

**Minutes of the Nebraska City Board of Health  
December 21, 2020  
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, December 21, 2020. 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 5:01 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: David Lacy and Mayor Bryan Bequette. Wendy Snodgrass and Gregg Goebel joined the meet via zoom. Dr. Brad Vasa was absent from the meeting. 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, Fire Chief Rob Schreiner, Finance Commissioner Gloria Glover and Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Patricia Moore.

Mayor Bequette noted there are 2 items on the agenda this afternoon. The 1<sup>st</sup> item of business is the approval of the BOH December 7, 2020 meeting minutes. Wendy Snodgrass moved to approve the meeting minutes of December 7, 2020 as provided. Gregg Goebel seconded the motion. With no further discussion, upon roll call the following voted YES. David Lacy, Gregg Goebel, Wendy Snodgrass, and Mayor Bryan Bequette. Voting NO: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Bequette noted the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 the State is sitting at 156,382 cases with 1,486 deaths. For the SE Health District we are at 2,507 cumulative cases with 747 of those in the last 30 days. Otoe County in the last 30 days has had 144 cases and a total of 2 deaths. In terms of instances of new disease across the State and our district we are seeing a positive downward trend. Similarly, the hospitalizations across the State continue to decline. As of last night the State is at 582 active hospitalizations. It has been below 600 2 of the last 3 days. As a reference the last time the State was below 600 was October 30. Instance of new disease, the District is currently at 38.9 per 100,000; last time we were in the 30's was October 27. November 13 the highest instance was 152 per 100,000. As a reference Douglas County/Omaha metro area at the same time was somewhere in the 120's. He added just because we are seeing a downward trend we don't need to let up on the non-pharmaceutical

intervention. He added we are at 30 cumulative deaths for the district. However, he added his list of death certificates is currently down to 2. In addition, this morning the district received its first application of the Pfizer vaccine. It has been distributed across the district. They are focusing on providing the vaccines to hospital's who've had direct/indirect contact with patients or infectious material related to COVID; clinics and their staff who have direct/indirect exposure to patients or infectious material; the third priority is any remaining hospital staff. What they have available now is not for the public but as they receive more product they will slowly start to expand those groups. They will try to incorporate more segments of the critical health care infrastructure. General public will not likely see the vaccine until the April timeframe.

Mayor Bequette asked for an update from Dr. DeFreece of St. Mary's. Dr. DeFreece advised he would like to reiterate what Grant has reviewed. They are also seeing decreased cases in the hospital/clinic as well as the CHI system. He feels the education/communication has worked and would like to thank the community for their part as well. They will continue to run their Test Nebraska this week but they will not be open on Christmas day. They are preparing staff through education to receive the vaccine. They have started vaccinating and that is going very well. He gives kudos to Grant, Stephanie and their team as well as the local hospitals. He again reiterates what Grant was saying in that this is not a cure all but a very big additional piece of the plan. He added it has to be done in conjunction with what we are already doing (masks, social distancing, hand washing, etc.). All still need to follow CDC recommendations.

Mayor Bequette asked Gregg Goebel for an update. Goebel advised MO currently has 368,316 positive cases, 4,947 deaths; IA has 268,114 positive cases with 3,589 deaths; KS has 204,600 positive cases with 2,448 deaths. He reiterated what Grant and Dr. DeFreece said, the numbers in these 3 States and Counties around us are also starting to trend down.

Mayor Bequette asked Wendy Snodgrass if she has an update from the State. Wendy noted DHHS is intending to launch a COVID 19 Vaccine dash board within the next few weeks. It will share a variety of metrics that provide a picture on how the vaccinations are progressing over time. It's projected by month's end Nebraska will receive 104,000 doses of the vaccine targeted for healthcare personnel as well as residents and staff of long term care facilities. They are recommending that people who gather over the Holidays to get the COVID 19 test beforehand so you can help protect somebody who might be vulnerable to COVID 19. She noted that might explain why Dr. DeFreece numbers for TestNebraska are going up. In addition, those who host or attend a gathering with people from outside their household are encouraged to remain vigilant and practice social distancing and to self-monitor for symptoms. Lastly, she saw an article with TestNebraska advising results are coming out in 24 to 36 hours of test.

Mayor Bequette asked of health care advisers if the DHHS COVID 19 vaccine dash board will have a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section. Wendy advised the article didn't say but there are a lot of FAQ's on the DHHS website. Dr. DeFreece added he has some education materials he has provided to his staff and will provide to the schools as well after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. He would be happy to present or give information especially related to the 2 vaccines. He noted it is not new technology but good technology; he would be happy to provide that information. Mayor Bequette asked Lou and Jeff to follow up with Dr. DeFreece.

Mayor Bequette asked Chief Lacy if he has anything new to report. David Lacy advised he doesn't have anything new to report but he noted he read an article on Coronavirus being around for a long time. COVID 19 a different strand. He added he's heard difference concerns from the public that it hasn't really been tested, etc. but in fact it's been studied for quite some time. This particular strain

maybe not but Coronavirus itself has been around and tested. Per the Mayor's prompt he noted they have had a couple of exposures and have an officer out who has tested positive. They have another officer who has had exposure and will be tested tomorrow; sounds like he is suffering from the symptoms. Lacy reiterated they are requesting officers wear masks when working with the public the best they can, etc.

Mayor Bequette asked Lou Leone for an update from the City. Lou advised he had a request from the National Guard for information on any City employee including Utilities that would like to receive the vaccine. The estimated date for them to receive it is in January. We don't know yet which one it will be, Pfizer or possibly Moderna. He believes as we get closer to the date we will find out for sure. He advised there was a good response and the numbers have been turned into the National Guard.

Donna Kruse per prompt of Mayor Bequette advised no changes for the Library. Same for Rob Schreiner he advised same but added they put their numbers together for Lou; they are ready to go when the vaccine is available.

Mayor Bequette asked if Andrew had a situation update for the Rescue Department. A. Snodgrass advised they are the outlier. He advised their run volume is up the last 14 days and 40% of all the patients treated during that time frame have tested positive for COVID. He further added he has multiple staff members currently out. He has one pending, they failed the rapid test so going for official testing. 2 other exposures who are out until they get tested. They haven't heard anything on the vaccine yet so waiting their turn in line so they can get them up to being healthy again. He added they have done 7 or 8 rapid tests in the last week but he doesn't have numbers. Several have come back as positive so they've sent them out for PCR testing. He added they've only had 1 that has varied/changed from 12 to 13 tests. Scheduling wise it's been an adventure. Moore asked if he could provide her the list for the COVID 19 sick hours. A. Snodgrass noted they were all part-time; Moore noted they would still receive based off of average hours if they were scheduled to work.

Mayor Bequette asked Jeff Kohrs to provide an update for Utilities. Kohrs advised operations are the same as they have been. All staff have returned to work and no longer under quarantine.

Mayor Bequette prompted Graham for an update as he moved the agenda to tasks. Graham advised we have another new DHM #17 as of December 12. It coincided with the change from orange back to yellow so when the hospitalization percentages decreased then the new DHM came out decreasing as well. Directed Health Measure Order 2020-SEHD-017.

Big changes include:

1. Indoor gatherings – 25% occupancy to 50% occupancy.
2. Extra-curricular youth activities – Raised from household members only up to 50% capacity.
  - a. NSAA perhaps has different restrictions as far as the State is concerned.
3. Removal of mask mandate for all the businesses that were mandatory (Restaurants, Bars, Taverns, Bowling Alley, Beauty & Nail, Barber Shops, Massage, etc.); instead adherence to any applicable State guidance is strongly recommended.
4. Elective medical no longer has the restriction of the different types.
  - a. Only restriction is on percentage of beds. Maintain 10% of their overall beds and 10% for ICU for COVID patients.
5. The quarantine and isolation instructions are the same.

He further added the dates are currently December 12 through the end of the month, however, he believes there will be an update and it will continue to follow the chart that was laid out by the State



whether that goes up/down/or stays the same. Mayor Bequette adds the true date doesn't seem that important as we get more fluid with the DHM.

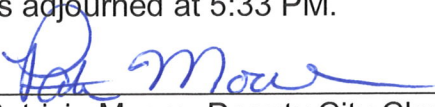
Graham added at the request of the City Council he re-released the Press Release of COVID 19 best practices for guidance for the community and City staff on how to best prepare/protect themselves from contracting COVID. It's the same release as before; joint release between the City, SE Health, and CHI St. Mary's. He advised further he received notice from Grant today that it would be translated into Spanish as well. He further advised he had an update on the Family First Coronavirus Response Act which is set to expire at the end of the year. However, it sounds like some of those provisions will be taken care of in the new bill that has been passed through Congress so there may be some extension of that. From the City standpoint, it's not a huge change since we are not eligible for the Tax Reimbursement anyway. Therefore the City is currently paying for those benefits (Emergency Sick Leave or Expanded FMLA). As a good will offer we can continue to capture that. He believes the paid sick leave will be extended but unsure on FMLA. Under the CARES Act it was a requirement. More discussion is had on same. Per prompt of Chief David Lacy, Graham advised currently the benefit is calendar year. He further added if you haven't used your time by the end of the year then it just went away. He is unsure what that looks like going forward if they've used their Emergency Sick Leave and now there's a new pool of 80 hours. Per prompt by Mayor Bequette to Moore on leave, he asked if it's fiscal year or calendar year; Moore advised calendar year.

Mayor Bequette asked did we have anybody in the situation (1<sup>st</sup> responders – Fire/Rescue/Police), who were not able to take or did they lose leave because of scheduling restrictions. A. Snodgrass added not in his department; just had more overtime accrue because of it. Bequette further asked we didn't have to deny people leave, etc. A. Snodgrass didn't believe so.

Mayor Bequette asked A. Snodgrass to provide an update on logistics. A. Snodgrass stated no news is good news, Sir. He hasn't heard anything and we are doing pretty good at this point. Mayor Bequette noted another aspect of logistics is funding; we've received an email back that says it looks like we did receive the presumptive pay. Moore added, we received a notice from the State advising the money would be deposited into the Cities ACH account. A. Snodgrass jumped in and advised that was the 1<sup>st</sup> round, the 2<sup>nd</sup> one for the one position should be funded in the future as well. Mayor Bequette thanked A. Snodgrass and Moore for their work on the project. He added in the spirit of transparency we are expecting that to be a little over \$400,000.00. It's called presumptive pay because it is presumed a lot of the tasks 1<sup>st</sup> responders were doing was COVID related so we ran through all of their criteria; all the numbers were crunched on pay and it looks like that is what will come in. He further went on to thank the 1<sup>st</sup> responders for all their time/effort as well. Lastly, Mayor Bequette asked about the Quarantine Timeline sheet that was emailed out to all City staff. Graham advised he received that from one of our EMS workers who had received that from the SE Health District. Bequette added if they follow this quarantine checklist it will keep them in line with the DHM. Graham advised yes...this is quarantine for close contact.

For communications, Mayor Bequette noted the next Board of Health meeting will be on Monday, January 4, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. Per prompt of Mayor Bequette, Graham advised the Executive Order will be in effect through the end of January. Mayor Bequette noted the same platform will be in effect for the next BOH meeting for zoom and in person for Board members as well as attendees.

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

  
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Patricia Moore, Deputy City Clerk-Treasurer