

## YANKTON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING

February 29, 2020

A special meeting of the Yankton County Commission was called to order by Chair Cheri Loest at 9:30 AM on Friday, March 27, 2020.

Roll Call was taken with the following Commissioners present: Joseph Healy, Gary Swensen, Don Kettering, Dan Klimisch (via phone) and Cheri Loest.

There were no conflicts of interest reported by Commissioners.

**Action 20124C:** A motion was made by Kettering and seconded by Swensen to approve the meeting agenda with the following addition: Item 6A, video conference equipment. All present voted aye; motion carried.

There were public comments from Louis Johnson and Gary Swensen.

Chair Loest closed public comment.

**COVID-19:** Chair Loest highlighted topics covered in the March 26 counties briefing with South Dakota Governor Noem. Some counties explained what they were doing to minimize exposure. Other topics included liability insurance if buildings need to close; property tax payment delay; upcoming Primary election, open meeting requirements; courtroom polices; and remote voting at meetings.

Chair, Loest, asked Emergency Management Director Paul Scherschligt to update the board on the COVID-19. Scherschligt said as of March 26th, there has been 46 positive cases, 1,973 negative and 125 pending. No cases yet reported in Yankton County.

The board discussed HR6201, which is the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Chair Loest said the bill covers employers with less than 500 employees with the allocation of two weeks for emergency leave. Loest said it's been discussed at the department head meetings how this bill would affect Yankton County. Loest said there is an exemption for medical providers and emergency responders and she feels they should be included and treated like any other county employee. The additional expense would be absorbed by the county because private employers will receive a tax credit and public employers will not.

**Action 20125C:** A motion was made by Kettering and seconded by Healy to include the Emergency Medical staff as part of the Family's First Corona Virus Act (HR6201). Roll call vote was taken with Kettering, Healy, Swensen, Klimisch and Loest voting Aye; Motion carried, 5-0.

Chair Loest reported information from meetings held with department supervisors. There was discussion about the addition of Plexiglas to counters and advising the public to do as much county business by phone, mail or computer as possible; and in-person business by

appointment. It was consensus of the supervisors that actions taken have made the building a safer workplace. Commissioner Healy suggested rotating staff with some employees working from home. Commissioner Healy said the weekly meetings with supervisors will continue, but an emergency meeting will be called if conditions change drastically. Chair Loest and Commissioner Healy have been attending the department head meetings. Chair Loest asked the board to give her and Commissioner Healy the latitude to make final decisions with department heads. Commissioner Klimisch said he would like weekly updates of the meetings.

**Action 20126C:** A motion was made by Kettering and seconded by Healy to delegate authority to Chair Loest and Vice Chairman Healy to make decision on building closures, staffing levels, payment compensation. Roll call vote was taken with Kettering, Healy, Swensen, Klimisch and Loest voting aye; motion carried, 5-0.

The board discussed COVID-19 resolutions passed by the City of Yankton and the City of Sioux Falls. The board also discussed the City of Yankton request to combine the City election with the June 2, 2020 County Primary Election.

**Action 20127C:** A motion was made by Klimisch and seconded by Swensen to allow Yankton City election be combined with the June 2, 2020 Primary Election. All present voted aye; motion carried.

The board discussed in length setting up a county board of health.

**Action 20128C:** A motion was made by Klimisch and seconded by Swensen to set up a County Board of Health, according to South Dakota Codified Law 34-16-22, in order to protect the safety and welfare of Yankton County. Roll call vote was taken with Klimisch and Swensen voting aye; Healy, Kettering and Loest voting nay; motion failed 2-3.

**Action 20129C:** A motion was made by Healy and seconded by Kettering to recess the commission meeting for five minutes. All present voted aye; motion carried.

**Action 20130C:** A motion was made by Swensen and seconded by Kettering to reconvene. All present voted aye; motion carried.

**Action 20131C:** A motion was made by Klimisch and seconded by Swensen to set up a County Board of Health, according to SDCL 34-16-22. The focus will be COVID-19. The term will expire June 4, 2020 with option to extend to a later date. This board will follow the City of Sioux Falls model.

**Action 20132C:** A motion was made by Healy and seconded by Kettering to amend Action 20131C to add that the Board of Health does not have blanket authority to close certain business in Yankton County. Roll call vote taken with Healy, Kettering and Loest voting aye; Swensen and Klimisch voting nay; motion to amend carried, 3-2.

**Action 20133C:** The amended motion was restated to set up a County Board of Health, according to SDCL 34-16-22. The focus will be COVID-19. The term will expire June 4, 2020 with the option to extend to a later date. This board will follow the City of Sioux Falls model and will not have blanket authority to close businesses in Yankton County. Roll call vote taken with Kettering, Healy, Swensen, Klimisch and Loest voting aye; motion carried, 5-0.

**Action 20134C:** A motion was made by Healy and seconded by Kettering to appoint resident Erin Hacecky to the County Board of Health. Roll call vote was taken with Healy, Kettering, Klimisch and Loest voting aye; Swensen abstaining motion carried, 4-0.

Commissioner requested getting quotes for video conference equipment.

There were public comments from Robert Freng, Gary Swensen and Joseph Healy.

Chair Loest closed public comment.

**Action 20135C:** A motion was made by Healy and seconded by Kettering to adjourn. All present voted aye; motion carried.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

**Cheri Loest**, Chair  
Yankton County Commission

ATTEST:  
**Patty Hojem**, County Auditor