

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County  
Agenda for March 25, 2020

THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIA CONFERENCE CALL. THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME TO CALL IN, ALTHOUGH THE PUBLIC WILL BE MUTED UNTIL AGENDA ITEM NUMBER 2 WHERE THE COMMISSIONERS WILL ADDRESS ANY PUBLIC COMMENT. PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR THE CALL IN NUMBER AND THE ACCESS CODE.

- **Call in number: 571-317-3122**
- **Access Code: 721-100-773**

1:00 Call to order

1. Discuss the COVID-19 impacts
2. Public Comment
3. Old Business
4. New Business

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners held a teleconference meeting at 1:00 p.m. on March 25, 2020, to discuss COVID-19 impacts. Identified attendees were: Chairman Steve Burgess, Commissioners Ed E. Schifferns and Doug Stone, County Administrator Jacob Piper, County Attorney Stan Kimble, Clerk to the Board and County Clerk Corinne M. Lengel, Sheriff Tom Nestor, Assessor Jeremiah Higgins, Treasurer Jim Covington, Emergency Manager Ken Stroud, Public Health Director Jobeth Mills, Human Services Director Pat Phillips, District 1 Road Foreman Chris Monks, Economic Development Executive Director Troy McCue, Town of Limon Administrator Greg Tacha, Town of Hugo Administrator Maria Nestor, and Juliet Lundy with the Eastern Colorado Plainsman/Limon Leader.

Chairman Burgess called the meeting to order and said that Mrs. Mills had a conference call with public health officials at noon. Mrs. Mills joined the call shortly after that.

Mr. Burgess discussed “essential personnel” and the possibility of “shelter-in-place.” He felt that road crewmen were critical and explained how his district handles social distancing. Mr. Stone said that District 3 followed the same practices. To keep contact minimal among employees at the county shop in Hugo, Mr. Burgess said that employees left paperwork in a vehicle to avoid entering the building.

As for the landfill, plans to isolate staff included limiting public access to the building and doing business through the east window. Mr. Burgess said that Brenda Howe planned to contact the town administrators to see if they would be okay with not signing their tickets for a while. Greg Tacha spoke up to say that he had no issues with the plan, and neither did Maria Nestor. Both agreed to pass the information along to their trash crews.

Mrs. Mills joined the call and said that there were differing opinions on the conference call she’d just finished; some wanted shelter-in-place, while others didn’t. She felt it wasn’t necessary right now unless the order came from the governor. The most concerning problem is travelers, but shutting down the interstate isn’t an option unless the governor orders it. Mrs. Mills also said that there is now one confirmed case of COVID-19 in Lincoln County. They have quarantined the entire family for fourteen days and will monitor all family members. She added that there are multiple tests out in the community, but none of those people that they tested were in contact with the person who tested positive.

Mr. Schifferns asked about ventilators. Mrs. Mills said that they have one at the hospital and possibly one or two with each ambulance. She didn’t know if the fire departments had any.

Sheriff Nestor reported that he advised patrol officers to take extra precautions, and they seem to be keeping everyone healthy at the moment.

Ken Stroud commented that the strategic stockpile from the state garnered a limited distribution of personal protective equipment, so he is still searching for PPE via other sources.

Mr. Burgess said that Mr. Tacha asked about the continued use of the Outback Express bus and wanted to know if the county was still running the COG bus. Chris Monks said the driver parked the bus at the shop and said she wasn't taking it out again until the crisis was over. Mr. Stone felt they should suspend the service for a while, and the others agreed.

Troy McCue spoke up to say that Economic Development was still available to help small businesses if the commissioners heard of any that were struggling. He said they could put the parties in touch with possible funding sources. Mr. Burgess said the government supposedly passed the stimulus bill and thought there were provisions for small businesses in that as well. Mr. Piper told Mr. McCue that he could put the information on the county's Facebook page if he'd send something to him, which Mr. McCue agreed to do.

Jim Covington stated that the county treasurers discussed forgiving the interest for the first half of property taxes, which were due February 29. At this point, they are not doing the same with the full amount, due April 30, or the second half, which is due on June 15. According to state statute, the treasurer has the authority to forgive up to \$50 in interest. The Board could agree to that as well, but Mr. Covington cautioned that doing so would also take that money away from entities relying on those payments.

Juliet Lundy asked for updated press releases from the department heads by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 30, if anyone had anything for the paper.

Mr. Piper provided information regarding emergency paid sick leave, stating that the county must allow each employee ten days, or up to eighty hours, of paid sick leave due to COVID-19. Regular part-time employees would be eligible for a portion of paid sick leave based on the number of hours they work. As for FMLA, it would only affect employees having to stay home and care for a child. Technically, FMLA requires the use of sick and vacation leave, which also isn't applicable at this time. Mr. Piper said that if someone had to go on FMLA, the department head would have to track it separately.

Mr. Burgess stated that as long as employees don't abuse the current policy, his feeling was to keep it in place. The other commissioners agreed.

Mr. Burgess asked if the others felt Mr. Piper should send in another press release instead of having individual departments submit something on their own. Mr. Piper said he'd like the information from department heads no later than noon on Friday.

Mr. Stone wanted to know if the elected officials received negative feedback from the public regarding the closure of the building. Mr. Covington, Mr. Higgins, and Mrs. Lengel all said they hadn't had any issues. Mrs. Lengel added that they continued to be reasonably busy every day.

Mr. Burgess asked for further public comment. Hearing none, he moved on to old business, which included the next meeting on March 30. He asked if they could do another teleconference and if the bills and payroll would be ready for approval by 9:00 a.m. Mrs. Lengel

said that the finance director would most likely appreciate more time to process invoices received in Monday morning's mail, so Mr. Burgess set the meeting for 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Burgess called for new business and said he'd purchased a Crust Buster 1610 seeding drill for \$1,700. They will split the cost between the three road districts and will use it for re-seeding gravel pits.

Mr. Schifferns asked Mrs. Mills if she was doing okay, but she had already left the call. Mr. Burgess said she was putting in a lot of hours, and they all appreciated her efforts.

Mrs. Lengel asked if the commissioners gave further consideration to the flooring in her office. If they wanted to use what Dan Hendricks pulled up, the driver examiner offered to put it in their kitchen area, since he is currently unable to work in his office. Mr. Burgess said that Mr. Hendricks said they'd ruined quite a bit pulling it up, but since there were two extra boxes, he didn't have a problem with allowing it. Mr. Schifferns and Mr. Stone agreed.

Mr. Piper asked how the commissioners would determine "essential personnel" if the order to shelter-in-place came down from the governor's office. Mr. Burgess said that the county needed to continue operations, and Mr. Kimble commented that there was quite a bit of chatter on the county list-serve regarding the matter. He offered to keep an eye on it to see what other counties might be doing.

Pat Phillips said that she'd cut DHS staff to 50%, and most of them have remote access.

Mr. Stone felt the county would deal with it one day at a time, and everyone agreed. Mr. Kimble commented that they might have to loosen up on certain procedures for a while to keep business flowing. He added that surely no court would take issue with counties acting proactively.

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Burgess adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m. The next teleconference will be at 1:00 p.m. on March 30, 2020.

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Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk to the Board

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Steve Burgess, Chairman