

March 30, 2020

The Graham City Council met for a SPECIAL EMERGENCY MEETING SESSION in the Council Chambers at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2020 with the following members present:

MEMBERS: Mayor: Neal Blanton  
 Mayor Pro-Tem: Darby Brockway  
 Council Member: Brint Albritton  
 Lee Boyd  
 Kyle Peavy  
 City Manager: Brandon Anderson  
 City Attorney: Dan De La Cruz

VISITORS: Young County Judge John Bullock, Thomas Wallner (The Graham Leader), and Tim Walker (Y110.5 FM Positive Radio).

ORDER: Mayor Neal Blanton called the meeting to order and announced a quorum is present.

**DISCUSS, CONSIDER, AND ACT ON ORDINANCE #1095 ISSUING A SHELTER IN PLACE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY:**

Mayor Blanton said, "Brandon Anderson, Graham City Manager, Young County Judge, John Charles Bullock, Pat Martin, County Health Officer, and Shane Kernell, Administrator of Graham Regional Medical Center, and I (referring to himself as City of Graham Mayor) had a conference call. As a group we discussed the facts. Dr. Martin sent out a text stating there were three (3) additional cases that tested positive in Young County. That is three (3) times the amount we previously reported last week. The discussion included compliance and whether or not people were adhering to the rules and regulations set by the Judge, myself (Mayor Blanton), and the Governor. Doctors were discussing the additional ones that tested positive. One had traveled outside the United States. One had contact with the previous (first case). What caused most concern was the one who tested positive that had not been out of town, country, or in contact with those previously identified as positive. Their recommendation was very emphatically that we needed a shelter in place order. The order is intended to stem the tide and keep individuals aware that we need to adhere to the social distancing. We need to put some teeth into what we consider a very serious situation. There is a potential of it being exponentially increasing as time goes on. Daniel De La Cruz, City Attorney, and Brandon Anderson, City Manager, have put together a very extensive recommendation for sheltering in place. It is well written, documented, I think it will hopefully stem the tide of what we are looking at as far as those who are not adhering to the recommendations that the Governor, County Judge, and I (Mayor Blanton) have all put in place. With that, I would be glad to answer any questions."

Brandon presented Ordinance #1095 and mentioned how quickly things have changed since Friday (March 27, 2020) when we did the Facebook Live. Brandon said, "We wanted to try to get everyone to self-comply, and that was our goal instead of ordering this shelter in place. There was some discussion of groups that were possibly continuing to meet. Groups that were made aware that they should quarantine but still had birthday parties and different things and may be working-out together. It is very important, these actions give us the most concern, and could possibly increase community spread. Maybe we have not taken these precautions serious enough. The other thing that is concern to the doctors is when you go shopping, make sure health is your paramount subject. Only one person from each family. Respect social distancing when you are in the stores. We are going to be working with grocery stores to see if there is any way they can help us to stop any concern of spread as well. This is serious and we need to take this serious. We felt like now, and in the past three (3) days COVID 19 positive cases has escalated from one (1) to four (4). We would love for people to take this serious because we do not want to come back in three (3) days and say it has gone from four (4) to twelve (12). That is the concern the doctors have is that this is how it starts. It will go from one, then one (1) to four (4), four (4) to twelve (12), twelve (12) to thirty six (36), and can quickly escalate. Please take this shelter at home serious. If this ordinance is approved today by the City Council, it will be posted on our Facebook sites. It will also be posted on our City of Graham website. I would ask you to read through it. Please read through it first to see if you can get your answer to questions or concerns. We will be available tomorrow (March 31, 2020). The way the ordinance is written it does not go into place until tomorrow (March 31, 2020) at midnight."

Lee Boyd asked if the three (3) new patients were symptomatic. Mayor Blanton said they were not. One (1) was exposed to the original person. However, he did not know about the other. One was symptomatic. He had not traveled anywhere. One had traveled overseas and came back. Lee Boyd asked if any of them were having symptoms. Brandon and Mayor Blanton both stated that information was not relayed to us. Lee Boyd said he found out Sunday that anyone can go up there and get a test now. Mayor Blanton said he was watching the news in regard to those testing facilities. He thought they had ability to test up to 250 a day. Mayor Blanton asked Judge Bullock if he was aware of testing capabilities. Judge Bullock said he was not aware of that. Mayor Blanton said there are two testing facilities. One at the American Airlines Center and the other someplace toward South Dallas. Lee Boyd said you could go by Graham Medical and get tested. Mayor Blanton stated he thinks that may be possible. Mayor Blanton said originally you had to be symptomatic, in other words, have a fever of 100 degrees or more. You had to be 65 years of age or over. Lee Boyd said he stopped by and talked to the lady running it. Brint Albritton asked if all are at home. Brandon answered that all are in quarantine at this time. Lee Boyd said she told him that anyone can call her and just schedule an appointment to come by and get tested. Mayor Blanton said turnaround time on tests range from three (3) to six (6) to seven (7) days. Lee Boyd said the lady told him results are returned in two (2) days. Mayor Blanton said he is aware of some situations where the turnaround was quite a bit longer. Lee Boyd said it is getting better from what she told him. Darby Brockway said there are lot of different counties and cities in the state that have enacted some sort of shelter in place or stay at home restrictions. How does this look in comparison to those? Darby said he thinks there is confusion in the general public about what those restrictions are, what those requirements are, and how are they different than other places. Brandon said this (Ordinance #1095) is consistent with other ones put in place. Dan De La Cruz said he has consulted with colleagues that represent other cities, specifically in north Texas. Dan said, "Ours (Ordinance #1095) is somewhat less restricted in some ways but it may get a little easier for people to comply with and understand compared to other stuff we are seeing so far." Darby Brockway asked if it enacts any additional restrictions on businesses or are there certain businesses that are not. From what Dan De La Cruz is seeing is that the business community is complying and they are taking actions and

steps to mitigate the situation the best way they can and still operate. Darby Brockway asked if this takes any steps to restrict other kinds of businesses. Brandon said, "I can tell you one thing in this. There is no difference in a shelter in place and the current restrictions that we have for a restaurant. It is defined in here what essential and a non-essential businesses are. Essentials are allowed to maintain "business as usual" with certain health standards. We are hoping those employers are implementing on a daily basis. There are some businesses being deemed as non-essential and being told to close during this time."

Lee Boyd asked how many counties in Texas have issued a shelter in place order. Judge Bullock said he did not bring the list with him but there are 35 to 40 out of 254. Lee Boyd said they are more typically urban areas. Judge Bullock said Wichita County put their order in today and the City of Wichita Falls did theirs late last week. Mayor Blanton said the City of Eastland has done it and Stephens County has too. Kyle Peavy said he thinks Iowa Park is doing theirs today along with pretty much all of Wichita County then will be. Mayor Blanton said the county (Wichita County) had done it today. Mayor Blanton said, "Potter County, I think, in west Texas and there is a number that are not metropolitan areas that have done it." Lee Boyd said if the county does it, then it does not matter what the city does, they are ruled by the county. Lee Boyd asked if the City needs to do it so that can be in on the enforcement of it. Dan De La Cruz said a more restricted County order would control over ours. Lee said if Young County did shelter in place then we would comply with that. Mayor Blanton replied, "Yes." Judge Bullock replied, "Unless you were stricter." Lee Boyd asked if Young County plans to do a shelter in place. Judge Bullock said he obviously does not want to but he feels there is a need to because the advice we have been given by the medical community. He is relying on them more than anyone else. Judge Bullock said that sometimes you want to think they overreach a little bit but it would be a whole lot better to overreach than under reach. Lee Boyd said this is for two (2) weeks. Mayor Blanton confirmed, "This is for two weeks and we can come back to extend that if it need be. President Trump extended until the end of April 2020 for those restrictions imposed. This (Ordinance #1095) is for two (2) weeks and I think it expires at 3:00 on April 14, 2020." Judge Bullock asked if there was an expiration date in it. Mayor Blanton and Brandon Anderson both answered, "Yes." Darby Brockway asked if there was enforcement tied. Judge Bullock said "Law enforcement will enforce this and issue tickets in some instances and fines up to \$1,000." Brint Albritton said he watched your meeting (referring to a meeting Judge Bullock conducted) and there was a lot of support for this type of deal (referring to Ordinance #1095 content) and a lot of people expressing why it was not done then. So I think there is a good appetite for this kind of thing now." Kyle Peavy asked, "How would you verify that someone is going to the grocery store?" Lee Boyd said, "Track them on their cell phone" (then said he was joking). Mayor Blanton said non-essential businesses are going to be closed. Mayor Blanton said, "Kyle, a lot of this we hope that people take it serious." Mayor Blanton stated, "We are serious about enforcing it and that really, I think, is the most important thing that people understand, we will enforce this."

Brandon Anderson said, "Wichita Falls escalated over the weekend. They nearly doubled their cases over the weekend. That is why we see the steps they are taking in Wichita Falls. This is consistent with Wichita Falls because we saw our cases triple from one (1) to four (4). What we are trying to do and what we tried to get people to do last Friday is to do this on their own accord. What we are trying to do today is telling them they need to do this, they have to do this. The reason we are doing this is we hope not to go from four (4) to twelve (12). We hope to stay at four (4). Kyle Peavy said, "I heard there are people coming out of the metroplex (referring to Dallas/Fort Worth area) to shop out here because their grocery or feed stores are limited. Is there anything they can do about this? They could bring that (referring to COVID 19) to us. If they get pulled over and it is someone from out of town then they have to explain what they are doing in Graham or will this slow down some of that? When it becomes known we are a shelter in place type of city. My concern is that they are coming out of a highly concentrated area bringing the virus out here with them." Brandon Anderson said, "It is even more important that if you have to get out, then do social distancing. That is one thing that if the doctors could figure a way to work with the grocery stores to make sure we are social distancing while we are shopping. That is a way we can ensure if you stay that distance away to make sure you do not have that contact with an individual." Mayor Blanton said he had not heard what Kyle Peavy mentioned. Mayor Blanton said, "I do know there was a big crowd at PK (referring to Possum Kingdom Lake) trying to get away from the metroplex (Dallas/Fort Worth area). Mayor Blanton said, "I hope that these individuals partner with us in the seriousness of this and the fact that they will take steps to help with the social distancing and the number of people that are around in a particular area." Kyle Peavy said, "The Mayor of Rhode Island is trying to restrict those coming in from New York by forcing them into a fourteen (14) day quarantine when they want to leave New York for their vacation homes in Rhode Island. He said that was met with some back lash. The Governor has issued that New York, Florida, and New Jersey have to quarantine for fourteen (14) days if they fly-in." Lee Boyd said, "I read where some guys were cutting trees to fall across the road to keep people out."

Brandon Anderson said, "I recommend for the good of Graham, for the families in Graham, and everything we are trying to do to be proactive, I strongly recommend passing this (Ordinance #1095) in a unanimous fashion to send the right message." Kyle Peavy made the first motion and Brint Albritton seconded. Ordinance #1095 was unanimously passed 4-0.

Mayor Blanton thanked everyone for coming. Mayor Blanton said, "I hope everyone watching and listening will heed to what we are trying do. We are trying to help everyone understand how serious this is and what we need to do to turn that curve in the right way. I appreciate everyone very much."

#### ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Darby Brockway, a second by Brint Albritton, the Council meeting was unanimously adjourned.

  
Neal Blanton, Mayor

ATTEST   
Sharon McFadden, City Secretary