

CITY OF UNALASKA
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2020-16

A RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL DECLARING A LOCAL EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO TAKE NECESSARY ACTIONS TO REDUCE THE IMPACT AND SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS KNOWN AS COVID-19 THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF UNALASKA

WHEREAS, the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention has identified the COVID-19 virus as a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans, causing respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death and which poses a significant public health risk; and

WHEREAS, a proactive approach taken by individuals and communities to slow the rate of infection will reduce the negative impact on our health care system; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, Governor Mike Dunleavy declared a Public Health Disaster Emergency in the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, City of Unalaska stood up the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to provide a framework for coordinated communications, preparedness and response; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a National Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020, by Mayoral Decree, the Honorable Vincent M. Tutiakoff, Sr. declared a local emergency as a result of these circumstances.

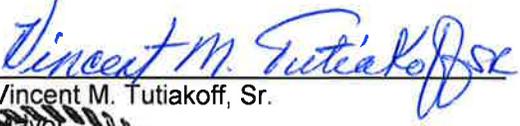
THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL that the coronavirus known as COVID-19 has created a local public health emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is authorized to take necessary actions, in accordance with Chapter 2.96 of the Unalaska Municipal Code, to prepare and position our resources in order to reduce the impact and spread of the coronavirus throughout the City of Unalaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this declaration supersedes the earlier-issued mayoral Declaration of Emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this declaration a local emergency shall remain in effect for so long as the declaration of a Public Health Disaster Emergency in the State of Alaska remains in effect.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Unalaska City Council on March 18, 2020.


Vincent M. Tutiakoff, Sr.
Mayor

ATTEST:


Marjie Veeder, CMC
City Clerk



MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Erin Reinders, City Manager
Date: March 18, 2020
Re: Resolution 2020-16 – Public Health Emergency Declaration

SUMMARY: Mayor Tutiakoff declared a public health emergency on March 15, 2020. This declaration is required to be ratified and extended by the City Council within seven days. This declaration of a local public health emergency is a proactive step in keeping with those actions. Staff recommends approval.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: Council has previously declared a state of emergency, most recently after the airplane crash. Council has taken no formal action related to this current public health crisis.

BACKGROUND: The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified the COVID-19 virus as a new strain of coronavirus, causing respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death. This poses a significant public health risk. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic related to COVID-19 and Governor Mike Dunleavy declared a Public Health Disaster Emergency in the State of Alaska. On March 13, 2020, the President declared a National Emergency.

DISCUSSION: On March 15, 2020, in accordance with Unalaska Municipal Code, Section 2.96.030, the Mayor declared the coronavirus threat and impact a public health emergency. Council action is now required to ratify and extend this declaration. This declaration of emergency allows for the potential to request for funding support in the future and allows response actions to be taken quickly and more effectively.

Even before the Mayor's declaration, staff has been proactive in addressing this situation. On March 12, 2020, City of Unalaska stood up the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to provide a framework for coordinated communications, preparedness and response. Our EOC meetings include representatives from the Clinic and School District. Numerous staff members have joined with other workgroups in the community and beyond to address various needs and mitigate potential risks. Our EOC is currently expanding to better ensure a continued coordinated response as this situation unfolds.

Although not an exhaustive list, the following actions have been taken :

1. Fisheries Infectious Disease Working Group, which includes representatives of the fishing and seafood processing industries here in Unalaska as well as City and Clinic representatives, have successfully set up screening for industry at the Anchorage airport.

2. Developed and implemented a communication plan to provide for accurate and timely information to members of the public. All press releases are approved by the Clinic Executive Director and City Manager before being finalized. City has created a city webpage dedicated to the coronavirus and issues press releases daily with coordinated messaging.
3. Developed and implemented a guidance document on risk thresholds for social distancing. This has been shared with the public and with numerous organizations directly, including the Senior Center.
4. Unisea has proposed a quarantine site for industry and community use, and the Clinic has approved it. Preparation details are being worked out now.
5. City has closed the PCR, Aquatics Center and Library (following the Governor mandate and UCSD's School closures). Other public gathering locations have done the same.
6. Local shippers and stores have been contacted to education and ensure a continuity of service.
7. Efforts are underway to develop a method to deliver groceries and supplies to patients in home quarantine upon referral from the clinic.
8. Senior Center has been closed to meals for the public. Meals are still being delivered to program participants.
9. Accounting system set up to track City costs associated with this emergency.
10. City has stepped up cleaning and wiping actions in public facilities, with the assistance of our staff and cleaning crews.
11. During this public health emergency, and in support of our staff and community members, the City has told employees that:
 - a. City employees may be asked to work in flexible working schedules, work from a different location, or be reassigned duties depending on the circumstances and the level of need.
 - b. City employees will be paid their regular wage and not be required to use leave if they are directed not to report to work due to city facility closures.
 - c. City employees will be paid their regular wage and not be required to use leave if they if they need to miss work because they are sick, need care for a sick family member, or need to provide child care for their child due to school closings.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: There are many moving part to this evolving situation. The associated financial implications are currently unknown. The finance department is developing an accounting system so that we may track the costs associated with the city's response. This declaration may assist in allowing for us to request funding support or reimbursement in the future.

LEGAL: Staff consulted with the City Attorney in regards to the original declaration of emergency.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval.

PROPOSED MOTION: "I move to approve Resolution 2020-16."