

April 7, 2020
Reno County Courthouse
Hutchinson, Kansas

The Board of Reno County Commissioners held an agenda session via Zoom with, Chairman Ron Sellers, Commissioner Bob Bush and Commissioner Ron Hirst, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan, and County Clerk Donna Patton, present.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Sellers asked Emergency Management Director Adam Weishaar and Health Department Director Nick Baldetti for a COVID-19 update. They joined the meeting via Zoom.

Health Department Director Nick Baldetti gave an update concerning some National, State and Local confirmed positive numbers. National 368,533 with 10,993 deaths, the State of Kansas 845 with 25 deaths and Reno County 11 with 0 deaths. There is a self-report form posted on the www.renogov.org home page for COVID-19 that people can fill out if they have had or are having symptoms. The form is confidential, and they can choose to list their name and number. If they list a contact number, a Health Department employee will get in contact with them to answer some questions and determine if they should be tested. He is constantly in contact with KDHE and KDEM for lab testing capacity and personal protective equipment but noted there is a lack of inventory across the state. The Governor's stay at home order is thru April 19th, and he didn't know if the order would be allowed to expire or if it would be extended. He thinks it will be extended since Kansas isn't expected to peak until the middle to the end of April, but that is just a guess and they don't want to end the social distancing too early.

Emergency Management Director Adam Weishaar stated that Reno County is now 1 of 85 counties that have declared a Public Health Emergency. Things are constantly changing, and they are having to make challenging decisions for the community. He commented that the community has been wonderful in offering some supplies. Reno County employees are also working additional hours to keep employees and the public safe. All meetings that they are engaging in are either via the telephone or Zoom. Mr. Weishaar stated that if another emergency were to happen now, he didn't know how we would handle the crisis, that is why he would like to see the burn ban extended. In doing this, he is trying

to keep the first responders and the public safe. By consensus, the Board agreed to add a discussion and possibly an extension of the burn ban to item 6a. He said he had discussed the burn ban with the local FSA office. He thanked the Commissioners for their help in reaching out to our Legislators and helping lead the charge to get some supplies released to Reno County. At the current rate of usage, we have approximately 12 - 15 days of PPE's in stock. Mr. Bush asked if there was any direction for personnel to reuse the N95 masks and Mr. Weishaar said they are hesitant to put out any information on this but noted Hutchinson Regional Medical Hospital is already working on a plan to reuse them and are looking at a process to preserve the PPE's. Commissioner Bush asked what will they do when they run out of PPE's? Mr. Weishaar stated that they are constantly looking everywhere for supplies and the supplies they have found are 3 to 5 times higher than what they have paid in the past. Everyone is doing the best they can, so they don't run out of PPE's. Commissioner Bush asked if the peak at the middle to the end of April was for the State or for Reno County? Mr. Baldetti stated that Reno County was typically 1 ½ to 2 weeks behind the larger more urban areas so he thought our peak would be around the end of April to the first part of May. By the end of the week, the actual data and the self-reporting data should give him better knowledge for this estimation. Commissioner Bush thinks we are on a good track due to Mr. Baldetti, Mr. Weishaar and their staffs, Law Enforcement and the people staying home. Commissioner Sellers asked if we have the possibility to test the general public like Louisiana is doing? Mr. Baldetti said we don't have enough tests and he didn't know the reason for this other than maybe they don't think Kansas is a "hot spot" for the virus and our numbers aren't climbing like Louisiana. He is constantly advocating for Reno County to be a regional testing site and for population-based testing. Mr. Sellers thanked him for the self-reporting form and for all the work they both and their staffs are doing. He asked about the process to screen the self-reports and if that process could be sped up? Mr. Baldetti said they have several staff members vetting these reports and they are trying to get through them quicker. Commissioner Hirst asked if anyone could help with putting this information about the self-reporting on social media and Mr. Baldetti said absolutely. The more we can get it out there, the better the information will be.

Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Hirst thanked all the people who are making the masks and sharing them with everyone.

Commissioner Bush asked Reno County Administrator Randy Partington if he would visit with Department Heads and Elected Officials about tightening our belts and if possible, trying to put off buying larger purchases until next year and limiting our spending. Mr. Partington stated that he had already been visiting with Department Heads and Elected Officials about this. He also stated that he has been in conversations about reducing of hours or even furloughing employees. On April 25th we will get March sales tax and that will be a good indicator of what's to come. Commissioner Bush would like to see actual dollars or percentages that each department is able to cut. We don't want to raise taxes next year.

Commissioner Sellers agreed and stated that he believes Mr. Partington is on top of the spending and seeing what we can carry over to next year. He also told Commissioner Bush that he liked his informational video that is posted on the Reno County website. He stated that he had listened to the Governor's report on Friday and she said that she believes local leadership is good, and he agreed that he believes we have good leadership. She reminded everyone to stay in place and only get out when necessary and stated that 47% of the cases are ages 20-55. The Governor stated that there would be no penalties for late tax filings. The KDHE said cases are doubling every 3 days. The Department of Labor said that over 79,000 people have filed for unemployment. Mr. Sellers said that the Governor's order exempts Religious organizations, but he reminded everyone to be in groups of no more than 10 people and to keep the 6-foot distance between you.

Mr. Partington said he is working on the budgets and where and how to cut and save money.

There was one addition to the agenda, a discussion and possible action to extend the burn ban.

Mr. Bush moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst to add item 6a to the agenda, a discussion to extend the burn ban. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

Mr. Weishaar stated that KDEM has asked for a voluntary reduction in burning. This should help with breathing problems

and cut down the risk of a fire getting out of control. After a brief discussion **Mr. Bush moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers** to extend the burn ban to April 28, 2020. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 2-1 with Mr. Hirst voting no.

Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Bush, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on April 10, 2020 of \$235,800.20 and also consisting of pending Added, Abated and Escaped Taxation Change Orders numbered 2020-156, 157, 159 and 160 as submitted. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

Human Resources Director Renee Harris and Youth Services Director Bill Hermes met with the Board for their regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Ms. Harris went over employment statistics and Mr. Hermes went over Shelter and Detention demographics and what they are doing to help keep the kids and staff safe during the epidemic. Both gave brief overviews of various issues not requiring action by the Board.

Solid Waste Director Megan Davidson and Monte Markley with SCS Engineers met with the Board to recommend approval for the Solid Waste Landfill 2021 Master Plan Update. Ms. Davidson commented that this is the update they give every year and briefly talked about the scale house and the office relocation. Mr. Markley gave a power point presentation showing what the new Convenience Center looked like and what would be housed there. Ms. Davidson said they are not wanting to raise the user fees for taxpayers and the tipping fees that commercial trash haulers pay. After some discussion, Ms. Davidson is going to put a report together to show what the \$3 increase in tipping fees would net the county and to include the county's that she thinks we might lose if we raise the fee. The commission would also like to see some aerial views of the area and how she is going to get input from the public in the area if it is decided to close Mohawk Rd instead of moving the road around the new buildings. **Mr. Bush moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst** to table the Master Plan Update until Tuesday April 14, 2020. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

By consensus, the Board agreed to put Department and Elected Official updates on hold thru the end of April.

At 11:15 a.m. the meeting adjourned until 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 14, 2020.

Approved:

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

Reno County Clerk
dp

Date