

JEROME COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Thursday, April 2, 2020

PRESENT: Charles Howell, Chairman
Ben Crouch, Vice Chairman
John Crozier, Commissioner
Jane White, Deputy Clerk

Meeting convened at 1:40 P.M., as an emergency meeting regarding the coronavirus.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

Present were Emergency Management Director Tanya Stitt and Attorney Mike Seib.

Tanya Stitt provided criteria for individuals with the confirmed or suspected COVID-19 virus when returning to work as well as a ten-page document from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission entitled "Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act."

Mike Seib stated the courts could close only with an order from the Idaho Supreme Court. He also advised all affected parties meet together to determine actions to be taken if a situation arises regarding the virus.

TELEPHONE CALL FROM GOVERNOR LITTLE

The Commissioners joined a telephone call from Governor Brad Little's office answering pre-submitted questions from county commissioners statewide about the coronavirus.

Governor Little stated Idaho's goal was to keep everyone safe and to be on a road to recovery as soon as possible.

Dave Jeppesen, as director of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, stated Idaho was following the best science available to protect its citizens and to slow the spread of the coronavirus. He then gave statistics of the number of reported cases of the virus in Idaho as well as the number of tests performed and hospitalizations. He warned that it would take a week to see results from the statewide stay-home order and that the pandemic would not be over in the next two weeks.

Brad Ritchy, director of the Idaho Office of Emergency Management, said his office was working with area field officers to meet needs and was also coordinating with FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency].

Governor Little stated he would appoint an advisory committee for distributing federal relief funding to local governments. Counties were to retain receipts for direct costs incurred.

Colonel Wills, Idaho State Police, said officers were working with sheriff's departments on enforcement of the stay-home order. He said their focus is on education, with written warnings or misdemeanor charges used sparingly.

Thursday, April 2, 2020

Page 1 of 2

A representative for Unemployment Insurance reported a four thousand percent increase in claims since the government shutdown and said that it would be weeks before claimants would receive payments. She informed that the federal Cares Act provides funding for new unemployment programs.

Governor Little encouraged residents to go outside but to stay close to home and to practice social distancing.

Jeppesen said efforts to slow the spread of the virus were to insure capacity in the health care system. Regarding guidelines for grocery stores, he did not recommend wearing masks or gloves if exhibiting no virus symptoms, but he said to sanitize one's hands after leaving a store.

Governor Little appealed to the media to use good judgement when making public records requests. He said the Office of Emergency Management has been working for a long time on procuring necessary resources, and he predicted that the supply chain would be back to normal by the end of April.

Governor Little said that Idaho would hold its Primary Election on May 19 but that voters would need to apply for an absentee ballot. The ballots would be due by 8 P.M. on Election Day, with counting the votes done on June 2.

The Governor had received questions about notifying first responders of known coronavirus cases, which remains a concern because of privacy rights. Governor Little also addressed criteria that will be used to recover the State's economy.

The phone call from the Governor was ended.

Seib expressed that he would like to have information about employees infected or exposed to the virus in order to protect both his employees and his family. He said it would be important for an employee to notify his or her supervisor and the human resources department if tested positive for the virus.

Meeting adjourned at 3:18 P.M.

Charles M. Howell, Chairman

Jane White, Deputy Clerk

A. Ben Crouch, Vice Chairman

John Crozier, Commissioner

Thursday, April 2, 2020

Page 2 of 2