

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY

109 Market Street, Room 106, Denton, Maryland

Minutes March 9, 2020

Present: President Larry C. Porter; Vice President Daniel J. Franklin; Commissioner Wilbur Levensood, Jr.

The meeting began at 9:00 AM.

COVID-19 Response Update: Laura Patrick, Health Officer, stated that currently Caroline County has a 2.11% positivity rate, which is the lowest it's been. She stated that the County has had a total of 21 deaths and hospitalizations have gone down with 2 citizens currently being hospitalized.

Ms. Patrick informed the Commissioners that the County has received 400 doses of Moderna which she stated is in thanks to the Commissioners advocating for more to be given to the County through the State's distribution process. She stated that currently each county has been appointed an Equity Officer, who will then established a panelist to execute an Equity plan for the County. She explained that this plan is being led by Jamie Beechey. Ms. Patrick went on to state that the county will be moving to remote vaccinations and going to locations such as churches to help vaccinate and reach different populations. Ms. Patrick ended by stated that 17.7% of the population in Caroline County have received their 1st doses of the vaccine.

Anna Sierra, Director, Caroline County Department of Emergency Services, stated that the EOC status remains at partial status due to the distribution of vaccines. She stated that they are actively working to fill the position of DES Emergency Planner. At this time all of the EMS shifts have been provided the vaccination training and she explained that this is a great and exciting tool for our employees to have. She gave a detailed report regarding EMS transfers, she explained that in the past month for transports the County has only transported 284 which is a decrease from the past two years. She explained that she will continue to look at this data and bring it to the board. She stated that there are a number of elements that are related to the lower transports in the county. Ms. Sierra stated that MIMMES has signed off on our Alternative Destination Protocol which is our partnership with Choptank Community Health. This is the first step for the County in implementing this program. She stated that the goal is to have this protocol implemented by the spring. The Alternative Destination Protocol would allow none-emergency room patients to be sent to Choptank Community Health for evaluation, which would allow for quicker response time as well as care given.

Dr. Patty Saelens, Superintendent, updated the Commissioners and stated that the schools are in a good routine with face to face instructions. She stated that students have started to host games and do more athletic activities. She explained that the Board of Education feels they have made great progress and are starting to feel normal with daily activities. She stated that the Greensboro Elementary School project remains on schedule as well.

Commissioner Franklin added that it was great to see students outside playing games

Sara Visintainer, Public Information Team, wanted to thank Jenn Farina and Lucie Hughes, for a job well done on the one-year anniversary of COVID-19 with March 5th as a Day of Remembrance. She stated

that her team is continuing to push people to sign up for the Eligibility Form to get on the list for vaccinations. The form can be found on www.carolinecovid19.org. Ms. Visintainer emphasized that they are pushing members to fill this out, whether they are in the age bracket at this time. She also explained that they are also encouraging people to answer the phone. The Health Department makes direct calls to the citizens that have filled out the form, however a major issues has been the lack of follow up or people not answering at all. She stated that if you have filled out this form it's important to answer your phone for any number you may not normally recognize. She stated that the Health Department will never ask for payments or insurance information. If someone asks this type of information, it is a scam. She stated that insurance information is already provided to them by the form. She reminded citizens that the call center will circle back when you don't answer.

Ms. Visintainer informed the Commissioners that a display ad will be published in the Star Democrat as well as the Caroline Review to help push out the Caroline County citizens to fill out the eligibly form. Facebook has run several ads as well pushing out this information. Ms. Visintainer also gave a special shot out to Glen Plutschak and Park Welsh, from the Caroline County and State Farm Bauru for their assistance on pushing out vaccines to over 120 farmers this past Friday.

Commissioner Franklin stated the common feedback he has received from members of the community, is that they are reluctant to sign up or fill out any form due to the low availability of the vaccine. He stated that he continues to encourage those to fill the form out so when the time comes and the vaccines are here, all their documentation will be in order and ready to go.

Special Recognition: Dina Daly Retirement: The Caroline County Commissioners present Ms. Dina Daly with a special accommodation letter for her years of services to Caroline County as the Director of Social Services. Ms. Daly stated that she has been working in the wonderful community since 1998 and she appreciates all the support and relationships that have been developed. Commissioner Levensgood stated that it has been a pleasure working with her and the leadership she have provided to the youth and underprivileged in Caroline County is immense. Commissioner Franklin stated that he knows the job she undertook is completely thankless, yet Ms. Daily has continued to show up and put forth effort to help the citizens of Caroline county. Thank you again doesn't seem enough; however, we thank you so much and best of luck to your future endeavors. Commissioner Porter stated that Caroline County is a better place due to Ms. Daly's commitment and hard work and dedication.

Discussion of the 2020 Caroline County Tax Sale: Cathie Moore, Comptroller and Nicole Moczulski, Tax Clerk, informed the Commissioners that the 2019 County Tax Sale had been postponed due to COVID-19. Ms. Moore stated that the Board wanted to reevaluate where the County was before moving forward with the 2020 Tax Sale. The Commissioners stated that after reviewing the data that was provided to them, they felt there was no reason to postpone the upcoming sale. They asked if there were members of the community that were trying to pay, but couldn't afford the taxes due to the pandemic? Ms. Moore stated that there are few, however most of the tax sale issues are from people who don't pay any year, regardless of the pandemic. The Commissioners asked Ms. Moore to bring back more data on the amount of houses that would be on the sale in April, and that at this point they feel its necessary to move forward with the 2020 Tax Sale.

Consent Agenda: the following items were approved by unanimous consent

- Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement Between Mid-Shore Regional Council, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, Salisbury University/ easter Shore Regional GIS Cooperative, Caroline County Economic Development Office, Dorchester County Economic Development Office and Talbot County Department of Economic

- Development and Tourism
- GOCCP Grant Applications for the Caroline County Sheriff's Office Heroin and Controlled Substance Interdiction Training Program
- Transfer for the Capital Improvement Fund—Bond Proceeds to the Board of Education for Expenses incurred through March 3, 2021.

The Commissioners pulled Resolution #2021-004, Admendment to the Investment Policy Statements for the Caroline County, Maryland Employees Pension Plan and the Caroline County, Maryland Other Post-Employment benefits Trust, from the consent agenda and reached out to staff to provide more information during an upcoming meeting. Mr. Goldman stated that he would have someone from Marquette and Association present more detailed information during a later meeting.

County Administrators Report:

- Mr. Goldman stated that he would like some guidance regarding the County Attorney position process. He stated that he needs details on who the Commissioners want to be on the interview panels. Commissioner Levensgood stated that he would like to see all applicants and he feels the panel should be in house employees. Mr. Goldman suggest the panel consist of the three of the Commissioners, Him, Sara and Katheleen Freeman, Planning and Codes Director.
- Commissioner Franklin stated that we may not need two rounds of interviews, however it will be good to leave that open if needed.
- The Commissioners also instructed Mr. Goldman to have face to face interviews that would not be over zoom.

Commissioners Open Discussion Period:

- Commissioner Levensgood stated that he is working in Annapolis with MACO. He stated that he has been discussing Senate Bill 898 regarding prisoners. He also informed the Commissioners that there is a discussion tomorrow regarding Kerwin with the Finance Teams. There is major concerns with what may happen with overriding the veto.
- Commissioner Franklin stated that he spoke with a concerned citizen regarding liter pick up in the County. He explained that he gave this person the office contact information to receive a formal complaint however, he has have yet to receive anything. He stated he saw the original complaint on social media.
- Commissioner Porter asked if staff would find out about the timeline for when Kerwin would be implemented. Ms. Visintainer stated that we should find out more in the next couple of weeks regarding the full implementation.
- Mr. Porter also asked if the 1.9 trillion-dollar COVID-19 relief package would provide any relief to the local counties and municipalities. Mr. Goldman stated that the bill itself has not been release to the County, however once they receive clean guidance, they are expecting that Maryland will get 4 billion. with a big piece for education and restaurants, and a direct chunk for local county's and towns. Ms. Visintainer state that Senator Cardin is hosting a meeting on March 12th, that should be explaining this bill further.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.



Jennifer M. Farina
Administrative Coordinator

Special