

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GEARY COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
March 30, 2020

Commissioners Present: Keith Ascher, Brad Scholz, and Charles Stimatze

Others present: Rebecca Nordyke, County Clerk; Jon Thummel, Human Resources Director; Garry Berges, Emergency Management Director/Rural Fire Chief; Tammy Von Busch, Health Department Administrator and Steve Opat, County Counselor (via phone)

The meeting was held at the 4H/Senior Citizens Center due to the closure of the Geary County Office Building to the public because of the COVID-19 virus.

Chairman Ascher called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mrs. Von Busch provided the weekly COVID-19 update:

- Presented the KDHE update from Sunday and noted that today's report was not available yet.
- Stated Geary County does not have any positive cases but our surrounding counties do.
- Reported the childcare facilities order is not in conflict with the Governor's order. The facility must take the temperature of the child and if the child has a temperature they cannot remain in the facility.
- Stated the Animal Shelter has been overwhelmed with dogs and inquired if they could use the side yard for people to "meet" the dogs for possible adoption. This would keep the public from being inside the facility.
- Stated the Governor's Order allows for church services, but the Geary County order does not. She stated she has had a call from a minister stating that he provides mental health services; therefore, the church should be open. Mr. Opat stated qualified mental health personnel must have a license and that he will check into this matter further. Mrs. Von Busch stated services can be held but they must adhere to social distancing.

Dan Jackson, Sheriff, arrived at the meeting.

Chairman Ascher inquired how church services on Easter Sunday will be handled if President Trump says they can be held. Mr. Opat stated that the President cannot override state and local orders, unless the Attorney General issues a statement with other guidelines.

Commissioner Stimatze asked if churches can have just 10 people in person. Mr. Opat stated they must observe social distancing.

Mrs. Von Busch stated there is a person who is belligerent and putting false information on the Health Department Facebook page. She inquired if this person can be blocked or if there is some other action that can be taken. She explained that her staff has called him about the issue. Sheriff Jackson asked that she send him the specific examples and he can compare them to the policy his office has for Facebook posts.

Mrs. Von Busch and Mr. Thummel left the meeting.

Sheriff Jackson presented the monthly report:

- Reported that the number of calls and the numbers in the jail are lower than normal at this time.
- Stated they have plenty of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) right now and they coordinate with Garry (Berges, Emergency Management Director/Rural Fire Chief) with regard to PPE.

- Reviewed two incidents that occurred this weekend: 1) a person was in Colorado had been around people who tested positive for COVID-19. That person bonded out Sunday morning and the Health Department will follow up 2) a second person was processed and while they are not showing symptoms, they are in isolation.
- Stated his department is operating as normal.
- Reported there have not been any public complaints. He noted that there was activity at Milford Lake over the weekend and the public are following guidelines.
- Mr. Opat inquired if golf courses were open. Sheriff Jackson stated yes and that there are lots of rules the public is supposed to follow. He said he heard there were many violations and suggested the Junction City Commission be called since it is a city course.
- Reported the highways are quiet. He stated he thinks for the most part people are doing what they are supposed to.
- Stated that Fort Riley is locked down and the Commanding General is basically following the orders the Governor has issued. Chairman Ascher inquired if Fort Riley personnel are keeping Sheriff Jackson, Mr. Berges, and other officials informed. Sheriff Jackson stated they attend the EOC meetings. Mr. Berges said he gets calls and notices from Fort Riley officials. He also noted that if a soldier in the barracks is diagnosed with COVID-19, they will be counted in the Geary County numbers.

Krista Blasidell, County Attorney, arrived at the meeting.

Sheriff Jackson left the meeting.

Mr. Berges presented information and requested authority to bid on a used fire truck that is for sale from the Highland Chemical Engine Company in New Jersey. The estimated cost is \$25,000 plus \$4,000-\$5,000 for shipping. He stated he has money in his capital outlay fund for this purchase. He noted the "new" truck would replace an older truck, so there would not be a need to purchase radio and other equipment. **Commissioner Stimatze moved to authorize Mr. Berges to place a bid on the truck as presented and if the bid is successful the money for the purchase would come from the capital outlay fund. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.** Mr. Berges left meeting.

Mrs. Blasidell requested approval of the technology agreement with Nex-Tech. She stated the total monthly cost is \$3,706.00 for three years. She noted this agreement will increase computer security in her office as well as needed upgrades in equipment. She stated it is an ideal time for the replacement/upgrade while the courts are closed. She stated she talked with Mr. Opat and he prefers to remain with the current provider. She stated she is working out a few details with Brent Graham, 8th Judicial District IT person. She noted this change will place her department on the county email. **Commissioner Scholz moved to accept the agreement. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.** Mrs. Blasidell reported she has staggered staffing due to the COVID-19 virus. Mrs. Blasidell left the meeting.

A recess was taken from 10:40 a.m. to 10:47 a.m.

Clerk Nordyke presented the weekly report:

- Presented Commission Change Orders for approval. **Commissioner Stimatze moved to approve Commission Change Orders 2019-315 through 2019-324. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.**
- Presented March 9 minutes for approval. **Commissioner Scholz moved to approve the minutes from March 9. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.**

- Reviewed the agendas for the month of April and inquired if the commission wanted to make any changes to the format of the meetings due to the COVID-19 virus, such as just meeting for action items. She explained that some other counties have decided to make such changes. After discussion the commission directed her to survey other counties and that for now the format of the meetings would remain the same. **Commissioner Scholz moved to continue the closure of the Geary County Office Building, to the public, through April 30, 2020. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.**
- Reviewed the items that she will bring to the meetings to accommodate being in a different location.
- Provided the following Election update due to COVID-19:
Stated that the Governor's Executive Order 20-15 includes requirements for conducting elections which means that all the Clerk's staff are essential personnel. She stated that she must maintain the voter registration database which can only be done in her office. The Secretary of State will not allow anyone to work from their home computer because the level of security is not adequate.
- Noted that due to the closure of the Office Building, that anyone wishing to file for office will need to make an appointment.
- Stated that the Governor's and Secretary of State's Offices are in contact with each other and at this time no one anticipates any changes to the primary election date or election method. She stated she expects higher volume than normal for advanced mail ballots and her office will work to be prepared for that increase.
- Stated that any changes to the date of the General Election in November will be made by Congress.

The commission held their review and update:

- **At 11:25 a.m.; Commissioner Stimatze moved for a 15-minute executive session, to end at 11:40 a.m., to discuss legal matters regarding no fund warrants for Geary Community Hospital with Mr. Opat. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.** The meeting resumed at 11:40 a.m. with no action taken.

Mr. Opat left the meeting.

The commission review and update continued:

- Chairman Ascher stated he talked to Senator Longbine regarding 2021 budget issues.
- There was a general discussion about sales tax and ad valorem tax collection.


The meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m.



 CHAIR, COUNTY COMMISSION



 COUNTY CLERK



 DATE