

Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
June 3, 2020 6:30pm
Videoconference

In attendance: Councilors Jay Ericson, Jack McCullough, Dan Richardson, Conor Casey, Dona Bate, Lauren Hierl, as well as Mayor Anne Watson. City Clerk John Odum acted as secretary.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:31.

2020-181. There was a discussion regarding the proposed Council resolution condemning racism and police brutality. No formal action taken. Comments from: Steve Whitaker, Erin O'Connell, Ann Charles, Anh Ducharme.

2020-180. Mask Mandate Discussion. Participating: Dan Groberg. Comments received from Steve Whitaker and Ann Charles. Councilor McCullough moved (and Councilor Casey seconded) add the language after 2020 "any person whether employees, customers or visitors who enters" (delete the word "all", adds the word "an", deletes the "s" from "establishments," and continuing on "shall", deleting "required both staff and customers or visitors to" and replace with "shall wear face coverings or shields over their nose and mouth while inside the establishment." Also adding "if anyone has a medical condition that is complicated by a cloth mask, a face shield is an appropriate alternative." Councilor Casey seconded. After modifications, the final form of the ordinance, in addition to a further modification moved by Councilor Richardson and seconded by Councilor Bate (carrying unanimously) was as follows:

CITY OF MONTPELIER Montpelier City Council Emergency Order

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Montpelier, Vermont, as follows:

COVID-19 EMERGENCY ORDER: WEARING FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the COVID-19 novel coronavirus and to help prevent people who may unknowingly have the virus from transmitting it to others; and

WHEREAS, the Vermont Department of Health "recommends that all Vermonters wear cloth face coverings when outside of the home to help slow the spread of COVID-19"; and

WHEREAS, Governor Phil Scott and the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development have issued the following instructions in conjunction with the Governor's executive orders regarding COVID-19, found in Addendum 14 to Executive Order 01-20 that authorizes the Montpelier City Council to enact local requirements regarding facial coverings:

“Businesses and non-profit and government entities may require customers or clients to wear masks. The legislative body of each municipality may enact more strict local requirements regarding mask use than those set forth herein”; and

WHEREAS, The City of Montpelier’s City Council is also authorized by the City’s Charter to promote and safeguard the public’s health; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 remains a present health threat to residents of, and visitors to, Montpelier and a significant threat to vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, wearing a face covering is an important act of safety and empathy that those in Montpelier can do in an effort to protect others from an infection that may be unknowingly carried.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Montpelier City Council hereby issues the following COVID-19 Emergency Order:

WEARING FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED INSIDE ESTABLISHMENTS

Requirement to Wear Face Covering:

Starting June 4th 2020, any person, whether an employee, a customer, or a visitor who enters a public establishment located in the City of Montpelier that invites the public into their premises for the purpose of receiving services, purchasing products, or otherwise conducting business, wear face coverings over their nose and mouth while inside the establishment and while in the presence of others.

In accordance with the State of Vermont Executive Department Addendum 12 to Executive Order 01-20, the traveling and commuting public shall also wear face coverings over their nose and mouth any time they are using public transportation conveyances, including buses, trains, and ride services and when in a mass transportation station.

Exceptions:

In accordance with the Vermont State Guidance, found in State of Vermont Executive Department Addendum 14 to Executive Order 01-20, masks are not recommended for strenuous outdoor activity, anyone under the age of 2, anyone with a medical condition that is complicated or irritated by a facial covering, or anyone with difficulty breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. If anyone has a medical condition that is complicated by facial coverings like a cloth mask a face shield is an appropriate alternative.

This ordinance shall not strictly apply to the extent that it frustrates the primary purpose of the business.

Posting of Requirement:

Each establishment shall post signage at the entrance and at other appropriate locations stating that customers (or visitors) are required to wear face coverings by order of the

Montpelier City Council. Other locations can be alternative entrances (back doors, etc.) or at transaction locations such as registers. Signage requirements will have an effective date of Monday, June 8th, 2020.

Effective Period:

This Order shall remain in effect until the Montpelier City Council amends, rescinds, or suspends this Order or until the Governor declares an end to the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Vermont, whichever occurs first.

Councilor Richardson moved to adopt the ordinance as amended under Council's emergency powers as outlined under the ordinance. Councilor Casey second and the motion carried unanimously after brief further discussion.

2020-182. The Council proceeded to site walk on Langdon Street for the purpose of evaluating potential uses of public spaces for business expansion during the COVID-19 pandemic. No formal action taken.

Without objection the Mayor adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent.