

## Town of James Island

### Special Meeting

The Town of James Island held a Special Meeting on Monday, June 29, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. by virtual platform (Zoom) at the Town Hall, 1122 Dills Bluff Road. The following Councilmembers were present: Dan Boles, Dr. Cynthia Mignano, Garrett Milliken, and Mayor Bill Woolsey presided. Absent: Councilman Darren "Troy" Mullinax. Also: Town Administrator, Ashley Kellahan, Town Attorney, Bonum S. Wilson, and Town Clerk, Frances Simmons. A quorum was present to conduct business.

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of James Island, members of the public were provided a link for the proceedings of the meeting.

Mayor Woolsey called the meeting to order and the Town Clerk called the roll. Councilmembers were reminded to introduce themselves before discussion.

Emergency Ordinance E-06-2020: Emergency Ordinance Requiring Persons to Wear Face Coverings in Certain Circumstances in the Town of James Island to Reduce Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 during the Public Health Emergency and Recovery

Mayor Woolsey moved for the adoption of the amended version sent to Council; Councilman Boles seconded. Councilman Milliken said he felt that the first draft ordinance had stronger language with respect to items #1 and 2 on page #2. He said it changed to the Town **recommending**, and he would like to see that stricken and go back to the original stronger version that face coverings **must** be worn while inside a building or vehicle. He thinks this is stronger language and it does not send mixed messages for recommendation vs. something that we must do. He said this would apply to # 1 and 2. Under # 1 the word **must**, would be reaffirmed and strike the word **should** under #2. Councilman Milliken moved with that as an amendment and Councilman Boles seconded.

Mayor Woolsey explained that the 2<sup>nd</sup> item in the Ordinance that is before Council was not included in the first, so the recommendation that businesses adopt a policy requiring face coverings was not included. In the City's ordinance their #2 is similar to our #3 that contains **must** in the document.

Councilwoman Mignano asked when the ordinance expires; Mayor Woolsey said the version before Council expires on July 17 if no action is taken to extend it. Town Council meets on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Councilwoman Mignano asked how the Ordinance would be enforced. Mayor Woolsey said the way the language is written, enforcement would be done by our Code Enforcement Officer. He said this is the reason he does not support Councilman Milliken's amendment, making it a requirement on individual citizens to wear face coverings because there is no practical way that our Code Enforcement Officer can enforce it. He said the Sheriff's Office would not enforce a face covering ordinance in the Town and it would be a tremendous burden on our one Code Enforcement Officer to enforce face coverings on individual citizens. Mayor Woolsey addressed the second issue saying it is premature at this time for businesses to adopt a policy of no mask; no service and we need to explore this more. He suggested at the next Town Council meeting if we find that businesses are not following the recommendations and have not adopted a policy we can make a policy of no service without face covering. Mayor Woolsey reiterated that he does not support the amendment and the recommendation applying to individuals is not the right approach. He said the ordinance would require businesses with employees in contact with the public to wear face coverings and believes our Code Enforcement Officer could enforce that.

Councilman Boles pointed out with the expiration date being as quick as it is, he does not see the harm in having everyone wear face coverings until July 17; and then look at public input. To him, the purpose is a matter of public safety and does not see half-way implementing a public safety measure; we should do all or nothing. Further, Councilman Boles said he has gotten many emails from people and businesses in support of face coverings. He believes the amendment is a good idea in taking a stand to err on the side of caution to the July Council meeting.

Councilman Milliken spoke in agreement with Councilman Boles. He said we are in an exponential increase and the curve is not flattening; unless we change our behavior a lot of people will die. He shared information from the New England Journal of Science on how we can reverse the trend and begin to flatten the curve by wearing face coverings.

Councilwoman Mignano talked about the protection of our citizens but does not think having an ordinance that is unenforceable is effective. Councilman Boles added by asking people to wear face coverings in public for three weeks is a small thing for public health. Mayor Woolsey reiterated businesses adopting a policy and require their employees in contact with the public to wear face coverings. Councilman Milliken commented that people want to feel safe when they go to a business establishment and face coverings helps reduce the likeliness of spreading the virus. Mayor Woolsey said if the amendment passes the town would be different from all of the other municipalities.

After discussion, the vote was called on the amendment proposed by Councilman Milliken to change that the Town recommends people to wear face covering to require; and change recommend business adopt a policy to require the wearing of face coverings.

Vote on Amendment

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	No
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	No

Amendment Failed


Vote on Ordinance as Proposed

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes

Passed Unanimously

There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

  
Frances Simmons  
Town Clerk