

**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

The City of Jesup Board of Commissioners held a Special Called meeting Monday, March 23, 2020 at 11:00 a.m., in the Council Chamber. Mayor David Earl Keith called the meeting to order. Roll call was as follows:

Mayor, David Earl Keith	Present
Commissioner, Shirlene Armstrong	Present
Commissioner, Don A. Darden	Present
Commissioner, Nick Harris	Present
Commissioner, Bill Harvey	Present
Commissioner, Ray House	Present
Commissioner, Stanley Todd	Present
City Attorney, Mike Conner	Present
City Manager, Mike Deal	Present
Police Chief, Mike Lane	Absent

Invocation was given by Commissioner Todd.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Darden.

Mayor Keith noted this meeting was to evaluate the City operations during unprecedented times due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mayor Keith stated the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases is changing rapidly every day. He noted on February 28, 2020, there were 40 cases in the U.S. and 33,000 cases as of yesterday. He urged everyone to stay home when possible.

Mayor Keith reported all the information about COVID-19 can be found on the Georgia Department of Public Health website at [www.dpa.georgia.gov](http://www.dpa.georgia.gov).

Mayor Keith said Governor Kemp called him last Friday to check on how things were going in Jesup. He reported Governor Kemp asks everyone to abide by their recommendations. Mayor Keith said Governor Kemp urges everyone to avoid social gatherings of more than 10 people, avoid eating and drinking at bars, restaurants and food courts, use drive thru, pick-up and delivery options. Mayor Keith asked businesses to please refrain from dine-in service or limit to 10 or less customers, and use 6 foot social distancing. He also asked people to please support the local businesses.

Mayor Keith announced City Hall lobby was closed to the public, but the drive thru was still open for all transactions during normal business hours. Also online payment fees have been waived to assist the customers.

Commissioner Armstrong inquired about the garbage pick-up. Mayor Keith stated that service will continue.

City Manager Deal noted the City is taking care of essential problems only, and will not do medical assist to protect the Police and Fire employees. He stated the City was scaling down its services, but the workers will be available if needed.

Commissioner House asked City Manager Deal to assure the public their water service will continue. City Manager Deal stated the City will try to make sure there won't be a drastic change in any of the services the City provides.

Commissioner Todd stated other cities have declared a Local Emergency, and asked what would cause the City to declare a Local State of Emergency. Mayor Keith stated Governor Kemp will have a press conference at 5 p.m. today, and it would depend on what he says.

Commissioner Todd stated some restaurants still have their dining room open, and he does not want to wait until there's a problem. He stated Council needs to put a written statement on Facebook letting people know where they stand because he didn't think the people in Jesup are abiding by what the Governor or President have requested. He stated Council needs to make sure people are doing what they are being requested to do because it's going to get worse before it gets better.

Commissioner Todd also noted that in 3 days, Georgia has gone from 420 to 620 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and from 13 to 25 deaths. He said even though there are no cases in Wayne County yet, they don't need to wait until there are.

Commissioner Harris stated a serious discussion needs to be started today - not just meet. He noted some businesses are operating as usual, and Cracker Williams Park playground was packed last weekend. He stressed this is a serious situation, and Council needs to discuss what the next steps should be. He stated it's Council's responsibility to look out for the City of Jesup.

Commissioner Darden stated, in reference to social gatherings, they had church service yesterday, but were spaced apart for social distancing, and that his church will not meet again until after this crisis is over.

City Attorney Conner stated the State Statute provides that local governments are authorized to make orders, rules and regulations as necessary for emergency management. Under the current Charter, Council can establish procedures for determining and proclaiming an emergency exist. In addition, the City has code sections that address emergencies.

Mayor Keith asked Council to wait until the Governor has his press conference today at 5 p.m. If still needed, Council can meet again in the morning to decide what to do.

Commissioner Todd stated he was on the verge of making a motion to move forward because he is convinced Council has to do something.

Commissioner Todd made the following statement for the record: "We're doing all we can do to prevent any other people from becoming infected with this illness. I don't want us to overreact, but I want us to react."

Commissioner House stated grocery stores, pharmacies and gas stations will remain open. He also asked Commissioner Todd what he wants Council to do. Commissioner Todd stated he wanted Council to do what they can do to shorten the life of this virus.

Commissioner Armstrong stated Council needs to take the necessary steps, and requested the Mayor and City Manager to check on businesses to make sure they were doing what they are supposed to do.

Mayor Keith and City Manager Deal agreed.

Commissioner Harvey stated he appreciates the Council meeting, but chose not to attend in person due to his age. He stated the City should listen to what the Governor is saying, and agrees with everything that Council has said.

Commissioner Harvey requested posting signs at all City Parks stating they are closed.

Commissioner Todd asked when will Council meet again to review what they talked about today. Mayor Keith suggested Council meet tomorrow at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Todd made motion seconded by Commissioner Harris to have a Special Called meeting tomorrow, March 24, 2020, at City Hall at 9:00 a.m.

All Council voted yes.

Wayne County Commissioner Hershel Hires thanked the City of Jesup for allowing him to call into the meeting.

Mayor Keith informed council GMA states to limit the spread in the community; we need to spread the community. That means the people need to spread out.

Commissioner Armstrong announced the District 1 City Town Hall meeting, scheduled for April 13, 2020, has been cancelled.

Commissioner Darden made motion seconded by Commissioner Harvey to give City Manager Deal authority to close the City parks and buildings.

All Council voted yes.

Meeting Adjourned.

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Rose Marcus-Jackson  
City Clerk/Treasurer