

Traverse County Commission  
Emergency Board Meeting  
March 16, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m. by Commission Chairman Mark Gail. Other Commissioners present included Dave Salberg, Tom Monson, and Todd Johnson.

The Board held an emergency meeting to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager held a meeting that morning with public health, the local health center, nursing homes, schools, and other key businesses in Traverse County. The discussion held talked about what each business was doing to plan for the pandemic. Schools are closed beginning Wednesday, March 18 through Friday March 27. They are still required to provide child care for elementary-age children of health care professionals, first responders, and other emergency workers during previously planned school days to help those workers stay on the job and help fight the coronavirus outbreak. The schools will be responsible for providing meals to students in need as well. The nursing homes have closed their front doors to visitors and workers are screened when they come to work. The Minnesota Department of Health has set up a hotline 800.657.3903 and it is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The message is that it is critical to have limited contact with others for the next two weeks. Siegel also informed the Board that Minnesota Governor Tim Walz declared a peacetime state of emergency on Friday to be ready for whatever the coronavirus throws at the state next. Siegel plans to hold weekly meetings going forwards.

Siegel; Dustin Kindeberger, Veterans Services/Solid Waste/Safety Manager; and Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator; discussed with the Board what surrounding counties are doing at this time. Grant, Stevens, Big Stone, and Wilkin counties are waiting until there is a case in a surrounding county or in their own county before they will close the doors to the public. Lac Qu Parle County has closed its doors to the public starting today, with only emergency and essential services being provided. One of the main reasons was because they have a high elderly population in the county. T. Johnson said that he would support closing the doors to the public because we also have an elderly population. Monson would like to wait until there is a case in a surrounding county. Gail and Salberg agreed that we can discuss this at tomorrow's regular Board meeting.

Zahl asked the Board if they would like to put an Executive Committee together that consists of two Commissioners and herself, Siegel and Kindelberger. They can meet and discuss updates and information without getting the full Board together. Salberg felt that all decisions should go through the whole board without an Executive Committee.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

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Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

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Mark Gail, Board Chairman