Introduced by:	City Manager Howell
Introduction Date/Adoption Date in Accordance with 29.25.030:	March 24, 2020
Action:	Passed
Vote:	6-0

CITY OF BETHEL, ALASKA

Ordinance #20-08

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE BY THE BETHEL CITY COUNCIL TEMPORARILY AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND/OR CITY COUNCIL TO MODIFY OR SUSPEND SECTIONS OF THE BETHEL MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PARTICIPATION; PROCUREMENT, CONTRACTS, AND LEASES; AND PERSONNEL RULES IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF THE CITY DURING A STATE-DECLARED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of the coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) a public health emergency of international concern;

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the Health and Human Services Secretary of the United States declared the outbreak a public health emergency for the United States;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the State of Alaska issued a public health disaster emergency declaration for COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared the COVID-19 outbreak a national emergency;

WHEREAS, various agencies and organizations statewide are canceling or restricting public gatherings and postponing nonessential travel as a means to contain the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, new information and guidance is being provided on state, national and global levels on a daily basis, requiring that maximum flexibility be given to respond to and implement the various containment measures;

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Council to provide increased flexibility in various governmental functions in the face of a rapidly evolving health emergency;

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WHEREAS, this authorization is intended to be temporary during this state-declared public health emergency, and will provide time for the City to further assess its code and procedures if more permanent code changes are determined to be necessary;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of Bethel, Alaska, as follows:

Section 1. Finding of Emergency. The Bethel City Council finds that an emergency exists in the City of Bethel due to the outbreak of COVID-19, which has been declared a global pandemic and a state and national public health emergency.

SECTION 2. Authorization. As authorized by Alaska Statute 29.25.030, Emergency Ordinances, the Council, based of the above statement of facts, authorizes the following:

- The City Council and city bodies may conduct city business by audio or video conferencing, consistent with state law, and may modify or waive provisions of the Bethel Municipal Code pertaining to scheduling, public participation, teleconferencing, and other related provisions of the Code governing public meetings, if deemed necessary for public health and safety; provided that any such modification or waiver is in compliance with state law.
- The City Council and city bodies may initiate occupancy limits and enforce social distancing measures at public meetings, as necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare
- The City Manager may cancel or postpone board and commission meetings and extend deadlines of required actions.
- The City Manager may authorize any purchases reasonably related to COVID-19 through expedited purchasing processes. The City Manager shall notify the Council of such action in accordance with Bethel Municipal Code 4.20.180.
- The City Manager may adjust or adopt personnel policies related to leave time, benefits, or conditions of employment to provide for the public health, welfare, and safety, and to ensure sufficient staffing during the term of this emergency ordinance.
- The City Manager may enter into temporary agreements with the collective bargaining unit in order to provide city services and ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the public and employees during the term of this emergency ordinance.
- The City Manager may extend deadlines for payments due to the City during the term of this emergency ordinance.

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- The City Manager may extend deadlines on contracts and leases through the term of this emergency ordinance. Any amendment to contracts or leases shall be made through a temporary agreement which shall expire with the term of this emergency ordinance.

SECTION 3. Classification. This ordinance is not permanent in nature and is a non-codified ordinance that shall not become part of the Bethel Municipal Code.

Section 4. Effective and Expiration Date: This ordinance is effective immediately upon adoption by a super majority of the City Council and shall remain in effect for a period of sixty (60) days.

ENACTED THIS 24TH DAY OF MARCH 2020 BY A VOTE OF 6 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.

Perry Barr, Mayor

ATTEST:

Lori Strickler, City Clerk