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Mayor

Good Morning!

Since the COVID-19 event the City of Kearney as an employer and business operation has taken quick and decisive action consistent with guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control. Today you will hear about the numerous actions that have been taken. Please note, additional steps may be taken as the CDC issues new guidelines. Please understand that this situation is serious and preventive measures we take today will benefit us all in the long term. To that end we ask for your patience and cooperation. Also, we appreciate the voluntary actions that numerous businesses have taken to close and/or reduce access.

Finally, although we have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Kearney, I strongly encourage the community to follow the recommendations from the CDC, use appropriate safety precautions and remain calm in effort to prevent overwhelming our local healthcare sector.

City Manager

Effective immediately, in accordance with state statute I have declared a state of emergency in Kearney due to COVID-19. The local declaration, which follows declarations by both the state and federal governments, will allow the City to receive potential federal and state reimbursement for crisis-related expenditures and to access emergency reserve funds if needed. This emergency declaration will simply allow the City to continue managing the situation and deploy any additional resources needed.

The city is committed to continuing critical city services while ensuring compliance with the guidelines issued by the CDC. Further we are constantly evaluating additional measures that we can take to protect the public as well as our employees.

Although this is a challenging time, city employees have demonstrated their continued commitment to serve you the citizens of Kearney and I am extremely proud of their efforts.

Effective immediately, all City offices will have limited access to lobby areas where possible. Further, phone first to access City services wherever possible. The City has temporarily suspended all large capital expenditures.

Beginning today, the City has partnered with Hot Meals USA to provide meals to be delivered by volunteers.

Look for additional updates in regards to COVID-19 on the City of Kearney website.

As I turn it over to various department heads they will brief you on actions taken to date and will respond to any questions you might have.

Human Resources

- Self- quarantine employees due to recent travel to high risk areas
 - Evaluating potential Federal and State mandates related to employee leave guidelines
 - Implemented work from home options where feasible
 - In process of setting up a communication system with employees
 - Provided guidance to all departments related to sanitation efforts
 - Implementing social distancing within work areas
 - Suspended all travel and training for employees
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Finance

- Personal protective equipment to process payments and customer transactions
 - Encourage customers to make payment for utility bills as follows
 - Online
 - Telephone
 - Bankdraft
 - Drop boxes
 - Mail
 - NO extra fees
 - Non-essential activities are discontinued
 - No inhouse meter replacements
 - No inhouse leak inspections
 - Suspend water service disconnections for failure to pay
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Airport

Working with our partners at SkyWest and United Airlines effective April 1 the Kearney to Chicago flight will be suspended. Additionally, we expect reduced operations related to the Kearney-Denver flight. These steps are necessary due to the overwhelming negative financial impact experienced by the airlines.

We certainly understand that these changes are difficult but as the situation improves full service will be restored. In the meantime, United recommends that if you are within 14 days of your travel date to contact them regarding cancellations, refunds etc.

Additionally, thorough sanitation measures have been implemented on the aircraft and in the terminal.

Library

- Closed to public
 - Suspended all meetings, programs and bookmobile
 - Implemented curbside pickup
 - Encourages public to utilize all online resources
 - Encourages the public to not return items until library reopens
 - No fines will be assessed
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Utilities

- Public water system is safe
 - Bottled water is not necessary
 - Household hazardous waste restore is closed until further notice
 - Refuse and recycling collection will continue as normal
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Development Services

- Encourage to apply for all permits online
 - Building inspectors will use discretion for inspections if they can be completed by real time video chats or pictures, they will be
 - Will be implementing additional online payment options
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City Clerk

- Implementing teleconference abilities to allow upcoming planning commission and city council meetings to continue as scheduled
 - No live streaming of meetings available until further notice
 - All other public meetings cancelled
 - Adjustments forthcoming for non-Class C liquor license
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Fire

- Cancelled all fire prevention activities and fire station tours
 - Fire department has cancelled all fire group training until further notice
 - Fire department personnel will have access to online training tools and materials
 - Limiting personnel entering structures on non-emergency calls for service
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Police

- Public access to secure areas of the Law Enforcement Center including the Multi-Purpose Room is suspended. All outside activities to include meetings, training, Citizens Police Academy etc. are suspended until further notice.
 - LEC lobby hours will be restricted to 0800 – Noon, Monday thru Friday until further notice.
 - Officers are permitted to use telephone reporting for calls for service that do not require an immediate police response.
 - 911 Communications Staff have implementing a caller inquiry procedure. Callers will be asked if you or anyone you are living with have a fever, trouble breathing, a cough, under voluntary or mandatory quarantine for any reason. An affirmative answer will result in a telephone response or “Doorway Triage” by 1st Responders with PPE.
 - Working with multiple vendors to re-supply PPE for police officers in the field.
 - Public use of Police to Citizen “P2C” is encouraged along with telephone reporting.
 - Members of KPD are prohibited from attending non-essential meetings. Staff are encouraged to attend remotely.
 - Staff is working on policy in response to recommendations by the Governor on limiting gathering to no more than 10 people. We encourage voluntary compliance.
 - Non-critical out of town travel and training for members of KPD is suspended until further notice.
 - The Police Ride Along Program is suspended until further notice.
 - Attendance at recruitment job fairs is suspended until further notice.
 - Attendance at community events, other than to provide police service or security, will be evaluated on a case by case basis.
 - Following guidance from CDC, Two Rivers Public Health, Emergency Management.
 - Request contract cleaning service to implement enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of the LEC.
 - Police Auction has been postponed
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Park & Recreation

- All events and rentals are cancelled through May 10
- Organized team practices and games at City parks by sport associations have been suspended until further notice.
- Batting cages at Patriot and Memorial are closed until further notice
- PSAC closed until further notice
- Mid Nebraska Community services will work with senior center staff to supply to-go lunches for those seniors in need beginning April 6 or possibly sooner
- Delaying release of KPR summer program guide. Date TBD
- Interviews for summer employment will continue using alternate remote means
- Park users should understand that it is not feasible for staff to regularly clean and sanitize park equipment such as playgrounds