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// An additional scheduled meeting of the Council of the City of Lynchburg was held on the 31st of March 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Treney Tweedy, President, presiding.

Present: MaryJane Dolan, Jeff Helgeson, J. Randy Nelson, E. J. Turner Perrow, Treney Tweedy,
Sterling A. Wilder, Beau Wright 7

Absent: 0

// In the matter of Budget, Council conducted a public hearing on the FY 2021 Proposed Operating Budget and the Proposed FY 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Program for the City of Lynchburg, which includes funding for General, Schools, Fleet, Airport, Water, Sewer, Stormwater and Other Funds. Dr. Reid Wodicka acknowledged that this budget was crafted prior to the current economic disruption. Staff will be revising the revenue projections and the budget development schedule has been revised. The policies guiding this budget were to comply with Council's financial policies, to implement Phase 2 of the Citywide salary study, to provide a general wage increase, fund maintenance commitments, address increasing health premiums, maintain training and professional development, fund the reengineering of our trash collection program and avoid a tax increase. Departments were asked to submit a budget that was equal or less to their budgets in FY2020. Schools requested funding that was equal to FY2020. The proposal is to cut that request by \$1.5 million because of declining average daily membership, increased state revenues and a trend of increasing year-end fund balance. Funding for GLTC is affected because of the loss of a contract with a local university and will require the use of some fund balance reserve funds.

Councilmember Nelson noted that Dr. Wodicka is enlightening them as to what to expect as they move the budget. He asked if there will be any notations or information that suggests how the proposed budget is likely to change due to the fluctuating fiscal landscape we are now facing. He does not want to go through this budget and then have to go through it again when the numbers are adjusted. Dr. Wodicka said they are working on new projections currently.

Mr. Jamie Maxwell, President of the Lynchburg Firefighters Association, came forward to speak regarding the budget. They are asking for appropriate pay and personnel. He mentioned that they do not know what the Korn Ferry study is recommending because it has not been released to employees despite FOIA requests. He speaks for 154 voices. They support the Fire Chief's budget proposal. They would not be giving the medic unit to the fire department. They would be giving it to the citizens of Lynchburg and they deserve it. He explained that many firefighters hired 10 years ago are making the same amount as firefighters hired in 2019. We have twenty year veterans making \$45,000 to \$46,000 a year. They will never reach the top pay advertised.

He acknowledged that Councilmember Wright has said that we need to value our employees and provide a competitive compensation package. He thanked Councilmember Nelson for his true leadership in saying that Council does not need to take their pay raises at this time.

He concluded that this is where Council needs to show that funding public safety is a priority. They need to

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prepare with a “rainy day” fund and stop funding pet projects. He does not envy them the hard decisions they have to make over the next several weeks.

Mr. Oliver Kuttner spoke on behalf of the COVID-19 Citizens Response Group. He would like them to pay attention to what Germany is saying because he left there about a month ago and watch their numbers because they are testing a lot and probably have good numbers. He said that this is an 18-month issue. The first peak will probably come around mid-May. Telling people to quarantine at home is not the best thing. He cautions them not to wait for the state and take their own action. It is absolutely essential that they take action and should call for an emergency meeting in the next couple of days. It will affect their budget more than they can imagine. If the health care system gets overrun, they run the risk of losing seven percent of their population.

Mr. Richard Loving, president of the Lynchburg Police Foundation, came forward to speak. He said that he has been pleased to see very strong and growing support of the police department from the business community and citizens. It has allowed them to offer a scholarship and other financial assistance to officers. They have also been able to enhance the recognition and award program for individual officers. He explained that staffing, technology and facilities are dependent on government support. They support maintaining the full staff of the police department but also the proposal for additional staff. He encourages them to continue updating technology and provide the training necessary for the officers to use the technology. They have received some donations earmarked for technology and they look forward to partnering with the police department. They thank Council and the City Manager for supporting the new police department building and asks them to keep it on track. He asks them to make the investment today that will make their community better prepared for the current situation and future threats.

The Clerk of Council, Robin Craig, read emails into the record sent prior to the meeting. The first one was from Carla Heath from the League of Women Voters: “In keeping with its long standing position to ‘support improving existing recreational space within the city, by preserving and acquiring natural area, and by maintaining recreational areas in high-density neighborhoods’ the League of Women Voters of Lynchburg calls upon the City Council to fully fund the Department of Parks and Recreation’s operating budget requests for FY2021 and the capital improvement request for FY2021-25

Just an hour in the Blackwater Creek recreational area any day these past weeks makes it clear that hundreds of Lynchburgers of every age, ability and background use and value the City’s natural areas to maintain their physical health and emotional well-being in these uncertain times.

Ongoing fiscal support for the City’s parks, trails, sports fields, and community centers is vital to keeping Lynchburg a ‘great place to live, work, and play.’”

// A statement from Lynchburg City Schools: “Thank you for this opportunity to share a brief statement in support of the Lynchburg City Schools’ (LCS) budget request for the March 31, 2020 Budget Hearing. At this time of

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uncertainty for the health of the members of our community and the unfathomable impact this current pandemic will likely have on our local economy, we are writing to simply ask that you preserve what you can of the LCS budget request.

On Tuesday, March 10, 2020, most of City Council joined with well over 400 other business and community leaders at the LCS Education Foundation's annual 'Breakfast with the Superintendent' to learn more about our schools, and specifically about some lesser known programs that are having significant impact on our students. At that time, we were mindful of handshaking but groups of more than 10 were an accepted norm.

Just two days later, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic and by Friday, March 12th Governor Northam declared a state of emergency that initially closed schools for two weeks and later closed schools for the rest of the academic year.

Within those 3 days, life across our country changed dramatically and caused many of us to begin to worry about the impact this pandemic would have on our family and friends.

Within those same 3 days, the needs of some of the most vulnerable in our community became a clear concern as LCS immediately identified the need to not only provide continued educational enrichment to the students in Lynchburg, but to continue to provide meals through the school nutrition program which is the only access some households have to nutritious food for their children.

That weekend, the LCS School Nutrition Department partnered with the LCS Transportation Department and worked tirelessly to develop and execute a plan. By that Monday, March 15th, without missing a beat, LCS school buses were already rolling, delivering breakfast and lunch each day not only to LCS students, but to all students (public schooled, private schooled, and home schooled) across the city to ensure that no child went hungry during these uncertain times. By Friday, March 27th, LCS had already delivered over 24,000 meals to children across this city and provided students with enrichment activities to ensure that continued learning opportunities were available. These recent events demonstrate that the school district is essential in protecting all children in the city of Lynchburg. The rapid response of LCS School Nutrition with the support of LCS Transportation and so many faculty and staff volunteers was nothing short of spectacular. This current crisis demonstrates the critical need for a strong public school district, with competency across all departments, and the tremendous impact a school system has on a community.

In the best of times, our public schools are charged with providing a robust education to all students to prepare them to enter the workforce and enhance the economic health for our community. In the worst of times, the public schools are a critical source of continuity and services to our children, made ever more vital when our community is stressed. And in all times, our public schools are instrumental in meeting the intellectual, physical, emotional, and nutritional needs of our children.

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We acknowledge that there will likely be tough financial times ahead. In light of all of the roles that our public schools play in our city, for those who are enrolled as well as for those who are not, we ask that you preserve what you can of the Lynchburg City Schools' budget request.

Thank you for your consideration and service, especially during these challenging times. Most Sincerely, Kevin G. Smith, President-Lynchburg City Schools Education Foundation and Chief Legal Counsel-Genworth; Steven Lobb, Chair-Lynchburg City Schools Education Foundation Advocacy Committee and Senior Counsel-Framatome and Jodi K. Gillette, Executive Director, Lynchburg City Schools Education Foundation."

// An email from Jennifer Wills: "I'm writing to support funding for Parks & Rec. While I support all of their budget requests, I'm writing to specifically ask that you provide funding for the Blackwater Creek Trail. The increase in traffic during this time has been significant. In nearly 6 years of living near the trail and exercising there on a regular basis, I have never seen as many people as I do now. Parks & Rec will need funding to repair the bridges so that visitors can enjoy the trail system. This will also allow visitors to spread out over more space rather than just staying on the paved trail and it will allow Parks & Rec to continue to maintain and provide this vital service. Thank you."

// An email from Geoffrey Wertz: "Dear City Council, I am so proud of the City of Lynchburg's efforts to make and maintain our beautiful parks. I volunteer as often as possible to help with the trail clean ups and enjoy both the camaraderie of the volunteers and our beautification results. As such, I am sending this email to provide my support fund the repair of the three bridges on the Creekside trail. This would restore 2 miles of the BWC trail system. Thanks for your consideration."

// An email from Viki Gossen: "Lynchburg's trail system, with the forested areas and Blackwater creek providing natural experiences from an urban downtown area, makes Lynchburg unique from other cities. After the flooding, nearby residents and organizations pulled together with Lynchburg Parks and Rec to recover as much access to the trails as possible, because it means so much to all of us. The trails and the community that support the trails give me the feeling of being at home, and it is where I go for exercise and relaxation. Visitors are always surprised, as I initially was, that Lynchburg has this amazing trail system accessible from the city and many neighborhoods.

Please fund the bridges on Creekside Trail. The city and community have done a lot of work for the trails but it's been a long time since that flood and we still can't walk through that area of the trail system. Bridges are always the place to stop and take pictures and enjoy the views of the valley. They bring value to the city beyond what can be quantified. Thank you."

// An email from Tim Miles, Chairman, Friends of Lynchburg Parks & Recreation: "We are writing to encourage City Council to fully fund the Department of Parks and Recreation's operating budget requests for FY2021 and the capital improvement request for FY2021-25.

As we all know, Lynchburg has an excellent park system and a vibrant Parks and Recreation Department that provides critical resources which helps make Lynchburg a great place to live.

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One area, of particular interest, is the CIP funding to replace the three bridges on the Creekside Trail damaged during the Blackwater Creek flooding. Parks and Recreation has done an excellent job of repairing the trail and re-opening the majority of the trail system. The re-opening of the final two mile section depends on the replacement of the three bridges. Thank you for your service and continued support.”

// An email from William Reynolds: “My family and I have been using the trail system in the City for over 30 years. The trails have provided quality time for our family to exercise and bond together. Our community is fortunate to have such great trails available to use.

// An email from Myles Jackson: As a user of our trail system and believer that it is part of what the City offers that brings folks to Lynchburg. Thus, I would like to recommend that council support funding for the following two projects: 1: CIP funding for 3 bridges on the Creek Side trail. This not only opens 2 more miles of trails, but would eliminate a possible safety hazard. 2: Funding an Assessment/Master Plan. This has not been done in 21 years. I don't understand how the system can work efficiently and financially responsible without a Plan. Thank You.”

August 2018 flood was an unfortunate natural disaster that claimed a number of bridges along the Creekside Trail. I have volunteered to help with cleanup efforts. I strongly support funding to rebuild the bridges to allow access to the miles of trails still closed from the flood. Thank you.”

// An email from Sherwood Newton: “To all members of Lynchburg City Council, Thank you for allowing me to voice my concern by email. My name is Sherwood Newton, 76 year old male, homeowner at 1913 Gaymoor Terrace. My concern is the proposal for an overhaul of the residential trash collection process. I do not think a flat monthly rate of \$15.02 would be an equal tax. Should the homeowner who puts out 1 small trash cart once a month, at most, be charged the same as a homeowner who puts out 2 large trash carts each and every week? Please consider basing the monthly rate on the size and number of trash carts a property owner has. Thanking you in advance for your consideration of my concern.”

// An email from Jack McCarthy: “Please don't cut Economic Development.”

// An email from Ryan McEntire: “Dear Council Members, Please do not cut economic funding out of the budget. These funds are critical to sustaining and growing the tax base of our wonderful City. We need all the efforts to attract, retain and encourage business growth that we can get. I appreciate your consideration.”

// An email from William Cook: “Dear City Council, Please do not cut funding to business development. Thanks.”

// An email from Robert O'Brian: “To whom it may concern, Please do not cut economic development money out of the budget. Best regards.”

// An email from Mac McWane: “Lynchburg City Council Members, Economic development is a fundamental tenet of every prosperous city in the world. Fortunately for us, we live in a country where dollars invested in economic development can be put to work in a market economy leading to exponential growth and prosperity for future

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generations. A brighter tomorrow for the City of Lynchburg is contingent on this council's decision to invest human resources and money now.

While I think Lynchburg is a wonderful place to live and raise a family, we are far from where we need to be in attracting and growing the best businesses through investment in infrastructure and an increased focus on cultivating and retaining the brightest minds. Businesses and the tax revenue they provide are what drives a city forward, pulling individuals out of poverty and raising the standards of living.

To cut investment in economic development now is to sow the seeds for economic disparity in the future. Unless each member of this council is willing to sign their name to such a bleak future for this city, I urge you not to cut investment in economic development. Regards."

// An email from Trudy Phillips: "I would like to voice support for the Parks and Recreation budget request. I am one of many volunteers from the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club that help re-establish the Creekside trail after the flood a few years ago. In order to make use of our work, the bridges along this section of trail need to be rebuilt. I am writing this just as an individual.

The trails throughout the City of Lynchburg are enjoyed by many residents, even now during the current health crisis. Our property borders Ivy Creek and Peaks View Park. The many users can be heard every day."

// An email from Ed Craighill: "City Council Members; It is imperative that we invest in our city and region and fund our Economic Development Program. Please do not cut economic development money out of the budget. This would not be a good business decision, as we need to grow, increasing jobs and all of the other positives that come along with growth. Funding our economic development program should be done on a sustained basis every year. Cutting money out would be like cutting key and critical sales away from companies. I support and my company supports the people who support Economic Development Funding, which is vital to our future. Sincerely."

// An email from Dylan Schumaker: "City Council Members, I am writing to advocate for two underfunded programs within the Lynchburg Parks and Recreation Department for the city. I am advocating for CIP funding for the three bridges on the Creekside Trail and for additional funding of \$20,000 to continue offering internal special events i.e., Egg Roll, Movies in the Park, and The Celebration of Holiday Lights. I know the budget for 2021 will be under close scrutiny because of the economic effects, both current and future, related to the COVID-19 virus. However, The allocation of funds for the Creekside Trail and special events provide both qualitative and intrinsic value to every citizen of Lynchburg. I utilize the Blackwater Creek Trail System regularly for exercise and mental stability. The rebuilding for the Creekside Trail bridges will allow for people to enjoy nature and stay physically and mentally healthy. In these times of uncertainty, an asset for people to use for mental and physical health is crucial for the future of Lynchburg.

Additionally, I have attended the movies in the park and the celebration of holiday lights in years past and was deeply saddened by their cancellations this past year due to budget constraints. The events allow for safe and

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wholesome social interactions to take place. Additionally, the events allow for a strong sense of community to proliferate. Finally, both these underfunded projects will provide the tools essential for the staff at Lynchburg Parks and Recreation to fulfill their mission statement, which is to contribute to a healthy, active, and educated community, providing stewardship and management of parklands, trails and civic facilities and creating opportunities for all people to participate in a rich variety of recreational activities. Regards.”

// A phone call from Larry Bassett: He advocated for Council to pay its employees a living wage. We hear a lot about helping those in poverty in the City of Lynchburg and he would encourage Council to take this into consideration during its budget deliberations.

// A phone call from James Camm: He stated that he is the Executive Director for One Community/One Voice. They work hand in hand with the police department and he gave several examples of how they are involved in community engagement. He would like to see them increase the police department staffing and would encourage them to continue supporting the building of the new police department building.

// There were no other phone calls, emails or speakers and the Mayor closed the public hearing portion of the hearing. Councilmember Perrow thanked the Clerk of Council and other City staff for putting together all the technology needs for this meeting and handling them so smoothly.

// In the matter of Budget, Council conducted a public hearing regarding the proposed adoption by City Council of an ordinance to adjust the Water and Sewer Rates effective for bills rendered on or after July 1, 2020. The proposed amounts of increase are as follows: Sewer Volume and Sewer Only Rate: Volume charge per hcf of consumption from \$6.02 up to \$6.14 (or a 2.0% increase); accounts deemed “sewer only” monthly rate from \$48.51 to \$49.35 (or a 1.7% increase); Sewer Surcharges: BOD charge per 100 lbs from \$24.46 to \$26.30 (or a 7.5% increase); TSS charge per 100 lbs from \$27.66 to \$28.50 (or a 3.0% increase). Sections 15.2-2109 and 15.2-2119 of the Code of Virginia permit enactment of such proposed increases.

Mr. Tim Mitchell gave Council an overview of the issue. There has not been an increase in fees since 2017. For the first time in decades our rates are below the state average. Our average bill for CSO fees for a household is 23 percent lower than the statewide average. One of the reasons for the increase is that a CSO consent order says that the sewer fee needs to be 1.25% of the median household income. By the time we submit our report in December 2021, staff anticipates that we will be out of compliance with that criteria. CSO programs are getting a lot of attention in the General Assembly right now. We will soon be the only CSO locality in the state and we want to complete our program before the goals posts move again and might cause scrutiny for the City due to noncompliance. The increases are also needed to continue to meet our debt coverage requirements.

He explained that we have customers that are sewer only customers. Since they are not connected to a meter, that fee is a mathematical calculation. About a 1.7% increase is proposed for those customers. They are also proposing that the surcharges for high strength waste increase to more closely recover our actual cost of service.

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The Total Suspended Solids fee is currently undercharged by approximately 16 percent. These charges impact about 15 businesses in Lynchburg, most of which would see about a \$100 increase. A few would see about a \$500 increase.

// There were no speakers either in favor or in opposed. There were also no phone calls or emails. Mayor Tweedy closed the public hearing.

// Councilmember Wright noted that it will be hard for them to justify these increases to the community at this particular time. He asked Mr. Mitchell what the consequences will be if we do not take this action. Mr. Mitchell acknowledged the median income might change because of the current conditions by the time they turn in their report. Their concern is that the City will be in noncompliance that might result in additional action by the General Assembly to make sure they are in compliance and complete the program in a certain period of time. Right now we have a very good consent order that is financially driven. We only fund it as we can afford to based on the financial criteria in the order. If the General Assembly were to impose a timeline, it would place an undue burden on our citizens.

Councilmember Wright asked him to explain to everyone what the consent order is and the obligation it places on the City. Mr. Mitchell said the thing that impacts citizens the most is that our average annual sewer bill for a customer using the normal amount of water has to be 1.25% of the median household income. The intent of this rate increase is to keep it above the minimum required by the consent order. Because we have had no rate increases in four years, we have gotten very close to that threshold and they are concerned that if median household incomes increase at all, we will be in noncompliance. The consequence of that would be that we would have to complete our program within a certain time period. We would have to spend money sooner, which would result in higher rate increases than the two percent now. The impact to the average household from the proposed two percent increase will be about \$0.82 a month.

Councilmember Nelson thanked him for that explanation as he had a number of phone calls from citizens asking why they were raising the rates on anything in view of the current fiscal situation. He appreciates Mr. Mitchell's explanation that it is not necessarily what we want to do but it is what we have to do in order to preserve the terms of the consent order that was reached years ago.

Councilmember Perrow noted that he has been working under this consent order for almost his entire career as an engineer. It is a very favorable consent order that was updated a few years ago as far as the TMDL and it is still a very favorable agreement. What is it that Richmond and Alexandria have gone through and what effect has it had on their rates? Mr. Mitchell said he did not know exactly but could say that our rates are about half of Richmond's rate. We have spent the same amount of money on our CSO program as Richmond over the last thirty years for a much smaller system (around \$300 million) but our rates are about half of Richmond's. We have done an incredible job of seeking out grant funds, using our funds wisely and spending money where we have the most impact.

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Councilmember Perrow noted that if the state legislature took action against them because they fall below the threshold, we could be looking at ten to fifteen percent rate increases like they are seeing in Bedford right now. He also noted that we are fortunate to have such an excellent, protected water source and we need to continue investing in it.

Mr. Mitchell also asked to be able to remind the public not to flush wipes because they have had two sewer overflows this week. It is putting their crews in harm's way to have to deal with the unpleasantness of the wipes being flushed in the sewer system, as well as making it difficult to keep everything flowing properly. The ones advertised as flushable wipes are not breaking down in the sewer system and should not be flushed. He mentioned that the EPA is making the same recommendation. Councilmember Perrow noted that these wipes will eventually end up in the landfill, so there could be more cost for sewer processing and the rates could go up. Mayor Tweedy noted that Communications and Public Engagement has been doing some great public media ads regarding this topic.

// In the matter of Budget, Ms. Witt presented Council with a revised budget calendar for its consideration.

Councilmember Helgeson pointed out, as did Councilmember Nelson, that what is in the budget document will be vastly different. He would suggest they move the April 7th meeting and give staff a little more time to sharpen their pencils and come up with what is different because things are vastly different from what they were even last week. We are looking at a much longer time frame from the governor and he would like to give staff more time to come up with revised projections. Ms. Witt explained that for the General Fund, we just have a couple of sections to go through--external service providers and debt service. They will not change. Then we have Other Funds and there will probably not be a lot of changes with those either. Dr. Wodicka acknowledged that the budget will be very different but they wanted to give everyone an opportunity to present. Councilmember Perrow asked if the 7:30 p.m. regular meetings will still happen on the second and fourth Tuesdays and Ms. Witt indicated yes. Councilmember Perrow noted he may have some upcoming conflicts but that will depend on where they are in the coming weeks. He could use Microsoft Teams or Meet Me with the consent of his councilmembers.

Councilmember Nelson agreed with allowing the rest of the departments a chance to present their "game plan" but commented that this budget is based on a "game plan" that is never going to be played. It is not a bad idea to continue looking over the old "game plan" but the sooner we get into looking over the new "game plan" the better. Council was in consensus to keep the April 7th and not move it to April 21st.

// In the matter of Council, Dr. Wodicka gave an update on the City's actions regarding COVID-19. He commented that they are still in the preparedness phase because the pandemic is not an event such as a tornado that they can prepare for or react to and then go into a remediation phase. They are preparing but understanding that there may be much more grave consequences to come for our community as we go forward. We have activated our Emergency Operations Plan, as well as the Strategic Management Team. Of the 17 Emergency Services Functions (ESFs), we

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have activated nine. They believe they have the appropriate functions activated now and we are prepared to activate others as necessary. In answer to a question from Councilmember Nelson, Dr. Wodicka thinks they have activated more ESFs than they did during the College Lake Dam event because this is more of a community-wide event.

Councilmember Wright is concerned that the responses from various quarters of the community and responders are not all coordinated. We do not have a clearinghouse for community concerns. Dr. Wodicka explained that the health department is the primary communicator of information regarding the pandemic. City staff is certainly the face to a lot of people and they are talking about ways to improve their outreach efforts. Councilmember Wright asked if he thought there should be a task force that gathers health care providers and colleges and universities and businesses, nonprofits and faith communities, workers, our State legislative delegation and law enforcement. Dr. Wodicka acknowledged it was a good question. He would suggest that the folks Councilmember Wright has mentioned would be a large group to meet in a virtual roundtable discussion. Dr. Wodicka would suggest they ensure and do some more structuring so the City's communications is reaching out to these folks as much as we can. He is not sure an additional meeting would be helpful or even well received or attended. Councilmember Wright wants to ensure that these various people have input on what the City is doing and be allowed to raise ideas, issues and concerns. Dr. Wodicka thinks that is a fair statement and they can strategize on how best to do that.

Mayor Tweedy wants the community to understand that information is coming fast and furious in all areas. Those people that are responsible in their lane of work have begun to respond. The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance has been having Wednesdays at 1:00 and taking a topic each week. Virginia Career Works is working with Communications and Public Engagement to assist people with unemployment. She was also on a Mayor's call with Senator Warner. She would like the medical experts to stand in front. We have confidence in our medical system and our health department director.

Councilmember Perrow asked if what is being described is under the umbrella of the Emergency Operations Center. It exists for the coordination of information. Dr. Wodicka said that is certainly the intent of the EOP. He is hearing that they may need to iterate their strategy a little bit and make it even better than what we are doing. Councilmember Wright thinks that they would all be able to say at the end of the day that they did everything they could and overreacted and overdid it. At the end of the day, there is a lot at stake. He knows they are all working very hard and he thanks them very much.

Councilmember Nelson appreciates what all the staff and citizens and moving parts are and have been doing. He thinks the voice that needs to come from the chamber tonight is that everyone in Central Virginia, if they care about our future, needs to take very seriously the very simple things we can do to keep ourselves and others safe. We are not like New York City with large congregations of people on top of each other having to pass shoulder to shoulder but things could escalate quickly if we do not take this seriously.

Vice Mayor Dolan said the City's website is a great source for solid information.

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Councilmember Nelson commented he is greatly appreciative of all the efforts throughout Lynchburg. Some were not listening closely at first but he is glad to see they have changed their perspectives and done things to get on the team. We do have to work as a team and everyone is important and any weak link can lead to the downfall of a neighborhood or a business or a community. We need to be focused and it is not going to be a short-term effort, so we have to develop good habits and maintain those habits.

Councilmember Wright agreed that we are all in this together so we should do the basics that we have been told to do.

Councilmember Wilder wanted to thank all our first responders, City staff and our citizens for working together to get through this. It is a challenging process so we need to continue to pray together and work hard together and we will survive together.

Councilmember Perrow noted this is a really challenging time for everyone. People are scared and there is a lot of uncertainty. American has come together time and time again in the past and we work hard and we beat it. We will beat this thing. It will take time. We are going to have losses but we need to not be paralyzed by fear. We need to think rationally and follow the guidelines of the CDC and health department and we will work through this. It is a matter of time and patience and will. We will get through it and we have the willpower to do it. He wants to encourage all of our citizens we all have challenges and obstacles in our lives. This is possibly this generation's challenge and obstacle.

Councilmember Helgeson commented that we have a medical crisis but we have a coming economic crisis. We have had 3 million people laid off in a week. We have thriving and vibrant restaurants that have completely closed or have laid off 90 percent of their employees. When we look at the numbers that are coming forward as a City, he hopes they can reboot because he has been hearing from businesses that have had to make tough decisions and lay off their friends. They have said that they really appreciate the deferment but what they really need is a lesser burden. He thinks they need to take this opportunity to regroup and take less of a burden and focus on what we need to do. We need to make sure our community is safe and we need to say that we are not going to furlough public safety. We may furlough other departments because we have different levels of need. We also need our public works employees. He wants them to take this opportunity to assure the public that we are doing the best we can to streamline the burden on them. We do not want to add another burden on them by the cost of government. We want to be there to help and do what the public demands. We have to prepare for both the medical crisis and the economic crisis. Hopefully we will have cool heads and rational thoughts and have a steady hand that says we are going to come together. We are not going to blame anyone. We are not going to attack employers and other folks.

Vice Mayor Dolan commented that all her colleagues have made valid points and she appreciates all their comments. This is an extraordinary time for our community, our country and our world. It takes extraordinary measures by all of us. We need to listen to what the CDC has to say so we can protect all those on the front lines.

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We need to keep them safe by keeping ourselves safe.

Mayor Tweedy commented that the budget process is challenging. No one anticipated this and it is unprecedented. She would like each Councilmember to look at what potentially will be our prioritization after we come through this. We hope to be Lynchburg calm, Lynchburg hopeful and Lynchburg resilient. Businesses will come back and be able to hire employees. We will be able to have some semblance of normalcy again. We have talked about services and positions and how to better utilize technology. We have talked about the quality of life that we want and education and economic development. We need to still have vision for this City to make the hard decisions. We will come out of this and there will hopefully be growth and success on the other side. We should not be thinking about blindly cutting departments, functions, services and operations because when we get back to the other side, citizens are going to want those things. We ask all our citizens to be hopeful and adhere to all the guidelines and the governor's orders. Stay home right now as much as possible and practice self- responsibility. // The Mayor also reminded them of the census. The 2020 Census is very important and we need everyone's participation, please. You should have received an invitation to complete the 2020 Census in the mail with your Census ID included. It has never been easier to complete the Census and respond on your own online, by phone or by mail – all without having to meet a census taker!

We are all legally obligated to participate in the Census and your personal information cannot be shared with anyone outside of the US Census Bureau. School lunches, highway plans, support for families in need, Pell grants, public transit and several other vital aspects of our lives are impacted by Census numbers, which only occurs every ten (10) years! With the negative effect the COVID-19 pandemic may have on the City's revenues, it is more important than ever before that we have a complete count to ensure that Lynchburg receives the federal and state funding it needs.

So please take a few minutes to complete the Census online at: 2020census.gov, by phone at 1-844-330-2020, or mail in your questionnaire!

// The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

Clerk of Council