

Supervisors Room, Courthouse
Pocahontas, Iowa
March 16, 2020

At 10:00 a.m., the Board of Supervisors of Pocahontas County, Iowa, met in special session to discuss the COVID-19 virus.

Members present: Chairman, Jeffrey Ives; Supervisors, Clarence Siepker, Louis Stauter, Ed Dewey and Brent Aden; and Auditor, Kelly Jepsen. Others present: Diane Ferguson, Public Health Director. Russ Jergens, EMA Coordinator joined telephonically.

Russ Jergens, EMA Coordinator, shared the update he received from the State. He explained that they are recommending more precautionary measures at this time. They do not want people to congregate in groups, as they are concerned about the spread of the virus. Jergens explained that 88% of the people that get COVID-19 would not even know that they have it and will selfheal. They are also recommending that employers start preparing for the shortage of help if employees get sick for an extended lengths of time. Their main concern is for the elderly with respiratory problems. As of now, they are being updated every Wednesday.

Diane Ferguson, Public Health Director, gave an update. She is not sending nurses into homes if anyone in the home is sick.

Motion by Dewey, seconded by Stauter, to follow any recommendations made by Iowa Public Health, as well as Pocahontas County Public Health, and in conjunction with any advice from Emergency Management and rely on our people to contact us if we have to change anything. At this time, will go with hand sanitizer, signage, and contact newspapers and social media to put information there so people can do business without coming into the Courthouse. They will be flexible at the same time. Ayes all, motion carried.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned.

Jeffrey K. Ives, Chairman

Kelly A. Jepsen, Auditor

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At 11:00 a.m., the Board of Supervisors of Pocahontas County, Iowa, met with Department Heads to discuss the COVID-19.

Members present: Chairman, Jeffrey Ives; Supervisors, Clarence Siepker, Louis Stauter, Ed Dewey and Brent Aden; and Auditor, Kelly Jepsen. Department Heads present: Diane Ferguson, Mary Eastman, Jill Conlin, Orene Cressler, Dan Feistner, Brian Reis, Sue Reigelsberger, Amy Johnson, Mike Bollard, Carol Williams, Steve Nelson, Bob Harrison, Don Cirks, and Kelvin Aljets. Russ Jergens, EMA Coordinator, joined telephonically.

Diane Ferguson, Public Health Director, gave an update. At this time, there are no cases of COVID-19 in Pocahontas County. Hand washing and sanitizing is most important. The schools have cancelled classes but the daycares are all still open. Nursing homes are on lock down.

Jeff Ives, Chairman, explained the Board's thoughts on how they would like to handle business at the County level and asked to hear their questions and concerns. Dewey explained that every office is unique and they should start making plans on how they would continue to operate their office. Ives added that we would never be able to close down the County completely, so to start planning for shortage of help. Different department heads expressed their concerns, asked questions, and gave ideas on ways to communicate with the public.

Siepker explained that this is a fluid situation, so things could change fast. It was encouraged to be prepared for changes. As for now, signs will be placed at all exterior doors requesting that if you are sick, not to enter the building. We will encourage people to do business with the County using other means, such as mail, drop box, email, and by phone. The next step would probably be to close the County building to the public and keep the offices open. If the offices were overwhelmed with sickness, then they would consider closing the office. No decisions on sending employees home for preventive reasons were made at this time.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned.

Jeffrey K. Ives, Chairman

Kelly A. Jepsen, Auditor