

RESOLUTION 15-20

A RESOLUTION DECLARING A LOCAL EMERGENCY REGARDING COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019)

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that has spread into numerous countries throughout the world, including the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the virus may cause serious illness or death in certain cases, particularly for elderly and persons with underlying health conditions; and,

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, the Mesa County Emergency Operations Plan was activated in response to the emerging threat; and,

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (“WHO”) declared the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 a “global pandemic”, pushing the threat beyond the “global health emergency” it had announced in January; and,

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the Governor of the State of Colorado declared a state of emergency due to the presence of COVID-19 in Colorado; and,

WHEREAS, the Mesa County Public Health Department anticipates that, due to the contagiousness of the illness and the fact that travelers from around the world visit Grand Junction and Mesa County, that the City will see cases of the virus and its transmission within the community; and,

WHEREAS, the virus, and the various public health and safety recommendations issued in response to it, have resulted in a severe economic contraction, especially on travel, restaurants and other food and beverage businesses; and,

WHEREAS, as recently as four weeks ago, economic conditions were very strong with national, state and local unemployment at record low levels, sustained wages/wage growth, and manifest optimism among businesses and across the economy; and,

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has caused or will likely cause loss of jobs and unprecedented economic impacts, including the possibility of recession; and,

WHEREAS, while Grand Junction has a long and strong history of resiliency, there is a very real risk of families losing income and businesses of all sizes experiencing significant economic injury due to COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, §42.02.780 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code authorizes the Mayor to declare a State of Emergency when it appears that the general health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the City are threatened; and,

WHEREAS, because of the risk to the personal health and economic welfare to the persons and businesses of the City, Mesa County, and the Greater Grand Valley community, and in light of the ongoing risk to public health, safety and economic security, at this time, it is necessary to declare a Local State of Emergency.

NOW THEREFORE, THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO BY AND WITH THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN HIM BY THE CITY COUNCIL DOES HEREBY MAKE THE FOLLOWING DECLARATIONS:

1) The presence of COVID-19 in Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction constitutes a local state of emergency, as defined in §42.02.250 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code, and a state of emergency shall be declared to be in effect.

2) By and with this declaration the City Council ratifies the City's Emergency Operations Plan and implementation thereof which authorizes a systematic approach to respond to changes in the COVID-19 situation. With the Plan implementation, as well as incorporation, adoption and reflection of the recommendations of our Federal, State, and local health departments and other emergency service personnel and organizations, the City will respond to the emergency conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

3) Actions to be taken by the City in response to the economic emergency attendant to the pandemic include those within the administrative authority of the City Manager, which includes but is not limited to the promulgation of regulations deemed necessary by the City Manager to protect life and property and preserve critical resources. The first such regulation will be to suspend procedures in the Grand Junction Municipal Code/Zoning and Development Code requiring neighborhood meetings for development applications. During the declared emergency strict compliance with that requirement would result in exposure to and possible spread of the which would prevent, hinder, or delay responding to and/or recovery from the emergency. As well, the City Manager will evaluate adjustment to wastewater rates for restaurants, hotels and motels, and as appropriate reduce penalties and interest applicable to delinquent payment of sales, use and/or lodging tax, so long as returns are timely and accurately filed, and process emergency refunds as provided by City ordinance. Additionally, the City Manager will review and as appropriate access Federal and State programs and funds available to mitigate the emergency.

4) Further, it is hereby ordered that this Declaration be given prompt and general publicity and that a copy be filed promptly with the Grand Junction City Clerk and with the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

This declaration shall be made effective immediately on March 23, 2020 at 7 p.m. and shall be effective for 30 days and may be extended or terminated by subsequent action of the City Council.

DECLARED AND ADOPTED on this 23rd day of March, 2020.



CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Taggart", is written over a horizontal line.

Rick Taggart
President of the City Council and Mayor
City of Grand Junction

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wanda Winkelmann", is written over a horizontal line.

Wanda Winkelmann
City Clerk