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MINUTES

SANGAMON COUNTY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING

MARCH 23, 2020

The Sangamon County Board met in Special Session on March 23, 2020 in the County Board Chambers. Chairman Van Meter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Mrs. Williams gave the Invocation. Due to the special circumstances and the restrictions set because of the COVID-19 virus, the meeting is being conducted by phone. Those present in the room are: Sangamon County Board of Health President Dr. Brian Miller, Infectious Disease Specialist with SIU School of Medicine Dr. Vidya Sundareshan, Springfield Fire Chief Allen Reyne, Director of the Office of Emergency Management Bill Lee, Director of Sangamon County Dept. of Public Health Gail O’Neill, Sheriff Jack Campbell, County Administrator Brian McFadden, Chairman Van Meter, and County Clerk. All other County Board Members, media, and the public joined the meeting by phone.

Chairman Van Meter asked the County Clerk to call the roll. There were 28 Present – 1 Absent. Mr. Krell was excused.

WAIVER OF TEN-DAY FILING PERIOD

A motion was made by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mr. Bunch, to waive the ten-day filing period. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED

TEN-DAY FILING PERIOD WAIVED

RESOLUTION 1

1. Resolution approving the extension of the Proclamation of a Sangamon County Disaster.

Chairman Van Meter stated there would be no questions or comments by the public or media during the meeting. The media can call the office at 753-6650 to speak to anyone after the meeting. They will now hear from the professionals regarding the COVID-19 virus in Sangamon County.

Dr. Brian Miller, who is the President of the Sangamon County Board of Health, addressed the County Board. They started discussing this problem back in January and things were being monitored. They enlisted shareholders in the county, in the community, and organizations of government agencies. They identified potential needs and came up with resources and everyone has been turned loose to do their jobs to prevent infestation.

Dr. Vidya Sundareshan, who is an Infectious Disease Specialist with SIU School of Medicine, addressed the County Board. She explained that the virus is different from the flu because of its capability to spread. The pandemic has become a huge problem. It is very important to adhere to non-pharmaceutical guidelines. They have included social distancing for people who are sick. The people who need to be in the hospital will be taken care of, and some will be confined to their homes. They will all have to work together on protocols. They will keep talking about the guidelines and will come up with more protocols.

Springfield Fire Chief Allen Reyne addressed the County Board. He stated that Brian put them all together and it was the right thing to do to produce an incident management team and to make sure they are all on the same page. If you do not have the organization, then things will be overlooked. It is going in the right direction. As they identify problems, they will get them taken care of.

Bill Lee, who is the Director of the Office of Emergency Management, addressed the County Board. He explained they are giving guidance to county officials and have created a flow chart that is broken down into groups. The alternate housing plan is about ready to go. They want to provide assistance to people when needed. They are also taking donations of protection equipment, and if needed, mortuary services. Things will change daily.

Gail O'Neill, who is the Director of the Department of Public Health, addressed the County Board. She stated they are trying to spread the word for people to go home and stay home. They want to get this message out to the public. The hospitals and medical facilities such as Memorial, SIU, HSHS, and Springfield Clinic have come up with a very good media message. Right now, testing is one of the biggest issues. In the beginning, they were only testing when available. Now, since they realize testing is becoming more widely available, the hospitals and Springfield Clinic are sending some out for testing. They have a chart that shows what is going on.

There are 50 or so that have been authorized, and they believe there will be another 600 tests done. While trying to get the information out, there has been confusion regarding the numbers. There are doctors that are concerned about the number of cases out there.

Chairman Van Meter stated there were a number of questions from the public about the jail and law enforcement, so Sheriff Jack Campbell will address them. The City of Springfield is working the same way with this. Information goes from the board members to the chairman and then to Brian. Sheriff Jack Campbell stated he has never witnessed anything like this before. They are limiting the moving of inmates, have suspended visitations, and conduct a daily cleaning of the jail. They have also postponed all evictions for now.

County Administrator Brian McFadden addressed the County Board. He acknowledged that Sangamon County is a large employer with over 700 employees. It is complicated to provide a lot of diverse services. There is a large number of people coming in the building. They have begun an exercise to scale back on manpower. They will see what can be done. They will determine what is essential and what is non-essential such as the Juvenile Detention Center, Coroner, Courts, SMART services, and the Recorder's Office. Non-Essential departments include Regional Planning, Zoning, and Supervisor of Assessments. With the Auditor, Building & Grounds, Information Systems, and Child Advocacy, some can work from home and some from the building. Hours have also been scaled back. They are now closing the building at Noon and are still closed on Saturday and Sunday. Judge Madonia and the State's Attorney decided they needed to reduce the traffic flow through the building.

Chairman Van Meter stated it is clear they have an extraordinary professional and team approach on this crisis, and it was made possible by this disaster declaration. He announced they will now address questions from the board members in batches.

Mr. Fraase praised everyone who has been working on this. The emails have been very helpful and they do appreciate it. Mr. Thomas praised all of the staff on their professionalism.

Mrs. Linda Fulgenzi seconded what Mr. Fraase said, and she appreciates the updates every day. Her constituents are very grateful. Mr. Ratts stated they are doing screening by the hundreds. He asked what facilities are giving testing since they are turning people away. The numbers could help them with funding down the road. Dr. Vidya Sundareshan explained the IDPH lab helps, with approval by the Sangamon County Dept. of Public Health, and they send them to third party labs. They have sent out a lot of testing, and the capability of testing will go up. They do not know how many they have right now. They are gathering numbers from the third party labs. Since there is a delay in getting tests back, they are not getting as many back as they are sending out. They are seeing an increase in testing capabilities. The criteria for testing has changed for IDPH. They recommended testing for patients who are admitted. They need to prioritize who has been admitted and who hasn't.

Chairman Van Meter asked if the availability of testing is improving. Mrs. O'Neill stated it is. They are providing new tests as they become available. Mr. Ratts stated he feels they are missing so many people. Mrs. O'Neill explained that this is just the IDPH batch. They will see how many more there are when they get the other tests back.

Mr. Bunch commented that he has a sore throat and doesn't know if he should get tested or not. He believes they will get through this. Chairman Van Meter stated the cooperation from the professionals has been extraordinary. Mr. Bunch praised each and every one of them. Dr. Vidya Sundareshan explained that a fever and sore throat are symptoms. If you went to a clinic they would ask if you have been in contact with anyone who has traveled. She pointed out that the criteria will change. As the test results come back from the third parties, they will know more. They will have increased capabilities of testing in the community. They would also ask if you had any contact with someone who had COVID-19. If so, then you would probably be tested. She encouraged everyone to continue social distancing, not to share drinks, to keep their distance from other family members, to self-quarantine, and keep monitoring.

Mr. Stumpf recommended all departments keep record of all their expenditures on anything related to COVID-19 so the committees will have record of all expenditures. Chairman Van Meter clarified that this resolution will not end the oversight committee requirement. Mrs. Annette Fulgenzi stated there have been questions from people inquiring if they should report to work for certain businesses. Mrs. O'Neill stated that is a challenging question and is a gray area. Mrs. Fulgenzi suggested that they could send people to the Department of Commerce if needed, and they will help. Sheriff Campbell stated they had just a few questions and they refer back to the Executive Order. Mrs. Small asked if they know when the test results they are waiting for will arrive. Mrs. O'Neill stated they do not know right now because they are being sent across the country. They are looking at about five or six days.

Chairman Van Meter encouraged everyone to continue with the communication and they will continue feeding information.

RECESS

A motion was made by Chairman Van Meter to recess the meeting to April 13, 2020. A voice vote was unanimous.

MOTION CARRIED
MEETING RECESSED

Don Gray
Sangamon County Clerk

