

**Minutes of Meeting
Elected Officials
March 18, 2020
9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Coroner Warren Keene, M.D., Prosecutor Barry McHugh, KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Chief Deputy Assessor Joe Johns, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Finance Director Dena Darrow, Elections Manager Shelly Amos, KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Director Sandy Von Behren, OEM Preparedness Coordinator Tiffany Westbrook, Chief Deputy Treasurer Laurie Thomas, Information Technology (IT) Network Administrator Grant Kinsey, BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones, BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Commissioner Bill Brooks attended via teleconference.

A. Call to Order: Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):

KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger requested that the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and Continuity of Operations topics be addressed first, to allow OEM Director Sandy Von Behren and OEM Preparedness Coordinator Tiffany Westbrook to attend to their pressing duties. All present voiced agreement.

Commissioner Bill Brooks entered the meeting via teleconference call at 9:02 a.m.

C. Business:

Office of Emergency Management Update – Corona Virus (Discussion)

Office of Emergency Management (EOM) Director Sandy Von Behren announced that the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was open and staffed. She explained that the EOC's function was to coordinate information to the public and to the County's partner agencies regarding the Corona Virus. She stressed that obeying the social distancing parameters was important. She stated that it would be helpful to allow County employees who could, to work from home. She urged everyone to look out for those on staff who were especially vulnerable to illness.

Ms. Von Behren said her department had created a fact sheet on the disaster declaration that would be distributed to all the Elected Officials. She noted that it would contain information on what expenses could be eligible for disaster assistance. She added that the EOC was trying to generate frequent press releases to keep the public informed.

Ms. Von Behren introduced OEM Preparedness Coordinator Tiffany Westbrook. She reminded those present that she would be retiring in May 2020 and Ms. Westbrook would be stepping into the Director position.

Ms. Von Behren reported that tests for the Corona Virus were being done every day; these were sent by overnight delivery to the designated labs. She remarked that they were waiting for results.

Ms. Von Behren urged that anyone who displayed symptoms of a cough, fever of 100.4 or more and respiratory symptoms stay home and call the Panhandle Health District at 1-877-415-5225. She stated that operators would be available from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.

Ms. Von Behren explained that the operators would ask a series of questions and, based on the answers, Panhandle Health would have an epidemiologist on staff call the person back with additional questions. The person might then be advised to call his or her primary care physician or an Urgent Care Center. The physician would then provide an order for a lab test, if appropriate. She noted the local testing site was 2207 Ironwood, Coeur d'Alene, across from Kootenai Health. She stressed that people who did not have a doctor's order for a lab test would be turned away.

Ms. Von Behren commented that all of the local healthcare agencies had been working together for a number of years to prepare for such an event; they had created policies and procedures to ensure close communication and quick action.

Treasurer Steve Matheson requested clarification regarding the transfer of authority in certain areas to the Incident Commander or to the Sheriff. He asked if such a transfer would impact BOCC powers in any significant way.

KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger said that he and Chief Officer of the Kootenai County EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Chris Way shared authority in this situation. He explained that they would coordinate information released to the public to maintain a consistent message and coordinated response. He replied that he did not believe the normal powers of the BOCC would be affected much. He confirmed that there was a \$10,000 per day spending limit placed on the Incident Commander; amounts in excess of that would need to be approved by the Commissioners.

Ms. Von Behren stated that all expenses related to the emergency should be listed under a specific line item number so they could be accurately tracked for potential reimbursement.

Ms. Von Behren explained the chain of authority that existed from the federal government to the local government in a declared emergency. She described the procedures by which requests for resources would be made. She added that the County could request reimbursement from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and said FEMA generally paid 75% of an eligible expense, with the state often covering up to 15%, leaving the County's match at about 10%.

Finance Director Dena Darrow reported that Payroll already had codes set up to handle staffing costs related to the pandemic. She assured the Commissioners the Auditor's Office could supply spending reports as required.

Continuity of Operations – Corona Virus (Discussion)

Sheriff Wolfinger announced that KCSO had modified Driver's License procedures, effective today, to appointments only in order to manage the number of people in the office at any time.

Sheriff Wolfinger noted that the Jail had four medical isolation cells. He said there were two inmates in isolation who were fugitives from out of state, so they would probably be in isolation here for the full two weeks.

Sheriff Wolfinger commented that the state of emergency would probably impact his department's ability to get their FY21 Budget out at the previously requested deadline.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan urged that departments get their budgets in by the deadline if possible, but assured everyone that arrangements would be made for those who were not able to get them done in time.

Ms. Von Behren, Ms. Westbrook and Sheriff Wolfinger exited the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos remarked that he was in charge of the Sheriff's Office operations while Sheriff Wolfinger was committed at the EOC.

Commissioner Duncan urged that departments encourage vulnerable employees to work from home wherever possible. She reported that Information Technology (IT) Network Administrator Grant Kinsey had provided VPNs (Virtual Private Network) sign ins to allow this. She called attention to a draft Daily Operations Decision Matrix provided by Ms. Darrow to help identify and manage areas of concern.

Commissioner Duncan referred to a memo provided by Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud which outlined circumstances under which administrative leave could be offered instead of having staff use accrued leave.

Ms. Proud inquired whether individual Elected Officials would decide when to offer administrative leave to staff in their departments. Commissioner Duncan and Chairman Fillios voiced agreement, but strongly urged all departments to keep HR informed at all times.

Those present discussed different scenarios under which an employee might be sent home, potential HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) violations implicit in requiring a supervisor to take an employee's temperature, and other potential problems.

Commissioner Duncan suggested that a second Elected Officials Meeting be held next week to continue discussions on Continuity of Operations. There was general agreement.

HR Generalist – Benefits & Compensation Dorothy Cross entered the meeting at 9:54 a.m.

Chief Deputy Assessor Joe Johns expressed concern about his staff performing customer service duties at their counter. Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke expressed similar

concern regarding the Recorder's Office and County Assistance. Treasurer Matheson agreed and asked the Commissioners to support consistent measures to be applied to all face-to-face services to safeguard the public and the employees.

Ms. Darrow remarked that Buildings & Grounds (B&G) could install Plexiglas shields at counters. She pointed out these were inexpensive and would be reimbursable by FEMA.

Ms. Locke suggested an accelerated cleaning protocol in all public areas.

Undersheriff Mattos suggested limiting customer entry to department offices. He pointed out this had already been done by KCSO in both Driver's License and Concealed Carry Permit counters.

BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones reminded all present that the County had a substantial social media following, which would help get necessary information out. She reported that a new web page was being added to the County website for Corona Virus updates.

Mr. Kinsey asked all present to send him names of anyone who would work from home. He cautioned that the County servers would unavoidably be slowed by offsite access.

Commissioner Duncan suggested that those working from home be encouraged to rotate their schedules to keep the servers from being overstressed at peak times.

Mr. Kinsey noted that the number of licenses for certain programs could become an issue. He said that the County bought a certain number of licenses for different functions; more could be purchased, but the cost might be higher than expected.

Mr. Kinsey exited the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Ms. Locke reported that she and Elections Manager Shelly Amos had been in contact with the Secretary of State regarding options for the May 19, 2020 election. She remarked that some states were considering changing the date of the elections. She said the Secretary of State's Office was going to support a push for people to complete absentee request forms. She added that a state-level website had been made available yesterday with the new form. Ms. Locke stated that the legislators had not expressed support for moving to just a mail-out process.

Ms. Locke said she, Ms. Amos and Chairman Fillios had discussed polling sites and were considering having one at the Fairgrounds for Election Day. She stated that they were consulting with Elections staff and IT to plan for requirements of a shift in location. She reminded those present of the logistics required to notify every registered voter in the County of a change in polling locations and encourage requests for absentee ballots.

After further discussion, it was generally agreed not to pursue early voting as a strategy.

Due to a time overrun, it was generally agreed to address the two remaining items on the agenda at a later date.

FY21 Compensation (Action)

Due to time constraints, this topic was not addressed at this time. It was generally agreed the topic would be added to the upcoming Human Resources meeting.

Advisory Votes (Discussion)

Due to time constraints, this topic was not addressed at this time. It was generally agreed the item would be added to the agenda of an upcoming meeting.

D. Public Comment (Discussion): This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County-related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There was no public comment.

E. Adjournment (Action): Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
