



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS  
330 Harbor Drive  
Sitka, AK  
(907)747-1811

## Minutes - Final

### City and Borough Assembly

*Mayor Gary Paxton*  
*Deputy Mayor Steven Eisenbeisz,*  
*Vice Deputy Mayor Kevin Mosher,*  
*Kevin Knox, Dr. Richard Wein, Valorie Nelson, Thor*  
*Christianson*

*Municipal Administrator: John Leach*  
*Municipal Attorney: Brian Hanson*  
*Municipal Clerk: Sara Peterson*

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Monday, March 16, 2020

6:00 PM

Assembly Chambers

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#### EMERGENCY MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. FLAG SALUTE

III. ROLL CALL

**Present:** 6 - Christianson, Eisenbeisz, Knox, Wein, Paxton, and Mosher

**Telephonic:** 1 - Nelson

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A [RES 20-05](#)

Continuing the Declaration by the Municipal Administrator of a Local Disaster Emergency in response to COVID-19 and a request for State and Federal assistance

Municipal Administrator John Leach stated on March 15 he had declared a local disaster emergency and asked SEARHC Vice President and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Elliot Bruhl to provide an update. Bruhl urged Alaskans to comply with the State of Alaska Health Alert regarding travel. Bruhl noted SEARHC continued efforts to limit entry to its facilities for the safety of patients and staff, was conducting staff drills to ensure staff was familiar with personal protective equipment, and was encouraging staff to stay home if ill. He noted there was an increase in supplies, shared the number for the SEARHC hotline, and nurse advice line. Bruhl said SEARHC was participating in the unified command structure with CBS and EMS. He reminded citizens of their part in this response - cooperate with public health requests, wash hands often, cover coughs and sneezes, maintain social distancing, have extra prescriptions, a 14 day food supply, take care of each other, and be kind to each other.

Leach stated the Unified Command was meeting once a week to ensure efforts were aligned. He stated city offices were closed March 16 except for essential governmental functions. He reminded cooperation from the community was essential in helping to

flatten the curve.

Wein reminded someone could be asymptomatic but still be a vector for the disease and urged compliance with basic public health rules. Nelson cautioned folks to refrain from overreacting. Christianson, referring to calls and emails he had received and reminded the city could not declare martial law. Knox reminded the City did not have the authority to shut down the airport, the building could be closed but planes would still come.

Discussion of the resolution at hand ensued. Wein and Nelson voiced concern over the stated time length of the emergency, November 24 and suggested it be shortened.

**A motion was made by Wein to AMEND the resolution to be in effect for 60 days and then bring back to the body for further consideration. The amendment FAILED by the following vote.**

**Yes:** 2 - Wein and Nelson

**No:** 5 - Knox, Paxton, Mosher, Christianson, and Eisenbeisz

**A motion was made by Christianson that this Resolution be APPROVED on FIRST AND FINAL READING. The motion PASSED by the following vote.**

**Yes:** 7 - Christianson, Eisenbeisz, Knox, Wein, Paxton, Mosher, and Nelson

**B**     [ORD 20-10](#)

An Emergency Ordinance of the City and Borough of Sitka making a supplemental appropriation to the FY2020 budget per Section 11.10(a) of the Home Rule Charter of the City and Borough of Sitka

It was reminded Section 3.03 of the Home Rule Charter required the affirmative votes of at least five assembly members for adoption of an emergency ordinance.

Eisenbeisz understood the appropriation for additional personnel however wondered of the explanation of supplies. Municipal Administrator John Leach stated the ordinance was a best guess and that overtime wages may need to be paid, help may be needed with public relations, emergency supplies, and contract services. He states the \$500,000 appropriation would come from the \$2 million emergency reserve fund in the General Fund. Wein requested a further breakdown of costs. Leach reiterated the numbers were an estimate, the city would be prudent in its spending, and would look for state and federal funding sources. Nelson spoke in opposition without having an opportunity to assess needs. Mosher expressed confidence in Leach and believed Leach would be prudent with the funds.

**A motion was made by Knox that this Emergency Ordinance be APPROVED on FIRST READING. The motion PASSED by the following vote. \* Note: Re-enactment/Second Reading pre-scheduled for 5/12/2020 to address and extend the 61-day expiration to the end of the Fiscal Year budget June 30, 2020.**

**Yes:** 6 - Christianson, Eisenbeisz, Knox, Wein, Paxton, and Mosher

No: 1 - Nelson

**V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD:**

Gayle Young of the Sitka Homeless Coalition expressed concern that all public restrooms were closed in the downtown area.

Charles Hart spoke to the homeless population and those who would be financially impacted and possibly need to close their businesses.

Keith Nyitray of the Sitka Food Co-Op urged the City to create a program for Sitkans to collaborate and provide food.

Assembly Member Mosher reminded everyone was concerned of the economic impacts and hoped the lobbyists were exploring options for Sitka. Assembly Member Christianson reminded of small business administration loans available.

**VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Christianson to ADJOURN. Hearing no objections, the meeting ADJOURNED at 7:02 p.m.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sara Peterson, MMC  
Municipal Clerk