

**Special Common Council  
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

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1 The Special Meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May  
2 19, 2020. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

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4 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Mayor Kim Smith, Ald. Tom Smith,  
5 Ald. Dan Stevens, Ald. Steven Nott, Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Diane Wulf

6  
7 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, City Clerk Cari Burmaster, City Attorney  
8 Amanda Jackson, Human Resource Director Hope Burchell, Parks and Recreation Director Dan  
9 Wick, Financial Services Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, Police Chief Charles Ashbeck, Asst.  
10 Fire Chief Troy Guide, Planning Manager Katie Aspenson, City Engineer Jarrod Holter,  
11 Municipal Court Judge Mark Huesmann

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13

14 **Item 2 – Approve of minutes from previous meeting**

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16 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ald. Wulf, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting  
17 as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

18

19 On voice vote, motion carried.

20

21 **Item 3 – Public Input: (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

22

23 Mayor K. Smith called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that  
24 portion of the meeting.

25

26 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

27

28 **Item 4 – Ratification of Mayoral Proclamation for Emergency Order No. 5**

29

30 Mayor K. Smith noted the proclamation was issued Thursday, May 14 and said it addresses a  
31 program for opening the playgrounds, and Parks and Recreation. The proclamation also  
32 addresses a plan for opening City of Onalaska buildings, and it reverses Emergency Order No. 4,  
33 which addressed Direct Seller Permits.

34

35 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. T. Smith, to approve ratification of Mayoral Proclamation  
36 for Emergency Order No. 5.

37

38 Ald. Nott said he believes this proclamation is “a great move in the right direction,” and that he  
39 also applauds city staff for identifying objective ways to make playgrounds safer, and also to  
40 open up city parks. Ald. Nott addressed the wording “when it is safe” and “as soon as safely  
41 possible” in the proclamation, stating he believes they are very subjective criteria. Ald. Nott  
42 asked what criteria will be utilized, and also who will determine that.

Reviewed 5/21/2020 by Cari Burmaster

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43  
44 Mayor K. Smith told Ald. Nott she believes the order was intentionally worded that way, and she  
45 noted the Council will discuss reopening City Hall to the public under Item No. 6. Mayor K.  
46 Smith said she anticipates that City Administrator Rindfleisch and city staff will lead those  
47 discussions, “and communicated and approved by the Council, I guess was my vision for this.”  
48

49 On voice vote, motion carried.  
50

51 **Item 5 – Discussion and action on Mayoral Proclamation for Emergency Order No. 1**  
52

53 Ald. Nott said he believes this also is a subset of the 20-2020 Emergency Declaration as well,  
54 and he stated, “I’m starting to question the validity of some of these. I will hold off a lot of the  
55 conversation because I think a lot of it will be covered when we talk about the opening of City  
56 Hall as well. But I think it’s very important that as our city and its citizens begin to return to  
57 normalcy that the government needs to as well. Along with that, I think that we’re approaching a  
58 time where we need to really consider when the emergency order and all the proclamations that  
59 have made temporary adjustments to how we do business is no longer valid, and we need to go  
60 back to business as usual. That doesn’t mean we don’t have to have controls under business as  
61 usual that are different than before, such as anyone who is more comfortable wearing a mask,  
62 obviously they could do that at work. That’s fine. But I think that we really need to start moving  
63 in the direction of, the city needs to get back to full functioning again. Again, I think that after  
64 we listen to what Eric has to say, we’ll probably have a better idea of how to do that, and how  
65 quickly to do that.”  
66

67 Mayor K. Smith asked, “We’re not taking action on this item at this time?”  
68

69 Ald. Nott said, “I know that I was requesting some of this. But when I take a look at the  
70 discussion on the reopening of City Hall to the public and I read the memo that Eric sent, I think  
71 that’s probably the right portion to have these discussions on what my concern was. He’s going  
72 to cover quite a bit of it, and I have some other additional concerns, which I’ll bring up. He has  
73 some very good, objective criteria inside of his memo that addresses some of my concerns. I  
74 will hold off until then.”  
75

76 **Item 6 – Discussion of reopening City Hall to the public**  
77

78 City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to the global email he had sent to Mayor K. Smith, the  
79 Council, and city employees, and he noted the email includes the following three points:  
80

- 81 • **TRAVEL:** Travel is being opened up to more parts of Wisconsin, with the exceptions  
82 being non-essential travel to “hot spots” such as Dane County, southeast Wisconsin  
83 around Milwaukee, and Brown County.

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- 84       • **RECALL OF STAFF:** At this time, each department head will be responsible for  
85       recalling his/her staff to work at City Hall or other city facilities according to their unique  
86       needs. City Administrator Rindfleisch said staff has identified potential efficiencies and  
87       new ways of conducting some business, citing inspections as an example of something  
88       that in some cases might be able to be done remotely.  
89       • **REOPENING:** The overall principle for reopening City Hall and other facilities to the  
90       public is doing it only when safe for staff and the public.

91

92       Based on employee input given to the department heads and via a survey, City Administrator  
93       Rindfleisch created three standards upon which being met lead to reopening city buildings to the  
94       public:

95

- 96       1. **SAFE EMPLOYEES:** Employees must be able to work safely. Employees have given  
97       information to their department heads as to the materials they believe they need in order  
98       to do so. These include facemasks, hand sanitizer, wipes, and gloves.  
99       2. **SAFE BUILDING:** This is the standard that could take the longest to achieve, but the  
100       city will work as rapidly as possible to accomplish the physical changes to the building  
101       that are necessary to be safe. Examples include permanent Plexiglas barriers at counters,  
102       social distancing markers on the floors, separation and distancing of work places,  
103       possible hands-free door openers for ADA requirements, and new disinfecting equipment  
104       to keep facilities clean.  
105       3. **SAFE PUBLIC:** Before opening each building, a plan will be instituted that could  
106       change the public experience to keep them safe as well. Examples are possible changed  
107       or reduced hours, designed unidirectional traffic flow through city buildings, and  
108       restricted access to areas of city facilities.

109

110       City Administrator Rindfleisch referred to his memo and said, “The work itself will dictate the  
111       opening date. We’re not going to create a false opening date. I want to assure the employees it’s  
112       not my goal to open up as a race to be the first one to open. The City of La Crosse is looking at  
113       opening up on [May] 26. The County of La Crosse has no plans of looking at reopening right  
114       now. I think we can probably be in the middle and look at a summer opening to facilities in a  
115       way that the public mostly remembers how to interact and transact and do business with City  
116       Hall. And as Alder Nott had mentioned, there may be some changes that will be impacting that  
117       as well.” City Administrator addressed the “Safe Building” step, noting it is the step that he  
118       anticipates will take the longest to achieve and telling councilmembers materials potentially  
119       could arrive in two weeks. City Administrator Rindfleisch said the goal would be to install the  
120       Plexiglas barriers at every counter in City Hall a few days after the materials arrive.

121

122       Ald. Stevens asked City Administrator Rindfleisch if he anticipates City Hall reopening within  
123       weeks or months when he says the facility will reopen this summer.

124

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125 City Administrator Rindfleisch said he would anticipate weeks versus months.

126

127 Ald. Nott said, “First off, I’m concerned. This is not just a local issue; it’s certainly one that  
128 probably extends nationwide. Somehow there have been decisions made that we’re changing the  
129 purpose of the restrictions and the reduced services from flattening the curve and making sure  
130 hospitals could handle a surge in demand for capacity, to now it is focusing on making sure that  
131 we are all safe. It sounds nice, but there are challenges to that because based on who and how  
132 we define ‘safe,’ ‘safe’ very well can easily mean never return back to normal. That is quite a  
133 move of the goalposts from where this all began. The military refers to this phenomenon as  
134 ‘mission creep,’ and it’s what results in our quagmires in some of our more nasty histories. I’m  
135 very concerned that we are going to enter into a cultural or a governmental quagmire if we focus  
136 on ‘safe’ versus what the original intent was and how we meet that, and then how we can  
137 objectively and not subjectively have criteria for how we can improve some of the safety for our  
138 government employees in this case for what Eric was saying.

139

140 He has some great things in there. The Plexiglas, I think that’s a great idea – not just for  
141 avoiding any type of exposure to viruses, but I think it’s also a good safety measure. There’s a  
142 lot of that in there. But any time we have ‘until it’s safe,’ it’s so subjective. And on top of that,  
143 we’re relying a lot just based on conversations I’ve had with a lot of the staff and what I’m  
144 seeing in some of the enclosures here with the agenda, that we rely a lot on the [La Crosse]  
145 County Health Department, and rightfully so. But they aren’t the be-all, end-all, either. In fact, I  
146 think it’s pretty clear to me that sometimes they have very good statistical analysis, and  
147 sometimes they don’t. Case in point: the travel restrictions for where the hot spots are. Now,  
148 when I looked at what they have for the counties, spot on. They really did a good job. Those are  
149 the counties where the hot spots clearly are. And by the way, what I’m using for when I look at  
150 where hot spots are, I’m looking at a National Public Radio numbers map to include a per capita  
151 map from the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, and also a New York Times density map from the 16<sup>th</sup> of May.

152 Again, I know that’s three days old now, but that’s what I have to go off because I wanted an  
153 apples-to-apples, 16<sup>th</sup> of May, 16<sup>th</sup> of May. I don’t want to be using older and newer type of data  
154 because now I’d be mixing things up. But based on that, when you look at the states with what  
155 the health department is telling us, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10, 11 of the  
156 states that they have on the hot spots map actually have anywhere from a 3.1 percent to a 68.2  
157 percent less per capita rate of infections than Wisconsin. Then when you look at the 13 that are  
158 not on the hot spots, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven of them have anywhere from a 14.9  
159 percent to a 149 percent greater per capita incidents of the disease. Some of the statistical  
160 analysis that’s going on here that’s going to be driving our decisions I think really needs to be  
161 tightened up.

162

163 Then on top of that, this is clearly not a state issue. This is a metropolitan issue. When you look  
164 at these density maps, it’s exceedingly clear that shown within the counties that they reported  
165 with Brown, Dane, Kenosha and so forth that are on this list, those are basically where Madison,  
166 Milwaukee, Green Bay, Racine, Kenosha – that’s where they are. And they’ve recognized that

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167 within the state. But then when it's going outside the state – and the one I picked here was South  
168 Dakota, just for a quick analysis – 80.2 percent of all the state cases in South Dakota, which is on  
169 the hot spot list, are from Sioux Falls in Minnehaha County. Eighty point two percent, but they  
170 only make up 28 percent of the state population. And what's not in there, because they have  
171 almost no cases or very low cases, are Rapid City, Aberdeen, and even Custer County where  
172 Custer State Park is, which is going to be a destination for people over the summer. And they're  
173 lumped in with, that's a hot spot. Custer County, where Custer State Park is, doesn't have a  
174 single case, and it's lumped in with a hot spot in South Dakota. What I'm trying to get here is  
175 that we have to be very careful when we're listening to statistics because the health department  
176 has a skill set that is specific to health. I don't know if they have a professional statistician on  
177 their staff or not. If not, I would encourage them that they would consider doing that because a  
178 lot of the numbers that are coming out and driving our decisions for into the future don't make  
179 sense to me at all.”

180

181 Ald. Wulf thanked city staff members for the work they have done during the shutdown over the  
182 last two months, and she said, “These are very trying, fluid times we've been through. Staff,  
183 administration, department heads ... it's been a juggling act. Day to day, it's constantly  
184 changing. As an elected official, I'm not at City Hall. I don't know what they've gone through,  
185 so I want to thank them for everything they've been doing, and for everything that I see it's been  
186 business as usual at the City of Onalaska. Even though our doors may be closed, work is still  
187 getting done. The City of Onalaska has a number of assets: buildings, equipment, land. But I  
188 see our biggest asset as our employees, and without them we have nothing. That is not  
189 something I pay lip service to.

190

191 Everything I read – whether it be city, state, county, or private companies – when the topic is  
192 reopened in these trying times, safety in the workforce and the public is usually the lead. I'm not  
193 insinuating that anyone here is placing any less importance on the safety of anyone, but that's  
194 personally what I'm going to lead with. Following up on what Eric mentioned earlier – he  
195 mentioned what La Crosse County's intention is, and [also] the City of La Crosse – I did reach  
196 out to four municipalities and governments. I figured if they were abutting municipalities, it  
197 would be nice to know, what are they doing? I talked to West Salem today, and they are opening  
198 next Tuesday, the 26<sup>th</sup>. They will be 100 percent open. They've made their Public Works  
199 building ... They'll have a makeshift Plexiglas for the front counter, [and] more cleaning. They  
200 have not gone to remote meetings because they just don't have the capabilities. And the City  
201 Administrator has made the sole decision to close, and then to reopen. The Village of Holmen is  
202 100 percent in support of the La Crosse County Health Department, and they have not made a  
203 plan to open facilities at this time. It may possibly be another month out or so before they even  
204 do that. They've been holding meetings in person. They've continued to do business, but in a  
205 controlled environment. And I believe just last Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> they made the decision to close  
206 the pool for the season.

207

208 The City of La Crosse, like Eric mentioned, they open next Tuesday. I know there are new

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209 protocols and operations in place. They're going to be limiting the number of accesses to their  
210 buildings, and I think their hours are going to be like Monday through Thursday from 8 [a.m.] to  
211 1 [p.m.]. Lastly, La Crosse County, like Eric mentioned, is having a 'Safer at Home' approach  
212 for their buildings. I talked with the County Chair today, Monica Kruse. They're trying to lead  
213 by example. The emergency order went into effect March 17, and it is in effect for 120 days.  
214 They're going with a phased-in approach."

215  
216 Ald. Wulf thanked City Administrator Rindfleisch for the memo he had sent out, and she said, "I  
217 am very supportive of a more phased-in approach. I think anything that we as elected [officials]  
218 can do to, number one, protect our employees and make them feel as comfortable as we can. I'll  
219 be honest: I don't know whether or not we're going to be able to make 100 percent of everyone  
220 feel the absolute most comfortable. I'm not singling anyone out because I haven't talked to  
221 anyone personally about this, but I think we need to do what we can to make people feel  
222 comfortable. I understand where Alderperson Nott is coming from. But I think at the end of the  
223 day, I look at the three-pronged approach that Eric has listed here – the Safe Employees, the Safe  
224 Building, and the Safe Public – [and] for me personally, that is the trend that I would be fully in  
225 support of."

226  
227 Ald. T. Smith said he appreciates City Administrator Rindfleisch's memo and his plan, stating he  
228 believes it is well thought-out. Ald. T. Smith said, "I think it makes us look at, we're not ready  
229 yet, but what can we do to get to those steps. Our employees are important, and I agree with  
230 you, Diane, that we do need to make sure that they feel comfortable in their roles and being safe.  
231 That's our employees, and our citizens, so it's definitely important. It's interesting because La  
232 Crosse is going to open next week, and I'm curious to see how that goes. We're not going to be  
233 the leading edge of that, but that's OK. This is a good example where we can see, how does it  
234 go, and learn from it. I think in this kind of situation, I think lessons learned is probably better  
235 than being the leading edge versus the bleeding edge. And I think in this kind of environment  
236 and the smaller organization we are ... Then you have West Salem, where everything is open.  
237 We're all neighbors. We can compare notes and learn from that. I'm the first person to agree  
238 with Steve that I think we need to open quickly. I think the goal of government is to be there for  
239 its citizens, but the citizens are also a little apprehensive right now. I think we all are. I support  
240 Eric's approach. I think I'd love to see us do it sooner than later. But I think the phased  
241 approach and looking at what our other communities are going to do over the next couple of  
242 weeks should give us a good example. I support the phased-in, conservative approach, but it  
243 can't drag on through the summer. We really do need to have it happen sooner than later. But it  
244 has to be intelligently thought out, and we all agree."

245  
246 Ald. Olson said he believes there is merit in Ald. Nott's comments, and that he also likes what  
247 Ald. T. Smith had just said. Ald. Olson said, "I agree that we need to make that sooner than  
248 later. It's time we take a look at what this country was founded on, and that's freedom. We need  
249 to get back to that as soon as we can."

250

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251 Ald. Stevens said he believes Ald. Nott's opening point was a good one, stating, "I think that  
252 moving toward opening is something that we should look at as a goal. I would be apprehensive  
253 to just open up the doors and let everybody come in. I think it would be problematic for staff,  
254 and it could cause potential problems with how interactions with the public would go. I think  
255 getting everybody back to work first is important, [as is] working the bugs out [and] imagining  
256 and running through scenarios how well you interact with the public. What do you do if  
257 somebody comes in and they could be aggressive and want to be more hands-on or too close  
258 with our staff than what we're comfortable with? I think we need a transition time to bridge  
259 through some of that. I would like to get everybody back to work first. Maybe we wait a week  
260 or two weeks. Eric and the department heads would have a better sense of how much time was  
261 enough time, but then use that as baby steps and we look for milestones like, are we actively  
262 doing what we need to be doing at this point? And how is this related to the current situation  
263 with COVID – can we accelerate this? Can we move it forward to the next step? Or if there's a  
264 spike, are we prepared to peel it back some? I think we need to identify what those milestones  
265 are and how we would make that directional change, if need be. It seems like Eric did a nice job  
266 laying out the groundwork for that.

267  
268 We need to open, but we need to be smart about it and be very calculating on how we do this.  
269 Finally, we have a different set of infrastructure and public than does West Salem or the County  
270 of La Crosse or the City of La Crosse or the State of Wisconsin. So while it's nice to look at  
271 what others are doing, ultimately what we really only care about is what works well for us. I  
272 think we need to almost every day ask ourselves the question, what is the next step? What is the  
273 situation on the outside, and how can we best manage this for both the public and the staff? We  
274 want to get to where we're open, but let's be smart about it."

275  
276 Mayor K. Smith noted that although the City of La Crosse is opening May 26, it is not  
277 completely opening its City Hall. Mayor K. Smith said it is her understanding only the lower  
278 level of City Hall will be open, and she also said the Village of Holmen is remaining closed  
279 because the structure of its City Hall is very open. Mayor K. Smith said, "Once somebody  
280 comes in, there's no way to restrict their flow and they don't know how to manage that at this  
281 point. They're working on developing that, just like Eric and the team are working on  
282 developing what it's going to look like at our City Hall."

283  
284 City Administrator Rindfleisch addressed the question of subjective versus objective, stating his  
285 goal always has been what works for the City of Onalaska and not following other standards  
286 created by others.

287  
288 Mayor K. Smith asked Amanda if any legal considerations have come to mind.

289  
290 Amanda said she believes the city is on "pretty stable ground," and that the city's decision on  
291 how it reopens its buildings is the city's decision at this point.

292

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293 Ald. Nott said, “Since we’re talking, and I brought it up about objective versus subjective, I’ll go  
294 out on a line and allow for an objective criteria that perhaps the city wants to bring to the [La  
295 Crosse] County Health Department because ultimately they would be the one who would have to  
296 be tracking those numbers. The milestone I would like to recommend is one that is actually  
297 based on ... I’m plagiarizing. It’s one of the main gauges that Texas is using, and that’s on a  
298 seven-day average of testing versus positive rate. We should be able to do that soon because the  
299 Omni Center is about to become a testing site with the National Guard. How that is measured is,  
300 it is not measured by the number of cases because, as I brought up at the [Parks, Recreation &  
301 Library Board] meeting [Monday], one of the potential fear factors that would be misleading is  
302 that if you increase testing you’re almost certainly going to find additional cases. That’s not  
303 necessarily meaningful. What’s meaningful as far as the statistics of it all is, how many positives  
304 are you getting versus how many tests you’re giving? And what’s happening to those positive  
305 rates over time? What you want to see is a declination on a trend analysis over time that the rate  
306 of positives are going down. That would indicate ... I would argue that your area or your region  
307 is becoming safer with this risk. I would be interested in a 10-day trend analysis, and if we can  
308 get a 10-day trend that shows it’s a downward trend, then it’s time to open, folks. And we can  
309 continue to do these other things and pursue them, but wait until all of them are done if the data  
310 is showing that we’re actually pretty good here, I think we should move.

311  
312 Again, I want to really emphasize this milestone I’m recommending would be a trend of 10 days.  
313 If there’s a spike and the trend is still down, that’s just a data set in time. I wrote some numbers  
314 down. On day one we get 10 positives, and then we get seven, then five ... I should say 10  
315 percent positive, then seven, then five, and then nine, then five, five, four, four, three ... You had  
316 that one nine spike, but the trend line would still be down. It was just one day you had a spike.  
317 It’s open for discussion, but it would give us a measurable criteria we could stand on. That’s that  
318 we’re going to get this testing, and if we can show a 10-day trend of downward motion of the  
319 testing versus the positive rate, then we need to open up.”

320  
321 Ald. Stevens said, “If we were to adhere to that sort of guidepost milestone, I’m curious as to, if  
322 moving the average went the other way and let’s say things started to spike seriously, what then?  
323 Do you close everything back down?”

324  
325 Ald. Nott told Ald. Stevens it would be up for discussion as it would show the city has a  
326 potential risk factor that is increasing if the positive rate is increasing rather than decreasing.  
327 Ald. Nott asked if the Council would be willing to consider utilizing a 10-day trend of downward  
328 motion as a milestone, noting it is measurable and stating he believes it is meaningful. Further,  
329 Ald. Nott said, “I think it’s something that you could stand on that’s reasonable as well.”

330  
331 Ald. T. Smith inquired about obtaining the data.

332  
333 Ald. Nott said La Crosse County likely would have to supply the data, and he told Ald. T. Smith  
334 La Crosse County officials would have to be willing to work with the city.

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335  
336 Ald. Stevens said, “I think at this point, I myself am more comfortable with sticking to the plan,  
337 maybe with some tweaking that the City Administrator has laid out. We’ll need some time for  
338 the data to come in from the county and the Omni Center testing before we can look at moving  
339 averages. It strikes that in three weeks we’ll have another Common Council meeting – hopefully  
340 in chambers – so I don’t know that I would recommend taking a specific action on a moving  
341 average guidepost at this point, but it’s food for thought for the next Council meeting [June 9].  
342 And in the interim, I think we should stick to the plan laid out by Eric.”  
343

344 Amanda said one of the reasons La Crosse County will be utilizing the Omni Center on Thursday  
345 as a testing site “is due to the fact that even though they say we have a certain level of testing  
346 capacity, there actually hasn’t been the expected number of tests being done that they would  
347 want.” Amanda asked Ald. Nott if that would be a factor in the moving average, and she said it  
348 is her understanding La Crosse County would like to be conducting “well over 100” tests per  
349 day. Amanda noted that currently is not happening in La Crosse County.  
350

351 Ald. Nott told Amanda he would have to defer to a professional statistician on what is the density  
352 of tests that would become statistically significant. Ald. Nott said that while he does not know  
353 the answer, he also would like to believe there are individuals either in La Crosse County or the  
354 State of Wisconsin who would have the answer. Ald. Nott said, “My recommendation on that as  
355 a milestone isn’t that we adopt it today [because] we don’t have the information. I’m with  
356 Alderman Stevens on this. Let’s continue to progress forward with our own \_\_\_\_ opening plan  
357 that Eric has outlined. But maybe by next time we meet we will have that data, and that would  
358 be something that we could consider. It would be up to the city to work with the county in order  
359 to collect this type of data.”  
360

361 Mayor K. Smith noted she had spoken earlier Tuesday with La Crosse County Health  
362 Department Director Jen Rombalski, and she told councilmembers Jen said the extra testing  
363 stations are crucial for obtaining more data. Mayor K. Smith said, “The health department, the  
364 professionals who are analyzing the data, they don’t know where on the curve we are because  
365 they do not have enough data to say, is it rising, is it falling, has it plateaued, is it doing  
366 anything? They don’t know. There was one day probably two weeks ago that we talked to her,  
367 and as far as I know there were only 17 people tested in our county. That isn’t enough  
368 information to make any kind of decision. Obviously since then there has been a big increase,  
369 and with these testing sites we’re getting even more data. I am very optimistic that by [the]  
370 Common Council [meeting] we’ll have a better picture of this in order to be able to make a wise  
371 decision.”  
372

373 Ald. Nott asked if the Council needs to make a motion on what City Administrator Rindfleisch  
374 has written.  
375

376 Amanda told the Council it is not necessary to make a motion regarding City Administrator  
Reviewed 5/21/2020 by Cari Burmaster

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10

377 Rindfleisch's memo and said, "It would just be if the Council wanted to pass a new policy, or if  
378 they wanted to draft a resolution to some effect related to that, they could do so."

379

380 Mayor K. Smith said that when she worded the most recent order, she had done it with the  
381 intention not to take a stand one way or the other, but rather to leave it open so that the city could  
382 continue to evaluate the data as it comes in "and make good decisions together." Mayor K.  
383 Smith said she appreciates the diversity of the Council and the different input she has received,  
384 stating she believes that is what helps the elected officials do a better job with representing and  
385 serving the community.

386

387 Ald. Stevens noted that Mayor K. Smith currently has executive authority, and he asked her what  
388 she believes is the best method to utilize in helping the city return to business as usual.

389

390 Mayor K. Smith said that perhaps both the public and the Common Council lose sight of the fact  
391 that it is business as usual for many individuals at City Hall, including City Administrator  
392 Rindfleisch, Amanda, the Police and Fire departments, and employees in the Inspection  
393 Department and the City Clerk's Office. Mayor K. Smith said, "It's more the physicality with  
394 the building at City Hall, and I think that the plan Eric has in place in conjunction with staff  
395 meets the concerts that we're having. Of course we want to be a leader, but this isn't a good time  
396 for us to be a leader. This is a time for us to be thoughtful about what we're doing, and to be  
397 looking around and paying attention to what's happening in other places. When we see good  
398 things happening, trying to model after it. We've all been working very closely together, and I  
399 support Eric's plan. I also support your comments.

400

401 I don't want it to drag out all summer, either. None of us do. But I also recognize that I don't  
402 think we should open City Hall to the public on the 26<sup>th</sup>. I think we need to get those barriers in  
403 place. We need to get the staff back to City Hall. Then when we do open the door to City Hall  
404 to the public, we need to have their access to City Hall restricted, at least in the initial phases.  
405 But I really want to see that data come back from the test site and see where we're at. I'm really  
406 interested to see that, and if it comes back that things are going well, then I think the Council  
407 meeting is going to be a really good place for another discussion about where we're at, and what  
408 the next best steps are."

409

410 **Item 7 – Discussion and recommendation on Aquatic Center Closure**

411

412 Ald. Nott, who represents the Common Council on the Parks, Recreation & Library Board, told  
413 the Council the board had met Monday evening, and he said Parks and Recreation Director Dan  
414 Wick had provided an updated costing model based upon some of the changes in the guidance  
415 that allowed the capacity at the Aquatic Center to increase from 50 to 148 people in the pool at a  
416 time. Ald. Nott said there still was a shortfall of funds that was not insignificant, and he told the  
417 Council the board had voted 6-1 to recommend that the Aquatic Center remain closed for the  
418 2020 season.

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11

419  
420 Motion by Ald. Nott, second by Ald. Stevens, to close the Aquatic Center for the 2020 season.  
421

422 Ald. Nott said, "I'm a big believer in the process that our Republic is founded on. And whether  
423 or not I agree with the decision or not has no bearing on whether or not I can support that  
424 decision. The process [Monday] at the board worked. We had our discussions. Yes, I disagreed  
425 with some of that. But in the end, that's irrelevant. It's about the process of democracy. We had  
426 the discussions, we had the vote, and I can support what the Parks and Rec Board decided is the  
427 bottom line. It doesn't matter if during the discussion I agreed with where it was going or not."  
428

429 Ald. T. Smith said that although he does not like seeing the Aquatic Center closed for the 2020  
430 season, he supports not opening the facility this summer. Ald. T. Smith said, "I just think that  
431 it's so late in the year now to have Dan and his staff scramble to get employees, and to go up  
432 with all the red tape that would be required, [and] the cost it's going to cost us. ... We've always  
433 struggled in the Parks and Rec [Department] with budget cuts. Sometimes it always seems like a  
434 lot of times that area always gets a lot of cuts in the budget when there's not enough money. I  
435 would rather not spend that kind of money, and hopefully we'll be in a better position next year  
436 to open with a bigger and better approach to the pool."  
437

438 Mayor K. Smith noted the Aquatic Center's closure allows the city to complete some of the  
439 renovations that were scheduled for later this year, perhaps on an earlier timeline that will be  
440 cost-friendly to the city.

441  
442 On voice vote, motion carried.

443  
444 **Adjournment**

445  
446 Motion by Ald. Wulf, second by Ald. T. Smith, to adjourn at 7:50 p.m.  
447

448 On voice vote, motion carried.  
449

450  
451 Recorded by:

452  
453 Kirk Bey