

COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

APRIL 22, 2020

Sheriff Hardesty, Chairman, called to order the meeting of the Richardson County Board of Health at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 22, 2020. Sheriff Hardesty, Chairman of the Board and Dr. Allan Tramp the appointed physician/medical advisor were both present along with the Secretary, Mary L. Eickhoff, Richardson County Clerk.

Sheriff Hardesty made note that due to this meeting being offered through a teleconference that the Open Meeting Laws were posted at the entrance to this meeting room and were also available for public review on the Richardson County website, www.co.richardson.ne.us.

The minutes of the April 8, 2020, meeting have been forwarded to the members and were thereby approved.

The agenda was provided to the media and was posted at the Richardson County Courthouse in the First Floor Lobby, the Lower Level Lobby and on the Commissioner's Meeting Room door on the 2nd Floor, all entrance doors at the Courthouse and on the Richardson County website www.co.richardson.ne.us.

Several persons from different agencies and departments requested to join the meeting and those present were: **Grant Brueggeman**, Executive Director, SE NE Health Department; **Kathy Messner**, Clinical Care Mgt—Infection Control from the Community Medical Center; **Brian Kirkendall**, Richardson County EMA Director; County Attorney, **Doug Merz**; **Duane Armbruster**, Falls City Chief of Police and member of the Falls City Board of Health; **Gary Jorn** of the Falls City Ambulance squad; and **Mike Dunn**, Attorney and Board of Health member for the City of Falls City.

Because of the need to offer teleconferencing, the ground rules of the meeting to prevent talking over others were presented:

- 1) Request to mute phones
- 2) Chairman will give everyone an opportunity to speak by calling on you in list form.
- 3) State name prior to speaking, Chairman will then repeat your name so that everyone will know who is speaking.
- 4) When a person is completed speaking they should indicate they are finished.

Dr. Tramp expressed thanks to the citizens in Richardson County for doing all they can to practice the social distancing recommendations the past several weeks and for the continued practice in the future. He also encourages citizens to wear facial masks while in public and away from home and family members.

Grant Brueggemann of the Southeast Nebraska Health Department provided an update on the coronavirus pandemic in the Southeast Nebraska area. In Nebraska as a total today, there are 1722 cases with 38 deaths; the Southeast District has had 4 total cases, 1 Otoe that has recovered; 1 Nemaha that has recovered; 1 in Johnson that has recovered and another in Johnson that is active. He stated that with the testing in Nebraska overall that those being tested 10% have been positive. It was previously reported that the prediction of the highest number of cases would be somewhere at the beginning of May and now has been moved into a couple weeks into May. He recommends that if masks are available and residents are comfortable that it would be recommended to wear them. Mr. Brueggemann also updated the group that the regulations proposed for the prevention of spread of communicable disease, illness or poisoning by the SE District Health Department were approved and adopted by the Board on Monday, April 20th and have been forwarded to the five county boards, Otoe, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee and Richardson Counties for their approval. Richardson County approved the regulations at their April 21st meeting and have been forwarded to the SE NE Health Department to be filed with the Nebraska Department Health. The cities and villages may also approve the regulations after they have been submitted to the NE Health Dept. and approved.

Brian Kirkendall, EMA Director updated on the work that is being done by the Richardson County COVID19 Planning Committee. With no new developments to report since the last meeting of the County Board of Health he did inform the group though that a business that is making gowns has contacted the County with their product information for the purchase of the gowns. It was also reported that the schools are working on plans to extend the lunch program into the summer due to the COVID19.

Duane Armbruster, Falls City Chief of Police reported that there has been a slight increase in the number of domestic calls and assault calls the past few weeks. He stated that he is letting the officers use their judgement if they would need to wear masks or not while answering calls.

Sheriff Hardesty also reported that deputies are using their judgement if a mask is needed to answer a call or not. They do ask screening questions of the persons making the call.

Teresa Mackey from the Community Medical Center reported on the virus testing being done at the hospital and the different types of test kits that are available. It was stated that the tests are being sent to different labs and that the results are arriving back sooner now than they have been and discussion is being held for the tests to be delivered to the lab by CMC instead of lab courier to save an extra day on receiving the lab results. With the Governor opening up the elective surgeries this will result in more testing being done on those patients. She stated that while the outpatient clinic, Emergency Room and hospital admissions are down at least 50% the staff are working to prepare for a spike in patients and reviewing the amount of supplies in stock and ordering for preparation. All staff members have temperatures taken when arriving at work and are wearing masks while at the facility. Visitors are still restricted at the hospital with a patient being allowed only 1 visitor who must sign an agreement that they will adhere to the social distancing regulations, handwashing recommendations, etc. as long as they are the visitor for the patient.

Chairman Hardesty adjourned the meeting at 11:29 a.m. and tentatively scheduled another meeting for Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at 11:00 a.m.

Sheriff Hardesty, Chairman
Richardson County Board of Health

Dr. Allan Tramp

Mary L. Eickhoff, Secretary
Richardson County Clerk