

Anniston, Alabama

March 26, 2020

The City Council of the City of Anniston, Alabama, met in Special Session via teleconference on Thursday March 26, 2020, at approximately 3:04 p.m.

Jack Draper, Mayor prayed the Invocation.

Jack Draper, Mayor, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Draper called the meeting to order. On call of the roll, the following Council Members were found to be present: Council Members Jenkins, Reddick, Little, Harris, and Draper, absent: none. A quorum was present and the meeting opened for the transaction of business.

Steven Folks, City Manager, was present.

Bruce Downey, City Attorney, was present.

Council Member Reddick made a motion to adopt the agenda with Council Member Little's motion relative to the multimodal center. The motion was seconded by Council Member Little and on call of the roll the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Member Jenkins, Reddick, Little, Harris, and Draper; nays: none. The motion carried and the agenda was adopted.

Mayor Draper stated that Council Member Little's motion relative to the multimodal center to change the hours of operation and the operational procedures. He stated that the hours were changed on March 23, 2020 pursuant to the Emergency Declaration the council passed on March 18, 2020. He stated that he collaborated with Mr. Folks, City Manager, in making this decision.

Council Member Little stated that he discovered that the citizens riding city buses cannot go inside the multimodal center to use the restroom because the doors are locked. He stated that those individuals have to use the restroom outside and cannot wash their hands, so they get on the bus and then there is a pandemic in a pandemic. He stated that the station should be open as long as the multimodal buses are running. He stated that the buses should make an announcement and ask the people to try and maintain a distance and wash their hands. He stated that they do not typically have a lot of people at the bus station anyway. He stated that Birmingham's station is open as long as it is monitored.

Mayor Draper stated that the multimodal center is open Monday-Friday during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and closed on Sunday. He stated that it is open and there is a city employee there that will let individuals in who need to use the restroom and then back out.

Council Member Little made a motion change the hours of operation and procedures enacted due to COVID-19 at the Multi-modal Center.

Council Member Little stated that he is down at the multimodal station almost every day and the way they treating the citizens is inhumane.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Reddick.

Council Member Reddick asked if the doors locked or are they unlocking it specifically for people that need to use the restroom?

Mayor Draper stated that to his understanding the doors are unlocked for people to come in and use the restroom.

Council Member Reddick stated that they should allow the train station doors to be unlocked if people are following the rules.

Council Member Harris asked is the number of people riding Greyhound is significantly lower than it is typically considering what is going on?

Council Member Little stated that the number is lower than it has been.

Council Member Harris asked if all the grey hound buses have restrooms on them.

Council Member Little stated that not all buses have a restroom on them. He stated that all airplanes have restrooms on them but the airports are still open. He stated that unless something is happening, there is no problem with the people.

Council Member Harris asked if there is still a covered walkway for people to wait on the train.

Council Member Little stated that there is a covered place but they are urinating back there and there is a horrible odor sometimes. He stated that they have a lot of senior citizens that are out there traveling.

Council Member Harris asked if the bus that is ran by East Alabama Regional Planning Commission started at 8:00 am and ended at 5:00 pm.

Steven Folks, City Manager, stated that it ends between 5:00 and 6:00 pm and it runs on Saturday as well.

Council Member Harris asked that considering this virus and what is going on now, did they not pass a resolution giving the Mayor and City Manager the authority to make administrative calls on March 18, 2020.

Mayor Draper stated that they did, but Council Member Little requested the called meeting since they can meet via teleconference.

Council Member Harris asked if the employee(s) are there at the station every day from 8:00 am until 7:00 pm and on Saturday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. She asked if they have any buses coming in after 7:00 pm or 3:00 p.m.

Council Member Little stated that they the employees are not there at 8:00 am to handle the tickets but are there to open the door to let the citizens in.

Council Member Jenkins asked if they have an employee there to open the facilities for someone to be able to use the restroom whenever the buses or trains are running.

Steven Folks, City Manager, stated that is correct within those hours. He stated that the reason this was done is because he wanted to stay consistent with all the City's public buildings. He stated that they did take into account after speaking with Mr. Gains with Greyhound and Shane Christian with the City bus system that if during those times anyone needed to use the latrine the employee would open the door to allow them to use the latrine and the citizen would leave afterword. He stated that at the end of the

day the employees would disinfect the whole station and lock it up so it would be ready for the next day. He stated that his intent was not to belittle anyone but to be consistent with all public buildings.

Council Member Jenkins asked if they are making provisions for people to come in and use the bathroom when the bus stops.

Steven Folks, City manager, and Mayor Draper stated yes.

Council Member Reddick asked when the bus comes in, is there a person at the bus station that unlocks the door and comes outside and asks if anyone needs to use the restroom? He asked if there is a person there standing by the door, so when someone walks up to the door they are let in.

Steven Folks, City Manager, stated that if someone wants to get into the station they can.

Council Member Reddick asked how the employee at the station would know someone needed to use the restroom.

Steven Folks, City Manager, stated that the employee knows the bus schedule.

Council Member Reddick stated that he does not understand how a facility that large cannot facilitate two people being in the building.

Mayor Draper stated that the building is not that large if they are to maintain 6 feet distancing from each other. He stated that if people need to use the restroom, they are allowed in.

Council Member Reddick stated that his concern is how someone is going to know that there is an employee in the building that will magically appear when they have to use the restroom. He stated that he does not understand why they even have to lock the doors.

Council Member Harris asked if they could put a sign up instructing people on if they need to use the facility, what to do.

Steven Folks, City Manager, stated that he is pretty sure there is a sign on the door and if not that can be corrected.

Council Member Jenkins stated that another thing he suggests is to reach out to the East Alabama, Greyhound, and Amtrak and let them know the City's policy and ask them to advertise it to their patrons using the transportation. He stated that that effort to inform them is not a difficult thing.

Steven Folks, City Manager stated that he can do that as well as have the employee posted out front at a table so they can see the window instead of standing behind the counter.

Council Member Little stated that he is down there and has watched the operations. He stated that not only do citizens come in to use the restroom but also because of the temperature and weather outside. He stated that they have plenty space. He stated that all he is asking the council to do before they lock them out is give them the opportunity to obey the law and keep their distance. He stated that they have elderly people on walkers and wheelchairs that come down there, let them come in and sit. He stated that if this method does not work then they can do something else.

Mayor Draper stated that he has concerns for the elderly as well and they would be safer not being in there because they would have to disinfect the building multiple times throughout the day.

Council Member Little stated that they are constantly doing that whether or not the elderly is there. He stated that when they are on the bus they are not 6 feet apart.

Steven Folks, City Manager, stated that if there is inclement weather he can instruct the employee to let them come in and maintain social distancing.

Council Member Harris stated that the council did give administrative authority to the City Manager and the Mayor to make these decisions and she is going to abide by that.

Council Member Little stated that this is an extreme measure and they should start off by asking the people to follow the guidelines. He stated that he is down there and that is why he is advocating for the people. He stated that they have adequate space to space the people out in the station.

And on call of the roll the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Member Reddick and Little; nays: Council Member Jenkins, Harris, and Mayor. The motion failed.

There being no further business to come before the council at that time Mayor Draper made a motion the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Council Member Harris; and on call of the roll, the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Members Jenkins, Reddick, Harris and Draper nays: Council Member Little. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:34 o'clock p.m.