

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROSEAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 19, 2020

The Board of Commissioners of Roseau County, Minnesota met in an Emergency Session held at the Roseau City Center in the City of Roseau, Minnesota on Thursday, March 19, 2020.

CALL TO ORDER

The Emergency Meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Board Chair Roger Falk. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Commissioners present were Roger Falk, John Horner, Jack Swanson, and Russell Walker. Daryl Wicklund connected through WebEx. Others present were Jeff Pelowski, Joleen Kezar, Martie Monsrud, Brian Ketring, Steve Gust, Matt Restad, Tobi Eidsmoe, Amy Carlson, Diane Gregerson, Liz Lund, Karla Langaas, Sue Grafstrom, Sandi Weiland, Pam Shaw, Judge Donna Dixon, Mike Trinkka, Chris Stauffer, Chad Wulff, and Pam Grand. Kristy Kjos connected through WebEx.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the Agenda was made by Commissioner Swanson, seconded by Commissioner Horner, and carried unanimously.

COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no comments or announcements.

COUNTY BOARD ITEMS

COVID-19 Pandemic – County’s Response

Coordinator Pelowski requested the Board discuss and address the following items:

1. Emergency Declaration – Following discussion, Commissioner Falk declared a State of Emergency within Roseau County through the next three days (the maximum allowed per MN Statute) in Roseau County. A motion to extend the Emergency Declaration, until such a time that the Board terminates the Declaration by Board Resolution, was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Swanson, and carried unanimously. The Emergency Declaration and Board action extending that Declaration is as follows:

COUNTY OF ROSEAU PROCLAMATION AND DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the virus named “SARS-CoV-2,” is a new strain of coronavirus that has not previously been identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person and which causes a disease named “coronavirus disease 2019,” commonly known as “COVID-19,” which is a respiratory disease that can result in serious injury or death; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the United States; on March 6, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the State of Minnesota; and as of March 19, 2020, there are 77 known cases of COVID-19 in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, as of March 19, 2020, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the County of Roseau, however, the County of Roseau is preparing for the inevitable spread of COVID-19 to our region; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19, beginning on January 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a National Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Tim Walz declared a Peacetime State of Emergency to authorize and all necessary resources to be used in support of the COVID-19 response; and

WHEREAS, as of March 18, 2020 the World Health Organization Situation Report confirmed a total of 191,127 cases of COVID-19 in over 135 countries, including 7,807 deaths; and as of March 19, 2020 a total of 77 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been identified by the World Health Organization as a pandemic, and the United States Centers for Disease Control has provided guidance for individuals, healthcare professionals, and businesses to slow the spread of COVID-19, which include cancelling or postponing in-person events that involve more than 10 people for eight weeks as of March 19, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the County of Roseau personnel has been preparing for weeks, working diligently with local, state, and federal partners to maintain situational awareness and respond to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, local cases will trigger a more aggressive public health response and are predicted to impact residents of Roseau County and those who work in or travel through the County, including County employees; and the need for social distancing, school closings, and quarantine methods to stop the spread of COVID-19 is expected to cause significant challenges; and

WHEREAS, implementation of basic precautions of infection control and prevention, including staying home when ill and practicing respiratory and hand hygiene are necessary to slow or prevent the spread of COVID-19 and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a communicable disease with significant morbidity and mortality, and presents a severe danger to public health: and

WHEREAS, the County of Roseau advises all its residents to follow Minnesota Department of Health guidance. County residents should regularly check MDH's COVID-19 webpage: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/ and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners called for and held an emergency board meeting on March 19, 2020 at the Roseau City Center to discuss the response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Roseau County Board of Commissioners and personnel find that this situation threatens the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the community and will cause a significant impact on the ability of public safety personnel to address any immediate dangers to the public as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Roseau County Board of Commissioners finds that traditional sources of financial aid, assistance and relief will not be able to compensate for the potential impact of COVID-19, and have determined that the necessary resources to respond to and recover from this pandemic will exceed those resources available within the County of Roseau, and additional resources will be needed from state and federal sources.

NOW, THEREFORE, CHAIRMAN ROGER FALK OF THE ROSEAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PROCLAIMS, DECLARES, REQUESTS, AND DIRECTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Under the authority given by Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, declares that a local emergency exists within the County of Roseau, effective March 19, 2020, with all the powers and

responsibilities attending thereto as provided by Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 12, and further proclaims that such emergency constitutes a declared emergency as provided by law.

2. Directs County Staff to review ordinance and regulatory requirements, operations, civil and legal proceedings, events, and resources to determine whether the foregoing should be adjusted or suspended, and to make recommendations regarding additional emergency regulations to support the employees and residents of the County of Roseau.

3. Directs all County departments and offices to operate and support the response to this incident, under the direction and coordination of appropriate county personnel, including implementing new employee protocols, strategies, and processes to ensure that public services are maintained.

4. Directs the appropriate County staff to request and coordinate appropriate aid and resources from surrounding jurisdictions, the State of Minnesota, and the Federal government, as needed.

5. Declares, under Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.021, that in-person meetings of the Roseau County Board of Commissioners, Committee of the Whole, Operations, and other advisory commissions of the County of Roseau are not practical or prudent due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and the peacetime emergency declared by Governor Walz pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 12, and hereby directs that **meetings shall be conducted by telephone or other electronic means, and hereby directs County Staff to take such action as may be necessary to enable such meetings to occur via telephone or other electronic means** pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.021, **until such time as it is no longer impractical or imprudent** for said meetings to resume in-person meetings.

6. This emergency declaration shall continue for a period of three (3) days from its effective date of March 19, 2020, unless further extended by or with the consent of the Roseau County Board of Commissioners pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, subd. 1.

7. Orders that this declaration be given prompt and general publicity.

THAT FOLLOWING THE PROCLAMATION BY CHAIRMAN ROGER FALK OF THE ROSEAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESOLVED TO EXTEND THE EMERGENCY DECLARATION AS FOLLOWS:

8. That pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 12.29, subd 1. the Roseau County Board of Commissioners hereby consent that the three (3) day period for the emergency declaration shall be extended until such time that a declaration or resolution is given by the County of Roseau terminating said emergency declaration.

9. That this resolution extending the emergency declaration shall be given prompt and general publicity and that it be filed promptly by the County Coordinator.

Dated this 19th day of March, 2020

2. Access to County Facilities – Commissioner Falk noted that our neighboring Counties have restricted public access to their facilities. Following a lengthy discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Horner, seconded by Commissioner Walker, and carried unanimously to take the following actions, effective at 8:00 a.m. Friday, March 20, 2020:
 - The Courthouse, Social Services, Law Enforcement and Highway Department facilities will be closed to the public, effective 4:30 p.m., March 19, 2020; but all County services will continue.
 - The Transfer Station/Demolition Landfill are to remain open as scheduled; however, public access to the office and shop areas will be prohibited.

Court Administrator Pam Shaw noted that the Court system will require access to the Courthouse for “super high” and “high” priority cases only. Following discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Swanson, seconded by Commissioner Horner, and carried unanimously, to allow public access to the Courts as determined by Judge Dixon.

3. Board Meetings – IT Administrator Stauffer noted that if public access to future Board meetings is restricted, the County could hold the meetings in the Courthouse Board Room and allow access by WebEx, and possibly stream live to YouTube. Given the fluidity of this crisis, Commissioner Swanson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Walker, and carried unanimously for the County Board to meet every Tuesday, 8:30 a.m., Courthouse Board Room, until further notice; and, to approve public access to the meetings via electronic means.
4. Temporary Employee Policies in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic – Coordinator Pelowski provided a draft Policy for review, discussion, and revision. Following a lengthy discussion, a motion to approve the revised Policy was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Horner, and carried unanimously. (The Policy is available for review in the County Coordinator’s Office)
5. Public Service Announcement (PSA) – Coordinator Pelowski and County Attorney Kjos will prepare a PSA, outlining the Board actions taken at this meeting, and submit the PSA, along with the Emergency Declaration, to our local media outlets.

Upon motion carried, the Board adjourned the Emergency meeting at 11:40 a.m. The next Regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

Attest:

Date: _____

Jeff Pelowski, County Coordinator
Roseau County, Minnesota

Roger Falk, Chair
Board of County Commissioners
Roseau County, Minnesota