



REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Title: Proclamation of State of Emergency

Preferred Agenda: August 25, 2021

Submitted By: R. Towry, City Manager

Reviewed By: R. Towry, City Manager

Type of Action: Resolution Motion Roll Call Other

Relevant Code/Policy: [SHMC 2.52: Emergency Management Program](#)

Towards Council Goal: Vision Statement: “The Sweet Home community members have elected the City Council to represent their collective best interests. We have been entrusted to make decision that do the most good for the most people for the longest period of time.”
Mission Statement: “...As efficient stewards of the valuable assets available, we will be responsive to the community while planning and preparing for the future.”
GOAL #2. Be an effective and efficient government

Attachments: DRAFT Resolution #22 for 2021. A resolution proclaiming a state of emergency concerning effects of the COVID-19 emergency response.
DRAFT Proclamation: COVID restrictions state of emergency

Purpose of this RCA:

For Council consideration, a resolution and accompanying proclamation of a state of emergency concerning the effects of the COVID-19 Emergency Response

Background/Context:

At the August 10, 2021, City Council meeting, Mayor Mahler requested a Resolution be brought before the City Council regarding the effects of COVID-19 precautions enacted by Governor Kate Brown. Attached is a draft of a document for your consideration.

On March 8, 2020, Governor Kate Brown enacted Executive Order 20-03 declaring a state of emergency throughout Oregon due to the COVID-19 virus and pending pandemic. In that time, and under the authority of ORS 401.165 to 401.670, ORS 433.443, and ORS 431A.015, Governor Brown declared a public health emergency under ORS 653.616.

Since that time additional Executive Orders have been enacted for the purpose of protecting and mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

Some of the mandates have been sweeping in nature including the closing of schools, businesses, and churches.

There have been unintended consequences of these measures encompassing increases in certain crimes and mental health issues including depression. It is commonly discussed that children may be suffering the most from the Executive Orders implemented to combat the spread of COVID-19.

The City of Sweet Home has seen an increase in mental health calls of 131% between 2019 to 2021. They currently are on track for an increase of 288% in 2021 over pre-pandemic numbers. Likewise, Sweet Home Police have recorded a 24% increase in domestic violence calls in 2020.

The Challenge/Problem:

Should the City of Sweet Home declare a state of emergency concerning effects of the COVID-19 emergency response?

Stakeholders:

- Businesses of Sweet Home – Businesses have been hard hit by the Executive Orders; some have closed for extended periods of time. Additional relief would be appreciated. Some businesses were hit harder than others and mandated to be closed longer than others. While many received financial aid, for some it was not enough to replace their lost revenue or requires interest be paid.
- Adults of Sweet Home – Many have been laid off, resulting in record unemployment numbers because of the business closures. Adults have experienced a rise in mental health issues and domestic violence in our community amongst other challenges related to homeschooling as a result of school closures.
- Children of Sweet Home – The closure of schools has impacted their education and their mental well-being. Children have been unable to socialize at school or during school sponsored events. Likewise, other activities such as club sports and scout programs were cancelled limiting their social growth opportunities.

Issues and Financial Impacts:

\$7,000,000.00 is in the current state budget as a General Fund expense earmarked for our Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade project. While the budget is set and the opportunity for a line-item veto has passed, under the current state of emergency the Governor has unregulated authority. We have reached out to get a definitive answer as to if the Governor could instruct staff not to distribute the funds to us – essentially implement a selective spending freeze. Further, Article X-A of the Oregon Constitution allows her to utilize all General Fund allocations for a public health emergency. Loss of those funds would result in each water account holder (some have multiple accounts, i.e., a constituent may have both a residential and business account) would be responsible for +/- \$2500 plus interest to cover the gap.

Elements of a Stable Solution:

A decision regarding a state of emergency concerning effects of the COVID-19 emergency response.

Options:

1. Do nothing – Council could choose to do nothing.
2. Adopt Resolution No. 22 for 2021, A resolution proclaiming a “state of emergency” concerning effects of the COVID-19 emergency response as presented. – Staff would then fulfill the requirements as indicated in statute.
3. Suggest edits to the draft resolution. – Council could discuss edits in the open session.
4. Remand the document to the Admin, Finance and Property Committee.

Recommendation:

Staff has no recommendation, but respectfully reminds City Council that they are elected to make decisions that do the most good, for the most people, for the longest of period of time.