

Ordinance No. 2020-04

**AN UNCODIFIED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE RERATIFYING AND
REAFFIRMING THE DECLARATION OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY AND
DISASTER DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS; IMPLEMENTING
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF
GOVERNMENT; RATIFYING AND AFFIRMING THE CITY MANAGER'S
AUTHORITY AND EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY AND DISCRETION IN
TAKING ACTIONS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CITY; AND
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO TAKE ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT
THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE**

Recitals

A. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a public health emergency of international concern and on March 11, 2020, the WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic;

B. On March 12, 2020, the Governor of Virginia declared a state of emergency, to prepare and coordinate Virginia's response to the potential spread of COVID-19;

C. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States issued a proclamation declaring a national emergency concerning the COVID-19 outbreak;

D. On March 16, 2020, the City Manager and Emergency Management Director, Steven L. Rosenberg, declared a local emergency concerning COVID-19 and its effects;

E. At its special-emergency meeting on March 18, 2020, by resolution, the Staunton City Council confirmed Mr. Rosenberg's Declaration of a Local Emergency and declared a disaster related to COVID-19;

F. On March 23, 2020, the Governor of Virginia issued an executive order that, in essence, further recognizes the emergency and disaster COVID-19 outbreak, closing the public schools for the entire remainder of the school year and closing recreational and other non-essential establishments.

G. § 15.2-1413 of the Code of Virginia authorizes any locality to, by ordinance, provide a method to assure continuity in its government in the event of a disaster;

H. City Council also continues to recognize, confirm, affirm, and find that emergency and disaster conditions and effects existed and continue to exist and the occurrence and/or threat of COVID-19 merited and continues to merit and even

necessitates action by City Council to provide for methods to help assure continuity in local government as to the City and its related public bodies and officials;

- I. This matter has been properly heard and considered; and
- J. These recitals are deemed an integral part of this ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Staunton, Virginia, (Council) to the fullest extent permitted by law under these extraordinary, even unprecedented circumstances, that:

1. It **RERATIFIES AND REAFFIRMS** the Declaration of a Local Emergency and disaster due to COVID-19 made on March 16, 2020 by the City Manager and Emergency Management Director, Steven L. Rosenberg, ratified at its special-emergency meeting held on March 18, 2020, making its own declaration of an emergency and disaster, effective retroactively to and including March 16, 2020;

2. It **ACKNOWLEDGES, CONFIRMS, AND AFFIRMS** that the Declaration of Local Emergency empowers the Director of Emergency Management to have and exercise special authority and duties, such as authority and duties as may be defined by the laws, rules, regulations and plans of the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the City of Staunton, Virginia, including but not limited to those under § 44-146.21 of the Code of Virginia;

3. It **ACKNOWLEDGES, CONFIRMS, AND AFFIRMS** that when, in the judgment of Council, all needed emergency actions have been taken, appropriate action by the Director of Emergency Management or by Council to end the declared local emergency and disaster will be taken, with public notice of such action given;

4. The nature of COVID-19 and its actual and potential catastrophic effects, as may be discerned upon continuing review, make it unsafe to necessarily assemble always a quorum of Council, other City public bodies, and officials in a single location, or to assemble members of the public in a single location, making it impracticable or unsafe as circumstances may exist at the time for Council and the City's other public bodies and officials to conduct meetings in accordance with normal practices and procedures. In accordance with the provisions of § 15.2-1413 of the Code of Virginia, notwithstanding any contrary provision of law, general or special, including but not limited to the City's Charter or the City Code, the following emergency procedures are **AUTHORIZED AND ADOPTED** to ensure **CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT** during the pendency of the emergency and disaster created or occasioned by COVID-19 or by its actual or potential effects, including but not limited to its effects as to Staunton citizens, other persons, commerce, businesses, and City-related functions, officers, personnel, employees, and City FY20 and FY21 fiscal and financial matters, processes, decision-making, and planning at all levels of City government and for City public bodies and officials;

4.1. Any process, procedure, or matter which requires the physical presence of the public in or about a City-owned or controlled building, facility, or property that the City Manager has declared or designated or may in the future declare or designate, by whatever means whether formal or informal or written or electronic or verbal, to be closed to the public is hereby **SUSPENDED**;

4.2 Meetings of the Council and other City public bodies, including but not limited to the School Board and those for which operations are jointly or cooperatively governed or managed, are **AUTHORIZED** and may be held through electronic communication means without a quorum of members physically present in a single location, provided that notice of such meetings is still given in accordance with applicable laws;

4.3 Such meetings are **AUTHORIZED** to be and may be held without permitting members of the public to be physically present in a central location or in the same physical location as any of the Council or other City public bodies and members and officials so long as alternative arrangements for public access to such meetings are made as may be appropriate under the circumstances. Such alternative public access may be electronic, including but not limited to audio, telephonic, video or internet-web broadcast or stream, a City social media platform, or any other similar means;

4.4 For any matter requiring a public hearing by law, it is **DIRECTED** that public comment will, at least, be solicited and received via written or electronic means, including email or social media, or audio or voice message prior to the vote on such matter. Public comments may also be solicited and, if so solicited, then received via electronic and/or other means, including through the City's or other City public body's social media platform, or during the actual public hearing if possible and practicable, as determined in the discretion of the City Manager or Mayor. All such comments will be provided to or their essence or themes, if any, summarized to the members of the public body and made a part of the record of such meeting;

5. The provisions of Section 4 of this ordinance **SHALL BE IN EFFECT**, until repealed by Council, for a period not exceeding six months or, as may be permitted by law then in effect for such longer period from the effective date of declaration of local emergency, to and including March 16, 2020. Upon repeal or expiration of the provisions of Section 4 of this ordinance, the matters referenced therein shall resume operation in accordance with the normal practices and procedures, with the Director of Emergency Management to give public notice of such;

6. The actions of the City Manager taken or communicated by whatever means beginning March 16, 2020 and continuing, in the best interest of the City as determined in the exercise of discretion by the City Manager, are **RATIFIED AND AFFIRMED**;

7. If and to the extent that applicable law is enacted to extend the authority or time permitted for the operation of this or a similar ordinance, this ordinance shall be **AUTOMATICALLY AMENDED EFFECTIVE THEN IMMEDIATELY** to incorporate such changes without further action of Council; and

8. The City Manager is **AUTHORIZED** to take all reasonable and necessary actions, as determined in the City Manager's exercise of discretion, to implement fully the provisions of this ordinance.

9. The Clerk of Council is **DIRECTED** to have posted a copy of this ordinance at the usual places and on the City's website.

10. To the extent that any provision of this ordinance is found or determined to be invalid or void, the other provisions of this ordinance shall remain in effect without further action of this Council.

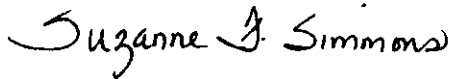
Adopted: March 24, 2020

Effective Date: March 16, 2020

Expiration Date: As provided



Carolyn W. Dull, Mayor



ATTEST:

Suzanne F. Simmons, Clerk of Council

Ordinance No. 2020 - 24

**AN UNCODIFIED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE
RATIFYING, CONFIRMING AND AFFIRMING
UNCODIFIED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE 2020-04**

Recitals

A. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a public health emergency of international concern and on March 11, 2020, the WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic;

B. On March 12, 2020, the Governor of Virginia declared a state of emergency, to prepare and coordinate Virginia's response to the potential spread of COVID-19;

C. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States issued a proclamation declaring a national emergency concerning the COVID-19 outbreak;

D. On March 16, 2020, the City Manager and Emergency Management Director, Steven L. Rosenberg, declared a local emergency concerning COVID-19 and its effects;

E. At its special-emergency meeting on March 18, 2020, by resolution, the Staunton City Council confirmed Mr. Rosenberg's Declaration of a Local Emergency and declared a disaster related to COVID-19;

F. On March 23, 2020, the Governor of Virginia issued an executive order that, in essence, further recognizes the emergency and disaster COVID-19 outbreak, closing the public schools for the entire remainder of the school year and closing recreational and other non-essential establishments;

G. The Governor of Virginia has issued further executive orders that reflect the existence of a continuing emergency and disaster related to COVID-19;

H. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that since January 21, 2020, there have been over 6,500,000 COVID-19 cases in the United States, with the number of deaths continuing to increase.

I. § 15.2-1413 of the Code of Virginia authorizes any locality to, by ordinance, provide a method to assure continuity in its government in the event of a disaster;

J. On March 24, 2020, City Council adopted uncodified emergency Ordinance 2020-04 (the "Emergency Ordinance"), reratifying and reaffirming the declaration of a local emergency and disaster due to novel coronavirus; implementing

emergency procedures to ensure continuity of government; ratifying and affirming the city manager's authority and exercise of authority and discretion in taking actions in the best interest of the City; and authorizing the city manager to take actions to implement the provisions of the ordinance;

K. City Council continues to recognize, confirm, affirm, and find that emergency and disaster conditions and effects existed and continue to exist and the occurrence and/or threat of COVID-19 continues to merit and even necessitates action by City Council to provide for methods to help assure sustained continuity in local government as to the City and its related public bodies, officials and others, and proceedings;

K. This matter has been properly heard and considered; and

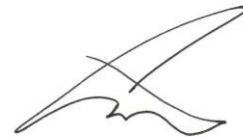
L. These recitals are deemed an integral part of this ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Staunton, Virginia (Council), to the fullest extent permitted by law under these continuing extraordinary, even unprecedented circumstances, that:

1. All actions of Council in the Emergency Ordinance and the provisions of such ordinance are **RATIFIED, CONFIRMED AND AFFIRMED**, including without limitation, the **CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT** provisions of such ordinance, which are expressly reenacted until January 15, 2021, in accordance with, and subject to, § 15.2-1413 of the Code of Virginia; and

2. The Clerk of Council is **DIRECTED** to have posted a copy of this ordinance at the usual places and on the City's website and public places and to provide a copy to the Chair of each City-related public body, including but not limited to the School Board, the Economic Development Authority, the Planning Commission, and the Historic Preservation Commission.

Adopted: September 24, 2020
Effective Date: September 24, 2020
Expiration Date: As provided



Andrea W. Oakes, Mayor



ATTEST: _____
Suzanne F. Simmons, Clerk of Council

Ordinance No. 2021 – 04

**AN UNCODIFIED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE
RERATIFYING, RECONFIRMING AND REAFFIRMING
UNCODIFIED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE 2020-04
AND
EXTENDING THE TIME OF REENACTMENT**

Recitals

A. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a public health emergency of international concern and on March 11, 2020, the WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic;

B. On March 12, 2020, the Governor of Virginia declared a state of emergency, to prepare and coordinate Virginia's response to the potential spread of COVID-19;

C. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States issued a proclamation declaring a national emergency concerning the COVID-19 outbreak;

D. On March 16, 2020, the City Manager and Emergency Management Director, Steven L. Rosenberg, declared a local emergency concerning COVID-19 and its effects;

E. At its special-emergency meeting on March 18, 2020, by resolution, the Staunton City Council confirmed Mr. Rosenberg's Declaration of a Local Emergency and declared a disaster related to COVID-19;

F. On March 23, 2020, the Governor of Virginia issued an executive order that, in essence, further recognizes the emergency and disaster COVID-19 outbreak, closing the public schools for the entire remainder of the school year and closing recreational and other non-essential establishments;

G. The Governor of Virginia has issued further executive orders that reflect the existence of a continuing emergency and disaster related to COVID-19;

H. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that since January 21, 2020, there have been over 15,000,000 COVID-19 cases in the United States, with the number of deaths continuing to increase;

I. The Central Shenandoah Health District has reported a sharp increase in COVID-19 cases locally, with an increase from an average prior to Thanksgiving of 700-800 cases per week to an average in mid-December of 2,000 cases per week, and a correlated increase in local hospitalizations;

J. Outbreaks of COVID-19 cases are occurring in both community and congregant settings, with an additional peak expected beginning in January due to travel and gatherings during the holiday season;

K. The increase in cases subsequent to Thanksgiving resulted in the implementation of new measures by the Governor and advice by public health professionals to continue mitigation measures (e.g., face coverings, distancing and hand washing);

L. Though in December the state embarked on the delivery of vaccinations, because it is estimated that 70% participation will be required to develop herd immunity and it is unclear whether the vaccination will protect from transmission, those vaccinated are encouraged to continue to observe mitigation measures;

M. § 15.2-1413 of the Code of Virginia authorizes any locality to, by ordinance, provide a method to assure continuity in its government in the event of a disaster;

N. On March 24, 2020, City Council adopted uncodified emergency Ordinance 2020-04 (the “Emergency Ordinance”), reratifying and reaffirming the declaration of a local emergency and disaster due to novel coronavirus; implementing emergency procedures to ensure continuity of government; ratifying and affirming the city manager’s authority and exercise of authority and discretion in taking actions in the best interest of the City; and authorizing the city manager to take actions to implement the provisions of the ordinance;

O. On September 24, 2020, City Council adopted uncodified emergency Ordinance 2020-24, ratifying, confirming and affirming uncodified emergency Ordinance 2020-04 and reenacted the continuity of government provisions of such ordinance until January 15, 2021;

P. The Health Director of the Central Shenandoah Health District has communicated to the City Manager her endorsement, given current and expected conditions, of the continuation of authority to conduct electronic communications meetings until the middle of calendar year 2021;

Q. City Council continues to recognize, confirm, affirm, and find that emergency and disaster conditions and effects existed and continue to exist and the occurrence and/or threat of COVID-19 continues to merit and even necessitates action by City Council to provide for methods to help assure sustained continuity in local government as to the City and its related public bodies, officials and others, and proceedings;

R. This matter has been properly heard and considered; and

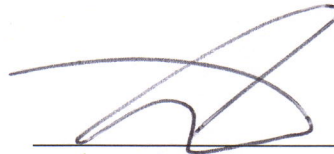
S. These recitals are deemed an integral part of this ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Staunton, Virginia (Council), to the fullest extent permitted by law under these continuing extraordinary, even unprecedented circumstances, that:

1. All actions of Council in the Emergency Ordinance and the provisions of such ordinance are **RATIFIED, RECONFIRMED AND REAFFIRMED**, including without limitation, the **CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT** provisions of such ordinance, which are expressly reenacted until April 9, 2021, in accordance with, and subject to, § 15.2-1413 of the Code of Virginia; and

2. The Clerk of Council is **DIRECTED** to have posted a copy of this ordinance at the usual places and on the City's website and public places and to provide a copy to the Chair of each City-related public body, including but not limited to the School Board, the Economic Development Authority, the Planning Commission, and the Historic Preservation Commission.

Adopted: January 14, 2021
Effective Date: January 14, 2021
Expiration Date: As provided



Andrea W. Oakes, Mayor

ATTEST: 

Suzanne F. Simmons, Clerk of Council

Ordinance No. 2021 - 06

**AN UNCODIFIED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE
REGARDING ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR USE OF ELECTRONIC
COMMUNICATIONS IN MEETINGS OF CITY PUBLIC BODIES**

Recitals

A. Staunton City Council has adopted a series of ordinances to ensure the continuity of government related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including: Ordinance 2020-04; Ordinance 2020-24; and Ordinance 2021-04;

B. At its January 14, 2021 regular meeting, City Council engaged in a discussion about possibly requiring public body member use of any available video feature in any meeting held using an electronic communications platform as well as about the possible remote attendance of City Council members who desire to observe meetings of City Council's committees both in open and closed meetings;

C. City Council believes that it is consistent with transparency and accountability in the use of electronic communications for meetings of City Council, to include additional conditions that relate to a Council member's utilization of available video features of any electronic communications platform, especially during a closed meeting so that there is added assurance no other person is remotely accessing the closed meeting;

D. City Council also believes it is consistent with transparency and accountability to allow a Council member who is not a member of a committee of Council, to observe such committee meetings, including closed meetings of any such committee;

E. This matter has been properly heard and considered; and

F. These recitals are deemed an integral part of this ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Staunton, Virginia (Council), to the fullest extent permitted by law under these circumstances, that:

1. As an additional condition of City Council's use of any electronic communications platform that includes available video features, all members of Council, during City Council meetings, shall at all times activate and keep activated the available video feature of any electronic communications platform, such as Zoom, so that the Council member is seen at all times during Council's meetings except during recesses of Council and brief, intermittent periods due to unanticipated technical difficulties or unexpected other circumstances; and if such conditions are not honored by a Council member, the presiding officer shall caution the member twice during any meeting and,

absent compliance in yet a third instance of non-compliance, shall direct that the meeting continue without the presence of the non-compliant member; and

2. Council members who are not members of a committee of Council may observe such committee's meetings, including closed meetings, using an electronic communications platform, and such committee will facilitate such observation by a Council member using an electronic communications platform, with support to the extent necessary from City staff and the Clerk of Council; and

3. The Clerk of Council is **DIRECTED** to provide a copy of this ordinance to each member of City Council and have posted a copy of this ordinance at the usual public places and on the City's website and to provide a copy to the Chair of each City public body, including but not limited to the School Board, the Economic Development Authority, the Planning Commission, and the Historic Preservation Commission.

Adopted: February 11, 2021

Effective Date: February 11, 2021

Expiration Date: April 9, 2021



Andrea W. Oakes, Mayor

ATTEST: Suzanne F. Simmons
Suzanne F. Simmons, Clerk of Council