

JEROME COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Friday, May 22, 2020

Special Meeting

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

Meeting convened at 10:30 A.M.

Commissioner Howell was not present because he was on vacation.

Although an executive session was scheduled for 10:30 A.M., the Commissioners deemed that it was not necessary to go into executive session to hear an update from St. Luke's regarding the spread of the coronavirus.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE FROM ST. LUKE'S

Emergency Management Director Tanya Stitt was present virtually. Also present virtually were Randy Hall, emergency manager for St. Luke's Hospitals; Melody Bowyer, executive director for the South Central Public Health District; Logan Hudson, epidemiology for St. Luke's; Linda Montgomery, chairman of the Health District board; Dave Davis, mayor of Jerome; and Mike Williams, Jerome city administrator.

Randy Hall told of the number of coronavirus cases and hospitalizations. He said there was an upward trend in the number of cases within the last two to three weeks.

Melody Bowyer expressed that she would like information about the virus more widely known. Linda Montgomery suggested asking the Jerome Chamber of Commerce to disseminate information.

Bowyer stated a food manufacturing facility in Jerome had 43 employees who had tested positive for the virus.

Commissioner Crouch asked how the facility was going to mitigate an increase in coronavirus cases. Logan Hudson said the Health District had been in touch with the facility and that it was following District guidelines. The Commissioner also asked where the plant's infected employees live, and Hall said they live in Jerome or commute from Twin Falls, Gooding, or Minidoka Counties.

Mayor Dave Davis questioned how to disseminate information to the Spanish-speaking community. Bowyer said the Health District Website had information in both Spanish and English.

Suggestions for Spanish announcements were to use the dairy association, Spanish-speaking radio stations, restaurants, the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, the Catholic community, and community-wide posters.

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- Commissioner Crouch said he would work on printing some posters.

Tanya Stitt asked when a decision would be made to close a facility due to the virus. Bowyer answered that the Food and Drug Administration would have the authority but that it does not recommend shut-downs.

Commissioner Crozier asked if infected persons would have any effect on the product they are producing; Bowyer said the virus is not transmitted through food.

- It was determined the Health District would update the Commissioners during their meeting on May 26 and thereafter on Mondays.

The update was continued until later in the morning in order to consult the County emergency management director further.

MICHELLE EMERSON AND TEVIAN EKREN-KOBER—REFINANCING JAIL BOND
Clerk/Auditor/Recorder Michelle Emerson, Chief Deputy Clerk Tracee McKim, and Treasurer Tevian Ekren-Kober were present.

Michelle Emerson spoke to the Commissioners about refinancing the County's current jail bond in order to pay a lesser interest rate.

Tevian Ekren-Kober said by refinancing, the County would save \$870,000 over the life of the bond.

Tracee McKim stated interest rates were at an historical low. She added that there would be a fee of \$120,000, plus the cost of bond counsel, that would be rolled into the bond. She said the County would be liable for another \$500 that would be non-refundable.

Michelle Emerson said the County is required to refinance if the opportunity comes available. She added that by refinancing, the County could pay off the bond one year early.

Commissioner Crouch requested a statement of the closing fees.

- The matter was continued until May 26 to receive more information.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE FROM ST. LUKE'S, Continued

The Commissioners spoke with Emergency Management Director Tanya Stitt by speakerphone about printing informational posters regarding the coronavirus.

Stitt said she had learned from the Idaho Office of Emergency Management that a public health office could close a facility. She said a unified effort in disseminating coronavirus information across the community would bring more reassurance to the public.

Meeting adjourned at 11:58 A.M.

Respectively submitted:

(absent)

Charles M. Howell, Chairman

Jane White, Deputy Clerk

A. Ben Crouch, Vice Chairman

John Crozier, Commissioner