group that he has particularly assigned to go in to look at this and to come up with a solution. And we will have a savings to the taxpayers, yet at the same time, pretty much still give our employees, which I am somewhat familiar. I was a merit employee for 15 years in this City. And I understand too what the Coronavirus that we've got here, we are going to have trouble with the meetings and now we have discussed that the Chairman of that particular Committee may not be able to make the meeting. So who do you refer it to? Well, you refer it to the experts and to me, if this is the expert opinion that has been given to the Mayor on this is the vote that we should vote to, then I think we should weigh pretty heavily with that expert opinion and so therefore I am going to vote to suspend the rules because I

have some faith in our experts that have looked at this and come up with a plan for the City, in support. And thank you Madam President for letting me say it now because when the motion comes to the table it is a non-debatable motion. So thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

Hi yeah thank you. So I appreciate all the comments that have been brought forward. I still am very uncomfortable and I think Alderman Lopez brings up a really good point of, "yes this is a situation that is an emergency, we are doing remote meetings in order to keep everybody safe" but I would not like to see us set a precedent where we don't talk through something that is going to affect all the employees in the City. And I personally know from being on the Personnel Committee for 2 years that there are things that I hadn't thought of until someone comes up and is able to at least speak on it. So unless somebody knew it was on the agenda tonight, we are not even giving them an opportunity to speak. And I really think that we need to make sure to not make that precedent.

Alderman Klee

Thank you. I am going to actually address Alderwoman Kelly if that's OK. Alderwoman Kelly, I think that we were told if we suspend the rules, table it and then bring it up for discussion at the next meeting, making notice to the public that it would be discussed, they could either attend or as we addressed, they could send an e-mail with their discussion and so on. I don't know if that makes it more palatable for people as well as the public, that we are trying to take everything into consideration.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you for the clarification. I am fine with that. I would like to make sure that Kim Kleiner or whoever would be heading this up in the City does give us a full overview of what the changes are as well. Thanks.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I am just curious and I think my question is to the Mayor, has there been any discussion about this process with the AFLCIO or SCIU whichever group is involved with this, as far as unaffiliated.

Mayor Donchess

Alderwoman Gathright, the unaffiliated workers are not represented by any union. So instead of talking to the representatives we held a group meeting here in the Auditorium a couple of weeks ago. There were, I don't know, 75, 80, 90 people present, and we talked through all of the details. Ms. Kleiner was here, Mr. Griffin, I think Mr. Budreau, all of the people involved. We had a handout sheet where we explained what is explained all of it, in addition to our verbal explanation. And then to questions, but there really weren't any. Before that, we had talked to the Division Directors and got their input on it. So we have addressed the employees and offered to discuss it with them or explain it to them. And at least my perception is we have not really had any objections. I mean I think a lot of people like the idea that the weekly contributions would go down.

Now you know, under certain circumstances they would be more, but I think another thing that is beginning to sink in with the employees to whom this has been properly explained and in the School Department I'm not sure that has happened, but that the high deductible plan is one that can really benefit most people. And as we explain it and discuss it more and more, it is being adopted by more employees and this change as we explained it they, in the – up here in the audience in the Auditorium to the employees, encourages if you don't like the changes, they encourage you to move to the high deductible plan.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

OK thank you.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, Madam President. I move to amend the motion.

President Wilshire

The attorney is saying you can't. The Motion is to suspend the rules to allow for a second reading of Ordinance 20-011. Further discussion on that.

Alderman Jette

I just wanted to, after hearing all of the discussion, I just want to remind my fellow Aldermen that the way that we normally deal with Legislation is that is referred to a Committee and the Committee has a chance to analyze it, discuss it, you know, people can come in, in this case either they could come in remotely or they could communicate by e-mail and they could, you know, we could all learn, I mean the Committee could explore what this is all about. I appreciate the Mayor's explanation but you know I am sure that in the end it will probably, you know, it sounds like it is a good move but I am concerned with our suspending the rules and moving forward with this. Some people have suggested that if we suspended the rules, we could then table it and then discuss it at the next meeting. But you know that's the way we normally deal with this. Are we going to have people coming in an explaining it to us at our next meeting? And how long is that going to make the next meeting? It would be then hearing people talk about this and then voting on this on the spot. The way we normally deal with things is the way I would prefer.

We do have time before the next meeting, we could schedule a meeting and it is unfortunate that Alderman Caron can't participate but she's not the only member of that Committee if that's where you send it. You could also send it to a different Committee. But sending it to a Committee would allow us to learn more about it, hear about it, discuss it and then when it comes, make a recommendation and then at the next Board of Aldermen meeting we could then vote on it, you know, fully understanding what we are voting on and fulfilling our role as Aldermen, which we owe to our constituents. I don't feel comfortable; I don't think we should just vote on something based upon what the Mayor has told us tonight. I don't doubt that what he is saying is absolutely true, but I think I owe it to my constituents to review all of that, research it, you know, talk to people and then vote on it based upon – I owe it to my constituents to look at this myself and not just accept what the Mayor is saying. And the Mayor said there is no emergency that requires us to suspend the rules tonight. We could go through the normal process and vote on it at our next Board of Aldermen meeting. And tonight has shown us that we can do this remotely. We don't have to endanger ourselves or others by doing it the way that we normally do things, which I think is the correct way.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I am just realizing that this is a conversation that we've had in many meetings with the Board on this process and I remember Director Kim was there and everything else. I just want to ask, is there some kind of way, I don't know, can we move, can I move the question, because at this point I believe that everybody knows what they feel and what they want to do and rather than prolong this evening, we move it. Is that a legit term here?

President Wilshire

Yes you can move the question.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Thank you, move the question.

MOTION BY ALDERMAN HARRIOTT-GATHRIGHT TO MOVE THE QUESTION

A viva voce roll call was taken to move the question which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd,
Alderman Tencza, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Laws,
Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 10

Nay: Alderman Lopez, Alderwoman Lu 2

MOTION CARRIED

President Wilshire

And that motion carried. The motion is to suspend the rules. Would the Clerk please call the roll?

Alderman Lopez

Aren't we just asking to move the question?

President Wilshire

We are voting right now Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

I understand we are voting but I thought that Alderman Gathright had asked to move the question and that we would have to vote on moving the question first.

President Wilshire

We did that.

Alderman Lopez

Ok so just to be clear now we are voting on whether to suspend the rules?

President Wilshire

Right.

Alderman Lopez

Thank you for helping.

President Wilshire

You are welcome.

Alderwoman Lu

I'm sorry, what are we voting on?

President Wilshire

Suspension of the rules?

A viva voce roll call was taken to suspend the rules which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Tencza,
Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Laws, Alderman Harriott-Gathright,
Alderman Wilshire 8

Nay: Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Lopez, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette 4

MOTION CARRIED

O-20-011

Endorser: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman-at-Large Michael O'Brien
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman Richard Dowd

REVISIONS TO THE HEALTH PLAN SECTION OF THE UNAFFILIATED EMPLOYEES PERSONNEL POLICIES

MOTION BY ALDERMAN KLEE TO TABLE O-20-011 UNTIL THE NEXT BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING

A viva voce roll call was taken to table O-20-011 which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza,
Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Laws, Alderman Harriott-
Gathright, Alderman Wilshire 11
Nay: Alderman O'Brien 1

MOTION CARRIED

O-20-012

Endorser: Alderman Richard A. Dowd
AMENDING THE ZONING MAP BY REZONING LAND OFF OF TINKER ROAD FROM RURAL RESIDENCE (R-40) TO "B" SUBURBAN RESIDENCE (R-18)

Given its first reading;

There being no objection, President Wilshire accepted the first reading of O-20-012, referred it to the Planning and Economic Development Committee, the Nashua Planning Board, and will be scheduling a Special Board of Aldermen public hearing as soon as conveniently possible

O-20-013

Endorser: Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Michael O'Brien
Alderman Jan Schmidt

AMENDING THE ZONING MAP BY REZONING LAND OFF OF AMHERST STREET FROM PARK INDUSTRIAL (PI) TO PARK INDUSTRIAL WITH MIXED USE OVERLAY DISTRICT (PI/MU)

Given its first reading;

There being no objection, President Wilshire accepted the first reading of O-20-013, referred it to the Planning and Economic Development Committee, the Nashua Planning Board, and will be scheduling a Special Board of Aldermen public hearing as soon as conveniently possible

PERIOD FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT - None

REMARKS BY THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMENAlderman Klee

Thank you, President Wilshire. I just wanted to make a comment about that I think that this process is very difficult and I think all of my colleagues are doing an admirable job and I really want to commend everybody on everything that they are doing. I also wanted to make a comment about the volunteerism. I have been contacted by I don't know how to pronounce his last name but his first name is Pedro, from In & Out Burritos, who wants to offer meals to those who need them. He was asking who he would contact relative to meals for the High School students. So if anybody wants to get ahold of him they can contact him at In & Out Burritos or they could contact me and I could put them in touch. So thank you to all the public that are stepping forward and doing all of this. Thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to offer some thanks to everybody who helped to get us up and running for this remote meeting, I know that it wasn't easy. I think everybody is doing an incredible job from that standpoint, Public Health & Safety is so important right now. On that note I want to thank all the leaders, everybody in our City who are still working to combat this; from the janitors who are still coming to City Hall to make sure it is sanitized and ready to go, to our nurses, fire fighters, police, even the community activists who are reaching out to make sure that our students have food. I think that we are really coming together as a City against this and I really appreciate every single contribution as we keep moving forward.

Alderman Dowd

Yes, a couple things, one and Attorney Bolton can correct me if I'm wrong, but anyone on the Board, if they have a question about a piece of Legislation and this also applies during the Budget if you have a question. You can submit it in writing to the Department Head or any City Employee but that would be the Department Head and you will get a written response and it will be shared with everyone on the Board of Aldermen. As long as we don't have conversations amongst ourselves, that's the proper way to do it. So on the insurance question, if you review the Legislation, do your homework and you have a question, you can ask whoever the Mayor wants to designate at the point person to handle the questions and they can give us responses in writing, probably through Donna. And Donna can then give all the Aldermen a copy of that and that will help with any of the discussion going forward. There will be more on the Budget as we get closer and start scheduling Budget Meeting and they will be all remove.

President Wilshire

Thank you, Alderman Dowd, anyone else, comments?

Alderman Lopez

Yeah I just wanted to remind the public ...

President Wilshire

Talk closer to your microphone please, you are really hard to hear Alderman Lopez. Thank you.

Alderman Lopez

Is this better.

President Wilshire

Yes.

Alderman Lopez

So as much as we are in a pandemic, and everybody is practicing social distancing voluntarily, it also can be a tremendous burden on people in particular who are extroverts or who need social supports. So I just wanted to remind the public that Mobile Crisis Response Team is still operating. We are using all the safety precautions that are appropriate. And they are open 24/7. So if you are in distress, reach out to someone. The number is (603) 816-0101.

And then also for people who thought I would have an event to announce, this Saturday at 7:00 P.M. we are doing an on-line fundraiser through Involve to Impact. We are trying to raise money for masks. So if anybody is interested in maybe hanging out with people while not hanging out with people, just go to InvolveToImpact.org. We are trying to organize it from there.

President Wilshire

Thank you.

Alderman Schmidt

Thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to thank all of the people who are sewing masks. I don't know if you are aware of those but there are hundreds of people who have gathered up fabric and are sewing their little hearts out to make sure that the people who need masks at least will have the simple masks that we can produce. But it is a huge thank you and I just wanted to make sure folks knew about that.

President Wilshire

I would like to take a moment to thank the Mayor.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I am so sorry, I was trying to hit the button. I just want to thank, you know, Dan I hear you and I know there's quite a few people here in Nashua that's really making the masks for people. And the nurses and I say that because it was my baby girl is one of those RN's that are out there. And I just want to thank all the people that are volunteering at the school to give out the meals at lunchtime for the kids to take home. Just to remind the parents that most of the schools, the elementary schools and the junior high schools are open. I believe it is 11:00 to 4:00 for you to pick up meals for your children for the next few days. They are only open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

President Wilshire

All set Alderman Gathright?

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Yes.

President Wilshire

Ok again I'd like to take a moment to thank the Mayor, Public Health, First Responders, I mean everyone. Everyone in this City has really come together, as difficult a situation as this has been I think some of our businesses have stepped up and are making things that they don't normally make. It has really been a

really awesome community effort. And I want to thank everyone, those essential personnel and those that are not quite as essential but still as important. So thank you to everyone out there for the tremendous work and the social distancing and doing everything you need to do to help prevent the spread of this virus.

Committee announcements:

President Wilshire

I am going to announce that there are no Committees.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN THAT THE MARCH 24, 2020, MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN BE ADJOURNED

A viva voce roll call was taken to adjourn the Board of Aldermen meeting which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman O'Brien, Alderman Klee, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd, Alderman Lopez, Alderman Tencza, Alderwoman Lu, Alderman Jette, Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Laws, Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Wilshire	12
Nay:	0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Attest: Susan K. Lovering, City Clerk