

COVID-19

March 12, 2020

4 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson (by phone), County Manager Erik Martin, Commissioner Stamper (by phone), Dr. Rachel Wood, John Abplanalp, Andy Caldwell, Amber Smith, Lee Napier, Steve Wohld, Lara McRea, Becky Butler (4:26 p.m.)

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Erik Martin discussed the need to focus in on what's needed in Lewis County to address the COVID-19 outbreak.

Steve Wohld said he is working to identify the needs for electeds and directors. He said Abbie Snyder from the Auditor's Office will help track expenses. He said he is tracking closures and working on logistics. He said Facilities is auditing supplies. He said IT is working on a list of essential personnel and continuation of operations.

The group discussed the need for offices / departments need to work on coop plans.

Steve said the county is monitoring future events at the fairgrounds and is following Dr. Rachel Wood's recommendations to allow no new events and not allow a weeklong circus.

He said the gun show is not interested in closing.

Andy Caldwell said DEM's role needs to be defined. He said he has concerns about the supply chain. Andy said he is working with the state Emergency Management. He said the county doesn't have a "voice" until it has a confirmed case.

John Abplanalp said there are no confirmed cases yet in Lewis County. He said the state Department of Health (DOH) may be offering to do all case investigations, allowing local staff to continue other efforts.

John said he and Dr. Wood will meet with school superintendents the morning of March 16.

Dr. Wood said she is working with area health care officials and discussed the possibility of drive-through COVID-19 testing. She said there may not be enough personal protective equipment at some local facilities. She said she is working to coordinate testing and receiving results.

Dr. Wood discussed non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as washing hands, covering coughs, sanitizing surfaces, etc. She discussed a proposed letter / statement.

Commissioner Fund said her concern is that the commissioners will need to follow the same guidelines, such as canceling meetings, having people work from home, etc.

Amber Smith urged the group to reach out to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office about any legal issues linked to personnel, OPMA, Public Works, etc.

Becky Butler joined at 4:26 p.m.

Commissioner Jackson discussed the need for a policy regarding sending employees home.

Commissioner Stamper discussed the hospitals' needs.

Dr. Wood reiterated the need to limit the spread of the virus by encouraging individuals to be thoughtful about attending events.

Erik Martin said he would revise the proposed letter / statement for the commissioners to review.

Steve said the circus and most other events have canceled their reservations at the fairgrounds. He also discussed a daily news update being sent out.

Steve said the county is trying to lockdown supplies.

Erik asked the commissioners to consider whether they want to appoint him as the point of contact regarding COVID-19.

Amber Smith discussed how the OPMA applies in the cases of emergencies.

At 5:06 p.m., Commissioner Fund announced that the meeting was being recessed until 3 p.m. March 13, 2020.

The meeting resumed at 3 p.m. March 13, 2020, with Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Stamper, Andy Caldwell, Erik Martin, Josh Metcalf, John Abplanalp, Dr. Rachel Wood, Amber Smith, Becky Butler, Lee Napier, Ed Mund and Jonathan Meyer, along with various members of the county, public and press.

Commissioner Fund discussed a recent WSAC meeting during which fact sheets and other information related to COVID-19.

The commissioners discussed state and federal funding available to help with the response to COVID-19.

Becky Butler outlined steps the county is taking to track spending related to COVID-19.

Commissioner Fund and Commissioner Stamper gave Dr. Rachel Wood and County Manager Erik Martin the authority to speak on the county's behalf regarding COVID-19.

Ed Mund, Commissioner Fund and Erik Martin discussed information available online, on the county's website as well Facebook.

John Abplanalp said there are no known cases of COVID-19 in Lewis County.

Erik said he and Andy Caldwell are tag-teaming on incident command. He said Greg Peterson has volunteered to help with the county's efforts.

Steve Wohld discussed work to identify essential personnel, order additional laptops, create work-from-home options, identify supply needs and set up sanitation stations. Steve noted that many events have canceled fairgrounds events.

Andy Caldwell said an order form to help with supply needs has been developed.

Ed Mund discussed an upcoming meeting with all county fire chiefs.

Erik said he is working on draft contingency policies regarding sick leave, quarantines, courthouse closures, etc. He said he would present those the following week.

Jonathan Meyer praised the efforts

Amber Smith discussed the Open Public Meetings Act as it applies to an emergency-type action, noting that all commissioners present would have to approve an emergency declaration.

Erik noted that an emergency declaration has been drafted. Commissioner Fund said the trigger for an emergency declaration would be if the county learns of a positive test.

Erik said two area hospitals have indicated they have four or five days' worth of supplies.

Amber clarified

Valley View Health Center CEO Gaelon Spradley discussed challenges with COVID-19 testing. He discussed the need to find a unified approach to find child care for health care workers and first responders so they can still work during the weeks-long statewide school closure. He urged the county to help with those efforts.

Chad Taylor commended the county's COVID-19 efforts.

The group discussed child care as well as large-scale events.

The group discussed ways to minimize in-person contact, such as relying on email more heavily and using online services.

Tori Graf from Centralia Downtown Association discussed efforts to help small business owners.

Meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.