

March 20, 2020

The Board of Ellis County Commissioners met in special session at 1:00 p.m., Friday, March 20, 2020, in the Commission Chambers, at the Administration Center, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas.

Chair Robert "Butch" Schlyer called the special meeting to order on the operation of the County with the Coronavirus and new federal and state regulations during this time.

Commissioners present: Chair Robert "Butch" Schlyer, Commissioner Dustin G. Roths and Commissioner Dean F. Haselhorst were present.

Also present were Interim County Administrator Darin Myers, County Counselor Bill Jeter and County Clerk Donna J. Maskus.

The meeting opened with everyone standing and saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

No changes to the Order of Business.

ISSUES FROM PERSONS NOT ON THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

No issues from persons not on the Order of Business.

COVID-19 UPDATE – JASON KENNEDY, ELLIS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

Ellis County Public Health Officer Jason Kennedy stated that there are no confirm cases in Ellis County.

Kennedy read and discussed his recommendations for County operations recommendations for County Operations as of March 20, 2020:

In consultation with KDHE, the County Board of Health, our medical director and in accordance with all current KDHE and CDC mandates we are not recommending widespread closure of county offices. We will support and enforce all state mandates including limiting social gatherings to no more than 50 people and mandatory 14-day quarantine of employees and residents of Ellis County who have traveled to:

- A state with known widespread community transmission (currently California, Florida, New York and Washington state) on or after March 15.
- Visited Eagle, Summit, Pitkin and Gunnison counties in Colorado in the week prior to March 15 or after.
- Traveled on a cruise ship or river cruise on or after March 15.
- Traveled internationally on or after March 15.
- Persons who have received notification from public health officials (state or local) that you are a close contact of a laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19. (A close contact is defined as someone who has been closer than 6 feet for more than 10 minutes while the patient is symptomatic.)

We also encourage all workers and residents of Ellis County to follow the current mandates and guidelines from both the KDHE and CDC including:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces daily.

I encourage the board of county commissioners to enforce, adopt or revise policies allowing and actively encouraging:

- Sick employees to stay home: Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness should stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100 degrees or greater orally), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- Ensuring that our sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with state and federal guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
- Discussion with outside agencies who provide Ellis County with services about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.
- Not requiring a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work. Healthcare providers are extremely busy and may not be able to provide such documentation at this time.
- Ellis County should maintain our currently flexible policies permitting employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Ellis County should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.
- Ellis County should actively discourage travel at this time. Travel at this time given the uncertainty of communal spread opens a potential vehicle for the viral transmission within our community and organization. Unnecessary travel could also result in mandatory quarantine that would further reduce our operational readiness further compromising our ability to serve the public.

I further recommend that in accordance with KDHE guidelines we:

- Place posters that encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at the entrance to our buildings and offices.
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.
- Instruct employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning: Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. That we use cleaning agents approved by the CDC and follow the directions on the label.
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

This is also an opportunity for us to recognize and be mindful of our employees and employees around the nation that make up our Critical Infrastructure. These 16 critical infrastructure sectors whose assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or virtual, are considered so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination thereof. These employees always hold the front line and knowingly place themselves at risk to protect the greater good of all. These 16 infrastructures include

- [Chemical Sector](#)
- [Commercial Facilities Sector](#)
- [Communications Sector](#)
- [Critical Manufacturing Sector](#)
- [Dams Sector](#)
- [Defense Industrial Base Sector](#)
- [Emergency Services Sector](#)
- [Energy Sector](#)
- [Financial Services Sector](#)
- [Food and Agriculture Sector](#)
- [Government Facilities Sector](#)

- [Healthcare and Public Health Sector](#)
- [Information Technology Sector](#)
- [Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector](#)
- [Transportation Systems Sector](#)
- [Water and Wastewater Systems Sector](#)

I also encourage all employees and residents to access the most recent and up to date information at:

- www.kdheks.gov
- www.cdc.gov

Sincerely,

Jason R. Kennedy

Public Health Officer Ellis County, KS

ELLIS COUNTY HOURS OF OPERATIONS – DARIN MYERS, INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Interim County Administrator Darin Myers discussed the County operation with the Coronavirus.

County Offices are asking customers to telephone the office and set up an appointment with office doors locked but all employees working. If an employee needs to stay home, they are to use their PTO time. Starting April 2 eligible employees with federal and state regulations could use an eligible two weeks of fully or partially paid sick leave for the COVID-19. Myers stated that Janet Schmidt will work through these payroll situations.

Myers reported that all Ellis County Fairground activities have been cancelled with the Kansas Governor’s orders. This includes the races and all activities in the buildings.

Court Administrator Amanda Truan addressed that the Court Offices are closed with a Supreme Court 2020 PR16 Order. Her staff continues to work.

Public Works Director Bill Ring reported on changes at the Landfill operation with a front window with less face to face contact.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session was called.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chair Schlyer stated that the meeting will adjourn at 1:33 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, April 6, 2020, at 5:00 p.m., Administrative Center, Commission Chambers, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas.

BOARD OF ELLIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ROBERT “BUTCH” SCHLYER, CHAIR

DUSTIN G. ROTHS, COMMISSIONER

DEAN F. HASELHORST, COMMISSSIONER

ATTEST:

DONNA J. MASKUS, COUNTY CLERK