



City of Harrisonburg

409 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Final City Council

Thursday, June 18, 2020

5:00 PM

Council Chambers

Special Meeting

1. Call to Order

All Council Members and staff held the meeting virtually.

Present: 5 - Mayor Deanna R. Reed, Vice-Mayor Sal Romero, Council Member Richard Baugh, Council Member Christopher B. Jones and Council Member George Hirschmann

Also Present: 3 - City Manager Eric Campbell, City Clerk Pam Ulmer and City Attorney Chris Brown

2. Regular Items

2.a. Consider designating June 19, also known as Juneteenth, a city holiday in 2020

Mayor Reed stated she called the meeting to consider making June 19, 2020 a city holiday known as Juneteenth. She stated Juneteenth commemorates the day when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas in 1865 to take control of the state and ensure that all enslaved people be freed. The troops' arrival came a full two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth honors the end to slavery in the United States and is considered the longest-running African American holiday. She stated it will be recognized as a formal State holiday on June 19th, 2020 and she believes by formally observing Juneteenth as a city holiday the city of Harrisonburg will signal their commitment to dismantling racial inequities. She stated the work before us is the work of justice, inequality cannot be allowed to persist, we must celebrate freedom. It is her hope this will encourage businesses, schools, universities, faith communities and all residents to join in conversation about racial injustice and use the day for reflection, listening, engagement and celebration.

Council Member Jones stated that Juneteenth has been a tradition and is extremely important the city follows suit with the Governor and make this an annual tradition of celebration. He stated the history of the African American in America has been filled with great trauma and turmoil, however out of that many great heroes and movements have happened, and hopefully Harrisonburg city staff and the city as a whole will stop to reflect and show gratitude to the accomplishments, as well as the efforts, of the African American Community that continues to build our nation and everything that has happened since 1865.

A motion was made by Council Member Jones, seconded by Vice Mayor Romero, to approve the observance of Juneteenth as a city holiday for June 19, 2020. The motion carried with a

roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Romero, Council Member Baugh, Council Member Jones and Council Member Hirschmann

No: 0

2.b. Resolution urging the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board to approve Emergency Regulations and Standards for all workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Mayor Reed read the resolution urging the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board to approve emergency regulations and standards for all workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Vice Mayor Romero stated he brought the idea of this resolution to council previously because it is critical that we urge the board to approve these emergency regulations. He stated as we know, the Covid-19 virus is in the city, and we may very well experience a second wave, we need to make sure our workers across the different sectors will be protected. He stated this resolution encompasses what he would like to see happen.

Council Member Hirschmann stated many led us to believe the cost of production would go up because of this request. He asked if anyone has any information as to if the costs have increased since regulations and safety precautions were put into place. Vice Mayor Romero stated that although some plants have done an exceptional job in mitigating the virus, not all of the plants have. He stated this resolution will ensure all sectors are practicing and following the regulations to protect the employees. He stated he is not sure if any information has been obtained regarding increase in costs due to these changes. Chris Brown, city attorney, stated he forwarded an email to Council, which he had received from Mr. Hobey Bauhan, president of the Virginia Poultry Federation, and a copy of a letter prepared by a law firm in Richmond that was sent to various government agencies sharing their concerns of proposed regulations. He stated the city manager received an email from the president of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Chamber of Commerce expressing concerns of what and how the new regulations will affect businesses in the city and across the state. He stated any information received on this matter has been shared with Council, but there has not been a lot of time leading up to this. Council Member Baugh stated some plants are adopting practices better than others, and this resolution will hopefully even out the playing field. He stated we need to get these best practices in play.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Romero, seconded by Council Member Jones to approve the resolution as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Romero, Council Member Baugh, Council Member Jones and Council Member Hirschmann

No: 0

3. Adjournment

At 5:29 pm there being no further business and on motion adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR