

## Randolph County Commissioners

March 20, 2020

The Randolph County Commissioners met in a Special meeting at 9:00AM in the Commissioners and Council Room in the Courthouse with the following members present: Board President Michael Wickersham, Tom Chalfant and Gary Girton. Also present was Randolph County Auditor Laura J Martin, Sheriff Art Moystner and County Attorney Meeks Cockerill.

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Michael Wickersham, President presided over the meeting.

### **COVID-19 – Issues and Procedures**

Mike said he asked earlier this week for this meeting to be called and his original intent at that time was to meet to discuss and possibly give somebody the authority to act on behalf of the county beyond having to meet with a 48-hour notice. He said since that time we have had some things change and I have come to the conclusion that he would be in favor of taking some action this morning with regards to the county owned buildings and that action would be announcing today and posting on the Courthouse, the RCFFO Building, the Highway Department, Community Corrections Building, the EMS Building and the Jail that we are officially closed to the public and that if you need to see somebody, call them, if you have a court appointment then we cannot do that, so anything we do this morning would be in conjunction with the courts. He said he thinks that would announce to the public that we want you to stay home and not come here unless you need to be here and if you need to be here let us know what you need to be here for and we will determine per office holder, per the court whether or not you can handle your business over the phone, over the internet, through the mail or whether you absolutely need to be here. He said that would be where he would want to start any decisions that we make this morning and then beyond that personally he would have to defer to Dr. Sowinski and Chris Shaneyfelt to add any other directions that they feel are important at this time.

Mike said there is some issue as to whether or not the county wants to implement the Emergency Family Medical Leave expansion policy, which we are required to do on Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup>. He is not sure if we implemented it today, if we extended that 14-day requirement that we are required to pay between now and the second. He said I don't know how that works, he said he does know that the day that it has to be implemented is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April. He said what he has read is that state and county subdivisions do not get reimbursed through the provisions of the Emergency Family Medical Leave expansion policy, he does not know if we would get reimbursed through FEMA, through other means because of the pandemic and the emergency. He said he is looking for guidance, he said in his opinion if they don't roll over and it becomes basically a 28 day period that we would be responsible for, he is not sure that he is in a position to be that generous this morning and would rather wait to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April and if we have any issues between now and then maybe look at taking it on a case by case basis or we do have sick days available and we do have compensation days available, if it is something we can implement

today and it is not going to cost us later from a budgetary stand point then he would not have a problem going ahead and implementing it today.

Meeks said that he does not know that anyone has that information at this point.

Chris Shaneyfelt said the guidance is very iffy at this point on anything, they are just playing by ear.

Mike said he would ask Gary Girton and Tom Chalfant to consider his suggestion regarding closing our doors to all public access as of 10:00 am today unless by appointment or order of the court and then give direction on how they are to do that. He said we cannot lock the doors because court has to be open as he understands it and at this point in time he would suspect that they want to be open.

Judge Haviza said that he spoke to Justice David of the Supreme Court yesterday and he is wanting the courts to follow what he is calling an AR-17 request petition and under that petition you would be asking for emergency relief from the Supreme Court to act in this emergency that is taking place right now and it would give the courts permission to continue hearings if need be, to conduct court business by telephone, by video conferencing, in order to give the courts an opportunity to respond and keep separation of people and things of this nature. He said it allows them to cancel civil and criminal jury trials. He said that he and Judge Toney are in the process right now of preparing that AR-17 petition. He said it is his understanding that they want the courts to stay open and active but on a limited basis.

Mike said that he would refer to the Judges judgement on that and basically, he would defer to the office holder's judgement on whether they want to shut their doors or not, but he said from his stand point the Commissioner's need to let the public know that they do not want them in here unless they have to be.

Judge Toney said that the popular date that a lot of these petitions seem to have in them is May 4<sup>th</sup> as far as jury trials, other matters such as his Friday morning cases today they have tried to eliminate bringing people over from the jail, he said that he told the prosecuting attorney's office that hearings such as those that can be continued that aren't an emergency, they should just ask for them to be continued and he is not going to have a problem with it and he is sure that Judge Haviza will not either. He said they are trying to limit the number of people that come in for court purposes and they will continue to do that.

Mike said he thinks that is what we all need to do and making the statement that we do not want you here is at this point necessary but he does not think from the courthouse standpoint we can lock the doors. He said we are going to have people filter in, he said office holders can lock their doors and put signage up. He said he has received several different documents as to what kind of signage to put out there and personally he likes the Pike County Courthouse Closing and it basically says what we have talked about and directs them if they need to be there.

Tom made a motion to proceed as Mike has suggested on the closing of the courthouse.

Meeks said just to be clear, all personnel will be here, but we are closing public access.

Tom asked Mike to read that again.

Mike said Randolph County Courthouse will be closing its doors to all public access as of 10:00 am March 20, 2020 unless by appointment or by order of the Court. If business can be conducted via postal mail, telephone or e-mail please use these methods. If your business cannot wait or cannot be transacted in the aforementioned ways please contact the respective office to set an appointment or make alternative plans. If any appointment is scheduled, instructions for entry will be provided, we appreciate your understanding. He said and then it says Randolph County Courthouse our address and then there is a list of office holders and their telephone numbers on this so that they can contact them. He said that he thinks this does a good job of covering the administrative offices, he said he doesn't know if the judges want to add some language here or even put your own sign up. He does not have a problem with that.

Meeks said he thought it would be very important for the office holders to know, that they need to put a sign on their door instructing the public how they want to conduct business.

Mike said hopefully the public will see this and not even come into the building, that is what we are trying to prevent, because when they come in, they are potentially contaminating door knobs, restrooms, office doors so we want to reduce that. He said he talked to Jake this morning and Jake feels that activity is down other than the grocery store, which those are essential services and there are larger than groups of ten at the grocery store. He said we just want to keep our activity down and this is the best effort to do that.

Judge Toney said one other thing that should be stressed to the office holders is that there is no reason what so ever for extra personnel to be coming in here and staying in these offices all day long. He said he knows that it has happened this week. People that don't belong here for what ever reason, they just don't belong here. He said everyone is trying to do their part and he thinks all of the officeholders need to be made aware of that and follow those rules.

Mike said if you are not an employee of the county in this building then you shouldn't be here. He said if you are not an employee of the highway department in that building then you shouldn't be there. If you are not an employee or a tenant of the RCFFO building then you should not be there. He said he has done that at his place of business and they don't get very many visitors at all but we still put the sign up that says don't come in. He said anything that we can do in that respect is going to help us be part of the solution. He said hearing what you hear on the news, if we don't do this as American's then someone is going to tell us to do that. He said that it is time to step up do it.

Mike said he has a motion to do this, do we have a second.

Gary seconded. Meeks asked if this is in effect indefinitely or should you do it until April 6<sup>th</sup> which is your next meeting.

Mike said it is effective until further notice.

Meeks said then you should maybe allow one of you to decide.

Mike said that is the next discussion, he is hoping maybe Chris and Dr. Sowinski can give us some insight into that. What if any other steps, but he has a motion on the floor.

Gary said he did not have any input.

Mike asked Dr. Sowinski or Chris if they had any input on this motion that is on the floor right now about closing the courthouse and the other public buildings to the public.

Dr. Sowinski said just some process suggestions that he doesn't think has to do with the motion but what to do when people call and say that they have to meet with someone. He said if you want to hear those suggestions now he can do that or you can vote on your motion.

Mike said let's vote on the motion and then you can share that because that would be good direction for the office holders.

Mike ask all in favor of the motion to signify by saying aye. All aye votes. Motion Carried.

Mike said he is going to give this to Laura and ask her to type it up, he asked the judges if they wanted to add anything to it or if they just wanted to put their own up.

Judge Haviza said if he could get a copy of it then he and Judge Toney would get together and decide which direction they would like to go.

Mike said we will need to act quick because this all happens at 10:00 am.

Mike asked Dr. Sowinski and Chris Shaneyfelt to come up. He said that Dr. Sowinski could start with what he indicated was a procedure to follow when someone calls.

Dr. Sowinski said this is what he has done for the health department and basically it involves, we are closed to walk in business, but if you need something urgently then he has a process of witness hand sanitation, couple of masks outside of the door, so they can put that on beforehand, he has a screening questionnaire to assure that they have not had a fever, cough or any inappropriate exposure from travel or the like and if they have any positive answers then they will be denied the appointment. He said if they are not sick then they will be allowed to bring zero people with them, one person at a time and then we will have the masks and the hand sanitizer at the front window and after that is done the window can be opened and business transacted.

Mike asked Dr. Sowinski if he was recommending that our office holders do this as well or is something, he said he does not know the business of each office holder, he said if you get a phone call he does not know what kind of phone call you are going to get and he is hoping most of them can be done over the phone so nobody comes in and he would hope that the elected officials can persuade the public not to come in and wait, but if you do he thinks hand sanitizer at

a minimum would be required before they come in the office. He said he would ask these questions because these questions basically they are not supposed to enter anyway if they have answered yes to any of these.

Dr. Sowinski said that is the intent, is for those questions to be a prescreening on the phone not as a face to face.

Mike said then you would do this to get an appointment.

Dr. Sowinski said that if an appointment is in three days, they have to be on the phone and have those questions being dealt with on the day of the appointment. He said these were his thoughts to keep his employees safe. He said these are not drastic measures here, it is just a mask and hand sanitizer and screening questions, so you can feel free to copy that.

Mike said he thinks we should copy it and distribute it to the office holders. He said we do not have masks available though. He said maybe you just keep them six feet from us when you come into our office.

Dr. Sowinski said exactly, you can implement any safety precautions that work for your office.

Mike said they could practice social distancing on a one on one basis. He said he has asked Chris to come because in the last ten days he shared about 200 pages Randolph County Emergency Planning documents with them and he wanted him to maybe give them a rough outline of what he perceives in the event things change drastically what should or could happen. He said he is getting the situation reports from Chris and those have been helpful, he said he almost called him yesterday because it seemed like St. Vincent hadn't changed any which is good news. He asked Chris to share with us from an Emergency Management standpoint what we are looking at.

Chris said from an Emergency Management Standpoint this is different than your typical disaster, the primary lead on this situation is the Health Department. He said the emergency pandemic falls under the true leadership of Dr. Sowinski. He said the way it is currently ran is the Health Departments and the Hospitals are handled by the State Department of Health and then the Emergency Services side of it and the continuity of governance and all of the other stuff falls under the emergency management side. He said there are some struggles going on because we don't have a really good grasp of it, he said he doesn't want to sugar coat it, is the best way to say it. He said as this continues to get worse and more and more testing becomes available for the short term, we are going to struggle. He said the S & S is available and is starting to get rolled out, the strategic stockpiles are going to the hospitals and to the Health Departments and he was told yesterday in a conference call that Emergency Services is on their own, so whatever supplies that we have is it until more is made available. He said until we get into a lot of the planning stuff the Emergency Management planning dictates the ways that we try to manage an emergency or disaster and we really need to say that we are going to enact that plan and the basic parts of any like the Health Departments can plan or influence the plan and the other plan that they developed which is the extended response and recovery plan. This helps us deal with long term cascading events, far better than an average C & P plan. He said we are concerned with all the offices, but the primary ones they are concerned with are the Highway Department where

they are helping to coordinate maybe traffic lanes and stuff like that if we have to set up screening sites, the 911 communication center, ESS4 which is firefighting, the Emergency Management office, which would be his office and red Cross and other agency's that would be involved are Recourse support, public health, public safety and recovery will actually involve a lot of the office holders and external affairs which is public information. He said these are groups that they need to pay particular attention to. He said when the President made this a National Emergency opened this up for potential reimbursement, so any type of expensed related to COVID needs to be documented and kept so that when it becomes time to seek reimbursement we have the documents.

Mike said what you are talking about happening would be is if we proceed down the negative path, this would have to be implemented.

Chris said we are already taking the steps to close buildings, he would think it would be in our best interest to go ahead and say we are going to activate CE&P to try and mitigate any further issues that we have.

Mike said then that puts the decision-making things such as travel advisory and things of that nature in who's hands?

Chris said you are the president of the Commissioner's and are the ultimate authority for this county. I have a travel advisory typed up in case you need it.

Mike said typically when a county sees a confirmed case within their borders they issue a travel advisory.

Chris said some are doing that and some have been proactive.

Mike said some are yellow.

Chris said yellow is the lower level, it is just an advisory.

Mike said really that is what we are suppose to be doing, we are not suppose to be out and about.

Chris said it is more about social distancing.

Mike said orange becomes essential only, to and from work.

Chris said to the grocery store, to the pharmacy.

Mike said California closed down the whole state, but if you read the proclamation it is not much more than Wayne County did two weeks ago. He said from a standpoint of essential travel only.

Chris said that is tuff to determine, you can put some guidelines in there but they can always argue as to what is essential and what is not.

Mike said that is the question before us today. Do we want to implement the Randolph County extended response and recovery for cascading events? He said from Tom and Gary's perspective they would be trusting him and basically trust Chris and Dr. Sowinski to make decisions on behalf of the county, he said he would commit to them that there would not be any isolation, he would through our attorney consult with both of you before they did anything that would be interruptive.

Chris said that if we did something interruptive that is outside of an emergency meeting it would only be good for seven days and then after that you would have to have a meeting to decide whether to extend it or not.

Tom made a motion to adopt the Randolph County extended response and recovery plan. Gary seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike said the only other item he had which he did bring up, is whether or not how we want to deal with any employees that could be or would be faced with COVID-19 health issue with respect to quarantine, child care and has he indicated the Emergency Family Medical Leave expansion policy requires us to do certain things for our employees beginning April 2<sup>nd</sup>. He said it is our choice whether we do something between now and then if we choose to do so. He said we might be able to get it back from FEMA or HSS as an expense of this or we might get credit for what we do now later. He said he doesn't think we will. He said or we could have a policy remote work when possible and authorize the office holder to pay their employee to work from home, if that is possible that might get us until April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Tom asked if we need to make a distinction between the elected department and the ones that the Commissioner's control.

Mike said that the departments that the Commissioners control would have to seek permission from them to do that. He said or we can just implement an Emergency Family Medical Leave expansion policy today. He said it is going to be a lean time in the next few months because the governor has extended property tax payments and income tax payments.

Meeks said if we have cash flow problems then the state going to help.

Mike said that we would have to determine that we have a problem and then we have to go ask for and we have to be able to respond to it. He said we are part of this state and we will follow their lead on this.

Mike said privately in his business we are required to do the same thing on April 2<sup>nd</sup> they are not going to do anything prior to April 2<sup>nd</sup> because they do already have paid sick leave in place for employees to take if they need to do so.

Tom asked if we will meet again next Friday.

Meeks said you are meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

Mike said he doesn't think we need to make that call yet.

Meeks said that if you are quarantined our policy says that you have to bring a Dr's note after 3 days. He said that is not going to be a requirement for quarantine.

Mike said that raises a question of, we don't want somebody coming back if they think they are sick, but if they don't think they are sick, we don't know if they are or not.

Dr. Sowinski said we are talking about quarantine perhaps a person that is not sick because they have traveled or were exposed.

Mike said if they are quarantined, whoever quarantined them would say you are free to go. He said the other side of it is if you are sick we don't want you coming to work, but before you come back you would need something from either a telephone conversation or an e-mail from a doctor or something that says you are okay to come back to work. He said I don't want people who say they are sick today and Monday they say they are well, we don't know if they are well or not. He said the CDC kind of gave mixed direction on that. He said its easy to let them go without a doctor's slip but when you come back in without a doctor's slip, how do you deal with that. He said that they implemented a telephone opportunity IU has an assessment that you can go to. He said he thinks Anthem offers a telephone opportunity as well. He said he would encourage using that and let us know that you have made that phone call and they have told you okay.

Mike asked Gary and Tom what they would like to do on this Family Medical Leave Expansion Policy.

Tom said he would like to delay it as long as possible.

Mike said so we will use our existing sick time for a couple of weeks and relax our standards when it comes to quarantine. He asked if they should offer the office holders and department heads the opportunity to work remotely at their discretion until further notice.

Chris said some locations are also changing the hours so and allowing different shifts for personnel for social distancing as well.

Mike asked Gary and Tom if they would want to include that to allow the flexibility of the office holder and department head to spread out the employees.

Gary made that motion. Tom seconded. All aye votes. Motion Carried.

Gary Friend asked Meeks on the regularly scheduled meetings, they are opened to the public, where are we at with that, how do we proceed.

Meeks said he has a 10:00 am meeting with Luke Britt to discuss this. He said you can cancel a meeting without having a meeting.



Mike said you can cancel that up until the day of the meeting.

Gary said he would be in touch with Mike and the Auditor's office soon.

Mike said some how they have to approve claims. He said there has to be some sort of method, but they can do that electronically.

Gary said if we have to approve additional appropriations.

Meeks said the Governor's order says we don't have to follow the additional appropriations guidelines. He said he will send Gary the e-mail with that information.

Robin Vickery asked since she is not an elected official and she does have an advisory board is she under the Commissioner's.

Mike said she should consult the president of her advisory board.

Mindy said she has employees that do not have sick time right now and she has one home today with flu like symptoms, is there any guidance as to how long she needs to stay home without pay.

Dr. Sowinski said the CDC recommendations in that situation is a minimum of 72 hours after complete resolution of symptoms and fever.

Mike said that answers the health side of it, the economic side of it, unless we change this policy. He asked if she has not been here long enough to accrue sick time.

Mindy said she has used it all, from being sick. She said she also has new employees that have no time yet.

Mike said the new standard is 30 days now for family medical leave for this purpose. He said at this time he does not know what to tell you other than if we start doing something like that then we will have a whole host of people that have used their sick time.

Mindy asked if she could tell her to stay home.

Mike said yes, that is her choice. He said Dr. Sowinski said 72 hours after the symptoms are gone.

Chris said since we are going to the restrictions at the courthouse he would recommend closing all doors except one to the facility.

Mike said yes, we could lock the east and west doors and just use the north door.

Tom said they will have to climb the steps to find out its locked.

Jake said if you go that route, he will put a rope and a sign on the handrails to the east and west doors saying please go to the north entrance. He also said the envelopes that Mindy has in the east and west entrance may need to be relocated and that signage changed. He also asked that when we type the posting up for the buildings could we put all the county offices and numbers on it.

Chris said if any officeholder has information they want put out by social media and you don't have the accounts for it, send it to his office and he will push those out for them, so that we are getting the messages out.

Missy Williams asked if the offices in the old hospital building going to remain open.

Mike said the RCFFO building will be the same guidelines that we have here.

Missy asked if the Commissioners have the mechanism to get this information out to our community.

Mike said he is trusting that everyone in the room will spread the word via social media or talk and Chris will get it out there. He said we will post our notice.

Missy said the clerk's office is doing an excellent job, they have started a new face book page and they could be your official to let people know what's happening.

Chris said we also have the County Web site and the Code Red we can use as well.

Mike said a code red blast would be a real good one to do.

Art said this is for Chris some of the officeholders with the push out of the plan, you will get that to them today so they will know what they are looking at.

Chris said yes.

Debbie Preston said that she has a memo from State Board of Accounts and it is talking about timely deposits of funds. She said that SBOA said that we can do it on Tuesday's and Thursday's but that it would have to be approved by the Commissioners because the banks are closed and they are only doing the drive up right now. She said it also talks about the claims and how just one person can approve those claims.

Mike said he does not have a problem with Tuesday and Thursday if it works for you.

Tom made a motion to allow the Treasurer to make deposits of funds on Tuesday and Thursday. Gary seconded.

Mike asked if you could walk them over and put them in the night deposit.

Debbie said she could. She said it is not going to bother her to go over there every day.

Mike said if you want to do that it is fine, we are not saying you have to do it. He asked that all in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike asked George if he had a question.

George asked if the policy that they are putting out allowing office holders to determine whether people work from home or not, will guidelines be put out since we are on a time clock generated payroll. He said if you are home you are not coming in here and clocking in/out.

Mike said it wasn't clear in our motion, but they are basically implementing the work from home policy in the event you qualify for Covid-19 sick leave. He said so if I have broken my ankle we are not allowing you to work from home, if you are quarantine, we will allow you to work from home. He said if you are diagnosed with Covid-19 although you probably shouldn't be, you could work from home.

George apologized and said that this was not clear.

Mike said he apologized for not making it clear, but there are 7 things in this that would qualify you and it all has to do with Covid-19.

George asked if this is state wide or a county policy.

Mike said this is county policy. He said he thinks every county is doing it differently.

George said some counties are working from home.

Mike said some are paying them now. He said right now we are under a mandate by the federal government that come April 2<sup>nd</sup> we have to implement a 14-day sick leave on top of the already existing paid sick leave any employee would have to deal with the Covid-19 problem. He said and that policy is that you cannot make them work from home, you can't make them use their already existing sick leave and it also allows them to take care of a child that is not in school until May 1<sup>st</sup>. He said that is there as well and can go for ten weeks and is pretty broad. He said as he understands this that public subdivisions cannot get that back.

Mindy said you said something about shift changes with employees does that only apply if someone is sick.

Mike said it really depends upon your office and how much social distancing you can do without doing that. He said in his office there are about nine of them but they all have their separate areas and they are able to practice social distancing. He said he thinks that is the key and for him, he is going to trust everybody in this building that they are not going to use this to take advantage. He said he thinks each office knows what they can do to mitigate this curve.

Ed asked if Dr. Sowinski's questionnaire could be e-mailed.

Mike said it will go out with the notice.

Mike said the Family Medical Leave act indicated that part of that bill Covid-19 testing was going to be free. He said he found out yesterday that it is going to be free if you don't have an employer sponsored health care, so your employer is going to pay for it. He said Anthem has proposed that we add coverage for this to our health insurance policy and they are indicating that it is going to cost us about 8 cents per covered person per month which is about \$17.84 per month total of \$221.00 a year. He said they are estimating how many claims we will have and they know better that we do of what that is going to look like. He said he would recommend that we accept and add this coverage to our policy.

Tom said that is for one year, they will not raise it on us.

Mike said no, not until our renewal which is in July.

Mike made a motion to implement this. Tom seconded.

Gary Friend asked that the self-insured portion to the county just because its part of our premium is that still going to pass through until we hit our maximum.

Laura said yes.

Gary said so that test in its entirety will come to Randolph County.

Laura said yes.

Gary asked if anyone knows what the test cost, not that it matters but we have to budget.

Dr. Sowinski said it cost \$199.00 from Quest or \$350.00 from Mackle and \$247.00 from LabCorp.

Mike asked for all in favor of the motion to signify by saying aye. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike said this doesn't make any difference, but he decided to do this last night.

Italy has a population of 60,000,000 people in an area of 116,000 square miles, that's 517 people per square mile.

Randolph County has an area of 453 square miles with 25,000 people in it, that's 55 people per square mile. He said we can have a lot of effect on each other by social distancing and it should be easy for us, so he encourages everyone to do that. He said he has other states too if your interested. He said Indiana is 184.

Dr. Sowinski said it is better to be in Randolph County than in New York City.


Mike said the state of New York has 343 people per square mile and most of that is probably in New York City.

**Adjournment**

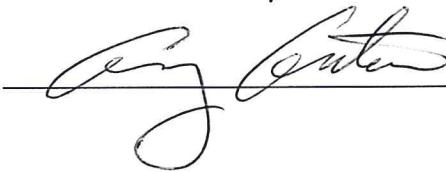
Tom made a motion to adjourn. Gary seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Reviewed and signed this 1 day of June, 2020.

RANDOLPH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
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ATTEST:

  
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Laura J Martin, Auditor of Randolph County