

**Minutes of the Nebraska City Board of Health
January 4, 2021
Rowe Memorial Public Safety Complex**

The Nebraska City Board of Health (BOH) met in regular session inside the Rowe Memorial Public Safety Complex, 1518 Central Avenue, Nebraska City, NE at 5:00 PM on Monday, January 4, 2021. Notice of the meeting was given in advance by posting in at least three public places, the designated method for giving notice, as shown by the Certificate of Posting Notice attached to these minutes. Availability of the agenda was communicated in advance to the media, the Mayor and BOH members of this proceeding and said meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Bryan Bequette called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. The Mayor publicly stated to all in attendance that he is required by law to inform the public that a copy of the Open Meetings act is posted on the wall to your right as you come in the door of the Rowe Building Gary White Memorial room. This meeting is being recorded. If you are present and wish to speak please come to the podium and state your name, address, and speak directly towards the microphone the entire time you are addressing the Board. We also have speakers joining the meeting via the zoom platform; we now have an Executive Order from the Governor that allows Board members to be present and voting via Zoom as well. If you are listening in via the zoom platform please keep your microphone muted; if you wish to make a comment, please click on the "Raise Hand" button, for those joining us through the call-in feature, please press *9 (star nine). This will notify our moderator, Andrew Snodgrass (A. Snodgrass), there is a comment from one of our virtual attendees. When you speak please state your name and address.

Upon roll call the following answered present: Wendy Snodgrass, David Lacy, Gregg Goebel, Dr. Brad Vasa, and Mayor Bryan Bequette. The following City Officials were present via zoom and in person: City Administrator Lou Leone, Construction and Facility Manager Marty Stovall, City Attorney Drew Graham, Utilities General Manager Jeff Kohrs, Library Director Donna Kruse, Finance Commissioner Gloria Glover and Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Patricia Moore.

Mayor Bequette noted there are 2 items on the agenda this afternoon. The 1st item of business is the approval of the BOH December 21, 2020 meeting minutes. David Lacy moved to approve the meeting minutes of December 21, 2020 as provided. Gregg Goebel seconded the motion. With no further discussion, upon roll call the following voted YES. Dr. Brad Vasa, Wendy Snodgrass, Gregg Goebel, David Lacy, and Mayor Bryan Bequette. Voting NO: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Bequette noted the 2nd item on the agenda is discussion/action regarding a status update on the CoVid-19 situation; potential tasks, logistical needs and communication. Mayor Bryan Bequette asked Grant Brueggeman, Director of the Southeast District Health Department for an update. Brueggeman advised as of this morning the District is sitting at 2,905 cases with 665 of those in the last 30 days; with a total of 34 deaths cumulative. Otoe County has 1,034 cumulative cases with 198 of those within the last 30 days. The cumulative cases in the past 30 day count are starting to widen which is exactly what we want. Previously in district we have seen up to 1500 in last 30 days. As of today, Otoe County has 3 cumulative deaths. In terms of an incidence rate Otoe County was at right around 47 per 100,000 on a seven day ruling average. As a reference, the District had gotten as high as 150 per 100,000 back in November. Hospitalizations Statewide have leveled off; currently at 511 active hospitalizations. As a reminder if it gets up to 600 we go back into the yellow zone DHM. More restrictive DHM's come out after every 200 hospitalizations. For Vaccinations we are in Phase 1A category which is the healthcare infrastructure. Brueggeman advised we are making strides to transition to the next Phase.

Mayor Bequette asked for an update from Dr. DeFreece of St. Mary's. Dr. DeFreece advised he pretty much echoes what Grant has said. They have been seeing decreasing cases for the last couple of weeks but concerned could be seeing a slight uptick now. They are still testing at a regular rate with Test Nebraska. Have been involved with Phase IA on the vaccine front. Plus they are getting ready for the 2nd vaccination. They are looking forward to Phase IB; they are developing their processes on getting that done. He adds he encourages everyone, there seems to be a good vaccine supply of the drug; vaccines will be available to those that want it. They will work with the health department and communities to work through the phases as they can; safely and efficiently.

Mayor Bequette asked A. Snodgrass to bring up the vaccination timeline as shown on this link. <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Documents/COVID-19-Vaccination-Timeline.pdf#search=Vaccination%20Timeline>

He asked the question if Phase IB is 75+, if individual out in the general population, they are not in a care facility, is it the individuals responsibility to contact their physician to get scheduled for a vaccine or are they contacted by somebody. Brueggeman advised when they make the transition to Phase IB, they will set up communications to where the district is at and work with those clinics and hospitals to contact the individuals and set the plan. But there will be a form of communication from the Health District. Mayor Bequette reiterated so you will communicate with us so we can communicate to anybody that asks how they would get in the que if they are interested in being recognized in that 1B Phase. Brueggeman noted he would just add, this is the timeline for the State but with the transitioning to the different phases is not going to be synchronized all State wide. Where we are at, the SE Health District, might be different than what is happening in Omaha, etc. This just gives you a relative idea of what it might look like but it won't be synchronized State-wide. Bequette asked are the definitions under the phases going to remain standard across the State. Brueggeman advised yes.

Dr. DeFreece added on the operations side they are working on the processes of getting their computer systems ready, this all has to be very accurately documented so they can get in the State registry system; very deliberate how we do this. He added they have to retool their nursing staff, etc. to be able to do this. They will be going from Phase IA where they are dealing with dozen's or 100s of people to Phase IB where we will be dealing with the whole SE Nebraska. As such, we have to be sure we have our processes in place and set up exactly the way we need it and staffing is proper. It will take time to work through. He discusses it further. Mayor Bequette asked question for Phase IA in Otoe are we still on healthcare or have we moved to long-term care facilities as well. Brueggeman noted for Long Care term facilities, besides one he knows of in a different County, those facilities are going through the federal odyssey program where the State is directly allocating 3 retail pharmaceutical organizations to vaccinate long term care. He can't speak specifically to where each stands in terms of vaccinating; the federal government is handling, it's outside of their office and what individual hospitals are doing. Bequette asked question for tracking numbers is everybody reporting vaccinations or are the vaccination numbers on the dashboard only those that are handled through the State. Brueggeman added it is his understanding it is all vaccinations administered. Bequette noted he just wants to help try and shape expectations on what we think we are seeing and to also make sure each of our different City departments is ready to go and is locked in with whoever they need to be at the right time. Dr. DeFreece added one of the things to consider on this, when you look at that Phase 1B, when you see age 75+, you are looking at a general population, those are a little bit difficult to schedule compared to a control population like 1st responders, education, etc. those are all the people we can go directly to; we know who those people are specifically so we will be able to

handle it a little bit better. More discussion is had on same scenario. He further added, up until now we have been working with captured populations if you will. Brueggeman added more to the conversation stating he is looking at estimates; in Otoe County itself there are 1200-1500 75 and older who are not part of a nursing home or assisted living facility. For the District as a whole there is maybe 2400 health care providers for all 5 Counties. Logistics will be an undertaking. Bequette further added if there is any way the City can help at all with communications or execution please let us know; we have a larger older population so it's definitely in Nebraska City's interest to be leading forward on that one as we move into Phase 1B and 1C. Like Dr. DeFreece said, there are certain closed populations where you know how to contact, their desire, etc. but when you move to a more open population to get a hold of and help them make an informed decision will be a big undertaking. More discussion is had from Dr. DeFreece and Brueggeman on same concerns as well as logistics with regard to communication.

Mayor Bequette asked Dr. Vasa for an update. He added he doesn't have anything new to add other than the cases are dropping but it's still out there. He knows people have mask fatigue but we still need to stay vigilant on wearing masks and social distancing.

Mayor Bequette asked Gregg Goebel for an update. Goebel advised MO currently has 402,957 positive cases, 5,562 deaths; IA has 285,476 positive cases with 3,992 deaths; KS has 231,317 positive cases with 2,897 deaths. As far as the County goes the Courthouse is continuing to ask patrons to wear masks as well as the staff when in the common areas of the building. Majority are complying.

Mayor Bequette asked Wendy Snodgrass if she has an update from the State. Wendy advised the information has been covered already.

Mayor Bequette asked Chief Lacy if he has anything new to report. David Lacy noted nothing has really changed for the police department. He added 4 individual officers have tested positive however. Moreover, half his department was overworked; he gave accolades for their hard work. They have visited with the health department and have scheduled vaccinations for the police officers who are interested in taking the vaccine; they are still working on logistics.

Mayor Bequette asked Lou Leone for an update from the City. Lou advised he doesn't have anything to add more than what Chief Lacy advised. He too takes his hat off to the officers who picked up the slack.

Donna Kruse per prompt of Mayor Bequette advised no changes for the Library.

Mayor Bequette asked Jeff Kohrs to provide an update for Utilities. Kohrs advised operations are the same as they have been. He added it's the 2nd week in a row where they've had full staff back and no one is under quarantine. Mayor Bequette asked question do we have phases for critical Utility workers for vaccinations. Kohrs advised he believes they are in the essential worker phase. Leone added he can answer, the City has turned in all of the numbers for those who wish to be vaccinated and he believes they will be in Phase 1B or 1C but we have not heard back yet from the National Guard. Brueggeman added for Utilities such as power, water, gas, sanitation they are in Phase 1B; 2nd tier. There are 4 tiers in 1B and they will be in the 2nd tier.

Mayor Bequette prompted Graham for an update as he moved the agenda to tasks. Graham advised just before Christmas the State moved from yellow to blue so downgrading the restrictions so that necessitated a new DHM. So for the SE we moved from DHM #17 to DHM #18, effective December

24; it is currently scheduled to run through the end of January. Obviously that is still tied to the colored chart, if we move back up a new DHM would take its place. <https://nebraskacityne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SEHD-DHM-018.pdf>

Changes include:

1. Indoor gatherings – 50% of capacity to 75% of capacity; no max number on indoor or outdoor gatherings. 100% outdoor.
2. Extra-curricular youth activity indoor attendance is 75% up from 50%.
3. It is the same language on all other businesses. Noting adherence to applicable State guidance is strongly recommended for restaurants, bars, beauty salons, barber shop, massage, tattoo, daycare, childcare, health and fitness gyms, religious services, including weddings and funerals. It is all no restriction; recommend you follow the guidance that is issued by the State.

He further added we had talked last time and he did a double check on the Executive Order allowing the opening meetings to take place via zoom does run through the end of January and there hasn't been any change to that. The Board members can participate via zoom through the end of January. He further added the City had released with SE Health and CHI St. Mary's a second COVID guidance release through our local media and to our employees. With Grant's help he was able to get that translated into Spanish as well so that has been sent today to our local media again as well as to Nebraska City Tourism and Economic Development to hopefully distribute to the community for anybody that needs Spanish translation of that document.

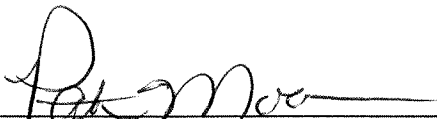
The final piece that he had was a question about the emergency paid sick leave; it was originally scheduled to expire on December 31. The Federal Government passed and signed into law the Consolidated and Appropriations Act which was the stimulus, etc. A part of that deals with the emergency paid sick leave. Previously it was mandated that employers provide their employees with 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave; there was no extension of that mandate. The Federal Government did provide an extension of the tax credit deadline through March 31, 2021. So for private businesses if they choose to continue to provide emergency paid leave to their staff they still have access to the tax credit. With the City, it doesn't matter since we don't have access to the tax credit as a government entity. So there is no more mandate but obviously the City always has the option to continue offering that to employees. He also read some additional information, the original idea was that it would be a one-time allotment of 80 hours so there hasn't been any additional guidance on that as far as resetting at the start of the new year or how to handle individuals that have multiple needs for that time off. Mayor Bequette asked question so we were mandated through December 31. Graham added everybody was mandated, you had to provide your employees with emergency paid sick leave as well as an expanded FMLA coverage. He reiterates as of December 31 that mandate is now gone so it is really up to the employers. It appears they tried to incentivize employers by continuing to offer the tax credit. Moore advises with having officers out on COVID and with that ending December 31, she will need direction on how the City wishes to handle. Graham added he would imagine that would be a Council decision on how we want to handle. Mayor Bequette stated he didn't know if it was really a final decision by the Council at the last meeting but we got a sense that there was some interest in the City continuing to adhere to the 80 hours. Graham added that was the idea that he was going to do some more research to find out whether or not we were mandated; obviously there is no mandate, however, the City has the option to continue as they desire.

Mayor Bequette asked A. Snodgrass to provide an update on logistics. A. Snodgrass stated he would give an update from his department. Kind of like the police department they have had several

but are almost back to full strength now. EMS received their vaccinations about 2 weeks ago, Fire Fighters received theirs last week for those who were interested. Those in the 1B category are done, at least the 1st round. Numbers include 20 EMS and 15 or so Fire. For logistics they have no concerns at this time.

For communications, Mayor Bequette noted the next Board of Health meeting will be on Monday, January 18, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. Goebel advised unified command was canceled for tomorrow due to technical issues. Mayor Bequette added the City is standing by any way they can on vaccinations, getting the word out, shaping expectations, and calming fears.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:33 PM.



Patricia Moore, Deputy City Clerk-Treasurer

