

EMERGENCY MEETING

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1:00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020

County Board Room, 3rd Floor, Courthouse

MINUTES

The Clay County Board of Commissioners met in special session with the following Commissioners present: Frank Gross, Jim Haney, Kevin Campbell, Jenny Mongeau, and Grant Weyland. Others present: County Attorney Brian Melton, County Administrator Stephen Larson, and Senior Administrative Assistant Colleen Eck.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gross called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Commissioner Weyland, seconded by Commissioner Haney, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda.

CLAY COUNTY OPERATIONS, POLICY AND PROCEDURE ADAPTIONS IN ADDRESSING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Limit Public Access to County Buildings

County Administrator Stephen Larson and Public Health Director Kathy McKay noted that following the Board meeting yesterday, a Personnel Issues Committee meeting was conducted with Commissioners Gross and Weyland and representatives from several departments. They addressed several issues for consideration in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and came up with a number of recommendations for the Board to consider approving. The first recommendation is to limit public access to County buildings including the County Courthouse, Family Service Center, Law Enforcement Center (LEC), and Highway Department. Signage with department phone numbers will be posted at the doors of those buildings for contact purposes. Security staff will remain at the main entrance of the courthouse. The Motor Vehicle Department is open for now, but there will be changes in their procedures. The LEC vestibule will be open and has a phone that goes to dispatch. Resolution 2020-16 was drafted to put these temporary procedures in place.

Mr. Larson referred to an Administrative Order from the Seventh Judicial District and noted he and Attorney Melton also met with Judge Rosenfeldt and Court Administrator Jeffers this morning. The Administrative Order states the Court's preference would be to leave the courthouse doors open for high and super high priority hearings. They will also make efforts to accommodate remote appearances at scheduled hearings. Sheriff Emptying stated he prefers the doors to be locked and those who come to the doors to be screened by Court Security. Attorney Melton stated there will be scenarios where access is needed but there will also be limitations. Those who are allowed entry should be walked in and out again by the appropriate staff. The

department heads will help identify the immediate needs and items that can be postponed or handled without face to face contact.

On motion by Commissioner Weyland, seconded by Commission Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the following resolution addressing ALL County buildings:

Resolution 2020-16

WHEREAS, the Clay County Board of Commissioners declared Clay County in a STATE OF EMERGENCY for the COVID-19 pandemic event on March 17th, 2020; and:

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic event will impact the population of Clay County and its cities due to the disruption of services, to include the closure of schools, childcare services and other services that will negatively impact day to day life; and;

WHEREAS, Clay County will follow guidelines presented by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Executive Order of Governor Walz and recommendations of President Trump of social distancing; and:

WHEREAS, providing for the well-being and limiting of exposure to our employees and the general public is of the utmost importance to the Clay County Board of Commissioners.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Clay County Board of Commissioners will be limiting public access to all County Buildings effective March 18th, 2020 until further notice.

Remote / Telecommuting and Potential Policy

Mr. Larson referred to another recommendation from the committee for some County employees to work remotely and tele-commute. Currently, Clay County does not have a policy for working from home. The department heads are helping to identify essential and non-essential employees and employees who would be in a position where they could work from home. They will also identify those who are higher risk: having underlying health conditions, 70 or older, or who are pregnant. Recommendations can be made but cannot be mandated to find reasonable accommodations for their work situations. Employees will be asked to work with Technology Services for their remote computer needs. The County Attorney and HR Director have reviewed the remote work terms and agreements that were handed out. These terms would just be to cover employees during this pandemic.

There was further discussion about meeting all data practice guidelines and HIPAA requirements. Ms. McKay noted that Public Health is still reimbursed for client screenings even when the clients are not there in person. Their staff are all on County computers.

On motion by Commission Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Remote Work Terms and Remote Work Agreement, effective on March 19, 2020.

Flexible work schedule

Again, department heads would have oversight of their employees with working non-traditional work hours to cover the needs of our citizens due to staying socially isolated from co-workers, daycare struggles, etc.

There was no document for this item, but the Commissioners were supportive of flexible work schedules at this time.

Allowing employees to utilize up to 80 hours of sick time prior to accruals.

The next policy to be drafted would allow employees to utilize up to 80 hours of sick time prior to accruing it. This may be needed for newer employees who have not built up their sick time or those who do not have sick time. Employees who are sick should not be coming in and infecting others. A doctor's order is not required to take sick time.

On motion by Commissioner Mongeau, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and unanimously carried, the Board approved staff to draft a policy for allowing up to 80 hours of sick time prior to accruing the sick time.

Motor Vehicle procedural change

The new change for Motor Vehicle is for their staff to meet the customers at the door, determine their needs, and have them wait in their vehicles until they are signaled to come into the building for assistance. This procedure keeps the number of people in the building to a minimum. The County also recommends customers not come to Motor Vehicle if they have 30 or more days to complete their transaction; or do their business online or by mail when possible. There may also be a grace period coming for expiration dates.

Future Board Meetings

The Department of Administration issued a reminder this week that during the time of a pandemic, Open Meeting Laws can be adjusted. At this point, there is a requirement for at least one person to be present at a meeting and the others could remote in as long as everyone could hear each other. The meetings would still be broadcast and videotaped for the public. This is an option for future Board meetings or other public meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.

Frank Gross, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator