

**Minutes of the Nebraska City Board of Health
March 1, 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, March 1, 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 5:01 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, Gregg Goebel, and Mayor Bryan Bequette. Wendy Snodgrass and Dr. Brad Vasa were not in attendance. 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 February 1, 2021 meeting minutes. David Lacy moved to approve the meeting minutes of February 1, 2021 as provided. Gregg Goebel seconded the motion. With no further discussion, upon roll call the following voted YES. 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 there is not a lot to report as far as case trends. The District has seen about 232 cases in the last 30 days; Otoe County specifically is at 115 cases in the last 30 days at an incident rate of 20.5/100,000. He noted a slight increase from where we were a few weeks ago but no concern yet. Last week for the District we had 70 total cases; the week prior we had 49. At this point don't know if that's of significance or just a coincidence. The UK variant is now present in Douglas County. The California variant B1429 has been sequenced in a few other health districts. None of the variants have been sequenced locally yet. As far as the vaccination role out, the District has vaccinated about 20.8% of the 1st dose, 10.6% have received the entire series. The 65 or older population 54% have received the 1st dose and 20.6% have received the entire series. He advised they have received more product recently especially with the Federal Pharmacy program. Mayor Bequette followed up on question on what the total percentage vaccinated for the

district. Brueggeman reiterated 20.8% have received 1 dose and 10.6% have received the entire series. Mayor Bequette asked question communication wise how can the City help. Brueggeman advised they are going to be pushing out their messaging via social media (i.e. website, printed materials, etc.). He noted they would welcome any messaging as the City sees fit. He advised they are maybe seeing a saturation effect with the 65 and older group by not having enough people registered through the State system so they are going to reprioritize that group and make sure they are addressing them as much as they can.

Mayor Bequette asked for an update from Dr. DeFreece of CHI St. Mary's. He advised we parallel what Grant has stated as far as the incidents of disease is related. They are seeing a decrease in utilization of the TestNebraska program to the point they have decreased testing to once a week (Wednesday mornings from 8:30-9:30 a.m.); they can always make changes if the need arises. They continue to work closely with the health department on the vaccination process. He discusses the process to vaccinate efficiently and safely as well as the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and how that will play into all of this. He advised a lot of clinical information is coming out on the variants; no surprise in the healthcare world to see variants; viruses mutate all the time, it's very common. The question is what does that do clinically (i.e. rate of illness, intensity of the illness, etc.). There are a lot of unknowns on how contagious the variants are. There is good consensus that the vaccines prevent serious illness (i.e. hospitalizations and death); however, they are not sure on the risk of getting the illness. He read an article where Moderna could retool their vaccine within a few weeks to cover any variants.

Mayor Bequette asked Gregg Goebel for an update. Goebel advised he doesn't have numbers for our neighboring States. However, he did want to bring up we are entering into severe weather awareness week and severe weather season as a whole so everyone should be thinking about how they are going to continue their preventative action (i.e. washing hands, masks, etc.) if they have to go into shelters and how shelter processes should work.

Mayor Bequette prompted Police Chief David Lacy for an update. He advised there are no changes for the Police Department, they are continuing status quo.

Mayor Bequette prompted A. Snodgrass for an update for Fire and Rescue. A. Snodgrass advised status quo for the most part. For the EMS side, he did a review last week and he noted for the last 60-70 runs they've had, there were zero COVID patients.

Mayor Bequette asked Donna of the Library for an update. She advised today was the 1st day they have opened up browsing for new materials again in the Kimmel Gallery. They are putting into motion updates on their computers/systems so that they are moving towards opening up the entire building maybe May 1 with the schedules of cleaning, etc. in place as well. Mayor Bequette asked if they've seen a lot of use on their computers for registering information. Kruse advised no but it's time to send out another release so along with the browsing release they can add information on having a station available for people to register for vaccines.

Mayor Bequette asked Jeff Kohrs to provide an update for Utilities. Kohrs advised they had one employee last week who had contact; he was tested and it came back negative so he is back to work otherwise operations are continuing as previously advised. Mayor Bequette asked question how is Utilities on vaccinations. They are in the same boat as essential workers, they have not had an update as far as being moved up on the list so they've instructed their employees to go ahead and register so they can get vaccinated when they can.


Mayor Bequette asked Lou Leone for an update from the City. Lou advised he'd like to piggy back on that as well and noted that is the advice he has been giving staff. Until we know for sure, if you can register with the State, go ahead and register and get the vaccine if you want it, when you can. Mayor Bequette asked question if our 1st responders have had their vaccines. Chief Lacy noted only 3 of their officers have chosen to get the vaccine (that includes himself); others have decided to hold off for a while. A. Snodgrass advised the fire department has had 10-12; EMS was about 85% who have received the vaccine. More went in this week so that number has changed. A strong majority have received.

Mayor Bequette prompted Graham for an update as he moved the agenda to tasks. Graham advised we are now under DHM #21, it extends through the end of March. He adds it is identical to 19 except a provision has been added relating to the vaccines provided to the pharmacies and how they can distribute those out. He believes they are only allowed to provide vaccinations to individuals above a certain age or whatever those limitations look like so nothing that affects the City or City operations. A. Snodgrass believes there was one other change adding if you were vaccinated fully then the quarantine has changed for those individuals. Graham confirmed and noted as far as businesses are concerned they are to follow the recommendation of the State but no actual restriction is in place.

Mayor Bequette asked A. Snodgrass for a logistics update. A. Snodgrass advised no updates.

For communications, Mayor Bequette made comments on the 1st case in Nebraska was approximately 1 year prior to the meeting. The next Board of Health meeting will be the 1st Monday in April on the 5th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:22 PM.



Patricia Moore, Deputy City Clerk-Treasurer

