

EMERGENCY ORDINANCE 2020-03

AN ORDINANCE OF POLK CITY, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO MAKE PROVISIONS FOR ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE BY ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS AT CITY MEETINGS DURING PERIODS OF A DECLARED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR REPEALER; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2020, Ron DeSantis, Governor of the State of Florida, issued Executive Order No. 20-51, directing the Florida Department of Health to issue a Public Health Emergency; and,

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2020, the State Surgeon General and State Health Officer declared that a Public Health Emergency exists in the State of Florida as a result of COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, Governor DeSantis declared that a state of emergency exists in the State of Florida as a result of the continued spread of COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, in order to mitigate or prevent these impacts, on March 16, 2020, the City Commission of Polk City, Florida, found it necessary to declare a state of emergency within the entire incorporated limits of Polk City, Florida pursuant to the City's Charter, and the City's home rule authority, including that set forth in Article VIII, Section 2(b), Florida Constitution, Chapter 252 and Section 166.021, Florida Statutes; and,

WHEREAS, the current outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) has made the City Commission acutely aware that provisions must be made to ensure that the business of municipal governance can occur without unnecessarily exposing either City personnel or members of the public to a risk of infection while ensuring public access and open government; and,

WHEREAS, Florida law, including Florida Statutes Sections 286.011 and 166.041, requires that meetings of elected and appointed officials ("Bodies"), for the conduct of public business, must be held following procedures (notice, access of meetings, opportunity to be heard, the taking of minutes, etc.) that ensure that the public is able to participate in and be aware of the decision making process (the "Sunshine Law"); and,

WHEREAS, previously, when asked whether a public body complies with the Sunshine Law when one or more members of the Body wish to participate in a meeting electronically from a remote location, the Florida Attorney General ("AG") has opined that a quorum of the Body must be physically present in order

to allow a member, who due to “extraordinary circumstances” is unable to physically attend the meeting, to appear and participate electronically; and,

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, the AG issued an AGO 2020-03 which provides that “unless and until legislatively or judicially determined otherwise, if a quorum is required to conduct official business, local government bodies may only conduct meetings by teleconferencing or other technological means if either a statute permits a quorum to be present by means other than in-person, or the in-person requirement for constituting a quorum is lawfully suspended by the Governor during the state of emergency”; and,

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2020, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order Number 20-69 which suspends any Florida Statute that requires a quorum to be present in person or requires a local government body to meet at a specific public place and permits local government bodies to utilize communications media technology such as telephonic and video conferencing, as provided in section 120.54(5)(b)2., Florida Statutes; and,

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has created or imminently threatens to create conditions that may severely affect the public health, safety, welfare and security of the citizens, residents and visitors of Polk City, Florida; and,

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds there is a clear and present danger in holding a public “in person” meeting for those attending and those who come in contact with those attending; and,

WHEREAS, the technology exists to conduct public meetings using technology in which the City can comply with the provisions of the Sunshine Law while preserving human life; and,

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that it is in the best interest of the personnel and citizens of the City to authorize the City Manager to provide, when he/she determines appropriate, for the City Commission and members of the various Boards and Committees to be able to attend meetings electronically during a declared public health emergency in Polk City pursuant to the City's Charter, and the City's home rule authority, including that set forth in Article VIII, Section 2(b), Florida Constitution, and Section 166.021, Florida Statutes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF POLK CITY, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The above recitals represent the legislative findings of Polk City, Florida, relative to the provisions of this Ordinance and are incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY. Pursuant to state law and based upon the Legislative Findings set forth in the above-stated Recitals, the City Commission of Polk City hereby finds and declares that an emergency exists requiring immediate action by the City Commission. By virtue of the threat to public health and safety by virtue of the threat to the City's financial health and home rule powers, it is necessary for the City to implement this regulation, which can only be accomplished by the adoption of this Emergency Ordinance.

SECTION 3. LIMITED AUTHORIZATION FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS WITHOUT PHYSICAL PRESENCE. The City Manager is hereby authorized, pursuant to the Home Rule authority of the City Commission, during a declared public health emergency to:

- a) arrange for the City Commission to meet electronically;
- b) promulgate rules of procedure that will ensure compliance with the Sunshine Law;
- c) provide technology and administrative support as necessary to fulfill these objectives.

Such a meeting may only be conducted without the physical presence of the City Commission members if an emergency is declared based upon an infectious disease, and only so long as (1) the meeting be properly noticed, (2) minutes be taken, and (3) the public be permitted to attend via technology such as teleconferencing or web-based conferencing.

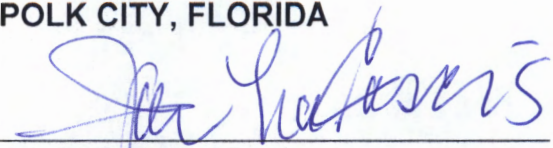
SECTION 4. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of any other provision, and to that end, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

SECTION 5. CONFLICTS. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This emergency ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage, and shall expire on August 31, 2020. Nothing contained in this Ordinance shall give rise to any vested rights, equitable estoppel, or claim for continuing any specific land use.

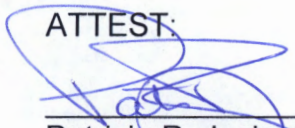
INTRODUCED AND PASSED AS AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE this
3rd day of **April**, 2020.

POLK CITY, FLORIDA



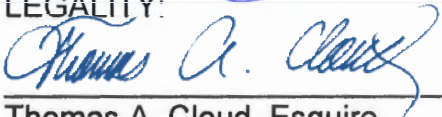
Joe LaCascia, Mayor

ATTEST:



Patricia R. Jackson, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGALITY:



Thomas A. Cloud, Esquire
City Attorney

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 20-51

(Establishes COVID-19 Response Protocol and Directs Public Health Emergency)

WHEREAS, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that can spread among humans through respiratory transmission and presents with symptoms similar to those of influenza; and

WHEREAS, in late 2019, a new and significant outbreak of COVID-19 emerged in China; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern; and

WHEREAS, in response to the recent COVID-19 outbreak in China, Iran, Italy and South Korea, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) has deemed it necessary to prohibit or restrict non-essential travel to or from those countries; and

WHEREAS, in response to the recent COVID-19 outbreak in Japan, the CDC has advised older travelers and those with chronic medical conditions to avoid nonessential travel and all travelers to exercise enhanced precautions; and

WHEREAS, the CDC currently recommends community preparedness and everyday prevention measures be taken by all individuals and families in the United States, including voluntary home isolation when individuals are sick with respiratory symptoms, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue and disposal of the tissue immediately thereafter, washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers with 60%-95%

alcohol if soap and water are not readily available and routinely cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects to increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak; and

WHEREAS, two individuals in the State of Florida tested presumptively positive for COVID-19, including a resident of Manatee County and a resident of Hillsborough County; and

WHEREAS, the CDC currently recommends mitigation measures in communities with COVID-19 cases, including staying at home when sick, keeping away from others who are sick and staying at home when a household member is sick with respiratory disease symptoms or if instructed to do so by public health officials or a health care provider; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and appropriate to take action to ensure that COVID-19 remains controlled and that residents and visitors in Florida remain safe and secure;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RON DESANTIS, as Governor of Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article IV, Section (1)(a) of the Florida Constitution, and all other applicable laws, promulgate the following Executive Order to take immediate effect:

Section 1. Because of the foregoing conditions, I direct the State Health Officer and Surgeon General, Dr. Scott Rivkees, to declare a public health emergency in the State of Florida, pursuant to his authority in section 381.00315, Florida Statutes. The State Health Officer is authorized and directed to use his judgment as to the duration of this public health emergency.

Section 2. In accordance with section 381.0011(7), Florida Statutes, I direct the State Health Officer to take any action necessary to protect the public health.

Section 3. I direct the State Health Officer to follow the guidelines established by the CDC in establishing protocols to control the spread of COVID-19 and educate the public on prevention.

Section 4. In accordance with section 381.0011(7), Florida Statutes, I designate the Florida Department of Health as the lead state agency to coordinate emergency response activities among the various state agencies and local governments. The State Health Officer, or his designee, shall advise the Executive Office of the Governor on the implementation of these emergency response activities.

Section 5. All actions taken by the State Health Officer with respect to this emergency before the issuance of this Executive Order are ratified.

Section 6. The Florida Department of Health will actively monitor, at a minimum, all persons meeting the definition of a Person Under Investigation (“PUI”) as defined by the CDC for COVID-19 for a period of at least 14 days or until the PUI tests negative for COVID-19. Active monitoring by the Florida Department of Health will include at least the following:

- A. Risk assessment within 24 hours of learning an individual meets the criteria for a PUI.
- B. Twice-daily temperature checks.

Section 7. The Florida Department of Health, pursuant to its authority in section 381.00315, Florida Statutes, will ensure that all individuals meeting the CDC’s definition of a PUI are isolated or quarantined for a period of 14 days or until the person tests negative for COVID-19.


Section 8. I hereby direct the Florida Department of Health to make its own determinations as to quarantine, isolation and other necessary public health interventions as permitted under Florida law.

Section 9. I direct all agencies under the direction of the Governor to fully cooperate with the Florida Department of Health, and any representative thereof in furtherance of this Order.

Agencies not under the direction of the Governor are requested to provide such assistance as is required.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed, at Tallahassee, this 1st day of March, 2020.



RON DESANTIS, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:



SECRETARY OF STATE

FILED
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TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA