

Mayors' Meeting

May 1, 2020

10 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, County Manager Erik Martin, Centralia Mayor Sue Luond, Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes, Centralia City Manager Rob Hill, Chehalis City Manager Jill Anderson, Morton Mayor Dan Mortensen, Mossyrock Mayor Randy Sasser, Pe Ell Mayor Lonnie Willey, Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh, Vader Mayor Joe Schey, Winlock Mayor Brandon Svenson, Lewis County Budget Services Manager Becky Butler, Emergency Management Administrator Andy Caldwell, Port Commissioner Peter Lahmann, Pam Peiper of U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's office, Assessor Dianne Dorey, EDC Executive Director Matt Matayoshi, Lewis County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Amber Smith

Guests: Reporter Susan DeLaire, David Woodrum

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Andy Caldwell said Lewis County stands at 29 confirmed COVID-19 cases with three fatalities. He urged city leaders to share their PPE needs with him as soon as possible. He said he has identified a source in the U.S. from which to order masks at 62 cents apiece for masks, let him know by the end of business May 1.

Erik Martin said the state has defined "recovered" to mean a patient is 28 days from the onset of symptoms and is healthy without symptoms. Erik said 16 of the county's 29 cases fall into that 28-days-post-symptom category. He said 12 patients meet the definition of recovered.

Winlock Mayor Brandon Svenson said Winlock businesses need to open. He said cities and counties need to band together to push for reopening.

Vader Mayor Joe Schey said the county provided masks for city employees. He echoed the need to open.

Mossyrock Mayor Randy Sasser said the one-size-fits-all approach isn't working for the small counties and small cities.

Pe Ell Mayor Lonnie Willey echoed the other mayors' concerns.

Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh echoed the other mayors' concerns. He discussed concerns with supplies, including those at area grocery stores.

Morton Mayor Dan Mortensen questioned what data the governor has used to close hunting and fishing and other outdoor recreation. He said he fears that the city will see a 20 percent drop in revenue.

Commissioner Jackson discussed a meeting the Board of Health held the previous day. He said the group discussed what measures area businesses should take to be able to reopen. He said the Board of Health

is creating a package to send to the governor. He asked that area businesses submit their plans for reopening so those can be forwarded on to the governor.

Mayor Dobosh said some small restaurants would not be able to meet strict guidelines.

Centralia Mayor Sue Luond expressed concerns regarding limits the state has placed on governments.

Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes expressed the need to continue pressuring the governor to reopen businesses across the state. He stressed the need for a countywide effort.

Becky Butler discussed stimulus funding that the county and cities are expected to receive as part of the CARES Act. She said \$300 million will be allocated to cities and counties with populations of less than 500,000.

She said the allocations will be at least \$25,000 for cities and at least \$250,000 for counties. She noted that Lewis County will receive \$4.3 million for COVID-19-related expenses, can be used

- To create grants
- To cover telecommuting efforts
- PPE
- Sanitization
- Will cover emergency paid sick leave
- Resources shifted to mitigate to COVID-19 response may be covered

Becky said Commerce is working on the grant agreements. Becky cautioned that federal funding will require cities and counties to provide auditing efforts. She said the money must be used in 2020 and that the Legislature must be notified in advance about grant agreements. She said the funding may be reimbursements but that it's possible the funding will be provided upfront.

Becky said regular salaries would not qualify for coverage and that the funding cannot be used to offset lost revenue.

Pam Peiper of U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's office said Rep. Beutler is working to streamline the funding and relax some of the requirements.

Andy Caldwell urged area leaders to alert him about any business closures as those are being tracked.

Commissioner Stamper discussed a multi-county meeting that took place the previous day. He said county commissioners from across the state have drafted a joint letter to the governor.

Commissioner Fund said there have been rumors of the governor's office announcing region-specific plans for reopening.

Commissioner Fund discussed a "toolkit" a group is putting together. She discussed struggles area residents are having signing up for unemployment. She discussed a plexiglass shortage.

Amber Smith discussed the governor's authority as granted via RCW. She said he has wide latitude during the COVID-19 meeting and that it's allowed under the state constitution.

She said PRA and OPMA changes still need to be addressed.

Area mayors discussed the status of their city parks, noting which ones are open and which are closed.

EDC Executive Director Matt Matayoshi discussed a new testing site. He also discussed efforts to secure additional grant funding.

David Woodrum thanked area leaders for their leadership. He expressed concerns about the region's spiritual recovery. He noted that the National Day of Prayer is the following week.

David Woodrum prayed for the group.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.