

**Commissioners' Journal**  
**March 12, 2020**

*The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in emergency session on March 12, 2020 at 4:45 p.m. in the Commissioners' Chambers located at 470 Center Street in Chardon, Ohio.*

*It is declared and determined that all formal actions of the Board of County Commissioners concerning and relating to the adoption of all resolutions that were adopted in this meeting, and that all deliberations of the Board of County Commissioners that resulted in such formal action were open to the public and were in compliance with all legal requirements, including section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.*

*The President of the Board, Timothy C. Lennon opened the meeting at 4:47 p.m. by leading the Board and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Commissioner Lennon thanked everyone for being in attendance for this emergency meeting today, adding that it was called due to the Corona Virus so they could discuss recent orders from the Governor.*

*County Administrator Gerard Morgan explained that Governor DeWine had issued a State of Emergency, which allowed the state offices to work together. As of today, he ordered no more than 100 people in a gathering and that all schools be ordered closed effective Monday, March 16, 2020 through April 3, 2020. Since then other departments and agencies have taken some actions, noting the Geauga Park District and the Board of Developmental Disabilities have cancelled all events and the Probate / Juvenile Court has announced changes they are putting in place. Mr. Morgan asked the Board to hold this emergency meeting to discuss how they want to handle the school closure with employees and those that will need to be at home, under normal circumstances if the school closes they would utilize their vacation time, due to the length of this closure of three weeks, and mandated by the state, if we want to allow them to use sick time, we do not have personal days, but not forcing them to use time due to the state order. In preparation of what may come next, a possible shut down, how we want to handle maintain services if the offices are closed.*

*Commissioner Lennon asked for clarification on the order, to which Mr. Morgan stated that gatherings for events of 100 or more are shut down. They agreed that it could change tomorrow. Mr. Lennon asked what they are allowed to do for their employees, if they have an employee that has a child that is off. Commissioner Spidalieri asked what options they have, to which Mr. Morgan expressed that they could create a policy to allow days for employees, to be paid for the time off. They agreed that there would need to have a form of verification of the need. Mr. Spidalieri added that the schools will act to have some form of school work while the kids are off. Mr. Spidalieri added that this is an unusual situation, we've never been in this before and agree that they need to take some form of action, to detour some spread and exposure, if you feel comfortable I would say let's go ahead and make a policy to support these families. Mr. Lennon added that some of the departments may have the capability of allowing employees to work from home. Mr. Morgan stated that he had spoken to Mr. Vontorcik at the ADP/Do IT department about the VPN's and access for employees.*

*Mr. Lennon asked Prosecutor Jim Flaiz about a protocol if they felt the need to start shutting down to essential employees, to which Mr. Flaiz added that they would do it by resolution, and adopting a temporary policy for those under their hiring authority and then encourage other elected officials to follow it. Mr. Flaiz stated that the policy needs to be done to maintain minimal staffing, sewer plants still need to operate and the Sheriff's Office can't shut down. Mr. Flaiz suggested an application for time off with approval from the supervisor, and establish a rotation of employees to cover the essential functions.*

*The Board could express an intention that you are looking to adopt a policy. Health Commissioner Tom Quade added that the order was end of the day Monday. Clerk Christine Blair added that Berkshire Local Schools sent out a notice that they will be closed effective Monday March 16<sup>th</sup> through Monday April 6<sup>th</sup> and re-evaluate. Chardon Local Schools also issued a notice that they will also be closed starting Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> through April 6<sup>th</sup>. The Board discussed holding a special meeting on Friday afternoon and work on a policy to adopt tomorrow.*

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – SCHEDULE SPECIAL/EMERGENCY MEETING**

*Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to schedule a special/emergency meeting on Friday, March 13, 2020 at 2:30 p.m.*

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<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Lennon</i>	<i>Aye</i>

*Mr. Lennon expressed that since everyone was present if anyone had a question for Mr. Quade. Mr. Flaiz asked about reporting if there was discussion about a shut down. Mr. Quade stated that this is a Class A disease, treat it like small pox, they are thinking of it in those serious terms. If it is reported we will know right away, but understand if there is a case confirmed, there will be a contact trace of people who would then be quarantined. Director of Job and Family Services, Craig Swenson inquired if an employee is quarantined, would it be considered FMLA, it would be a sick leave case to maintain public health. Mr. Lennon inquired about cleaning and disinfecting. Offices are going to continue to function. Director of Maintenance Glen Vernick stated that his staff had ramped up and are doing additional cleaning and wipe down through out the day. Mr. Quade added that employees need to have access to the wipes and sanitizer to wipe down the counters and the "publics" pens. Mr. Lennon inquired about supplies and can we supply to the departments. Mr. Lennon expressed trying to get a bulk buy done to get supplies to employees.*

*Director of Aging, Jessica Boalt thanked Mr. Quade and Mr. Morgan for remaining in contact with the department due to the nature of their agency. Ms. Boalt explained that their agency services the vulnerable in multiple capacities and at this point they are looking for additional guidance on the closure of the senior centers, but are concerned about seniors and staff getting each other ill. Ms. Boalt stated that the staff are making phone well care checks to the frailest seniors and to continue the home delivered meals program as best as possible. Mr. Quade expressed that the order to close the schools has merit to it, while they are the lessor vulnerable, while they can get infected, it would be a milder experience, but the logic is if you are going to close schools, you need to consider the risks of closing the senior centers. The challenge we face is we don't see what you prevent, there is no public health order to close, but encourage and support the closure. Mr. Lennon inquired if they needed formal approval to close, to which Mr. Flaiz stated that it is discretionary, but as the Director Ms. Boalt can take the action. Ms. Boalt stated that at this time it would be in the best interest to close the senior centers, stop the face to face appointments and in-home care services. Ms. Boalt stated that the staff will still report and engage well fare checks and call in home care clients. The meals on wheels program will continue, when the volunteers that deliver stop volunteering, staff will then handle the deliveries as long as they can and if an emergency plan is enacted they will use first responders and reduce as necessary. Mr. Spidalieri agreed that this is a good decision and take necessary actions. There was a discussion about an end date, and it was suggested to say until further notice on the closure. Mr. Quade stated that we are trying to slow it down to not burden the healthcare agencies, and in slowing it down, it stretches it out. Mr. Spidalieri stated that we don't want to instill panic, it causes people to make bad decisions. Mr. Quade noted that they have been holding informational meetings, and provided the best sources for information, the Ohio Department of Health has a web page specific for this, [www.coronavirus.oh.gov](http://www.coronavirus.oh.gov) and the call center phone number is 1-833-4 ASK ODH. Mr. Lennon asked DES Director Roger Peterson if they have had any activity, to which he explained that they are getting conference calls and emails daily from the Ohio Department of Emergency Services, and are keeping an eye on things and staying in contact with the Mr. Quade from the Health Department. Mr. Peterson noted that the EOC will kick in at any time and ready to go, there staff is available.*

*Mr. Spidalieri asked Sheriff Hildenbrand if they needed any assistance. Sheriff Hildenbrand explained that all tours have been cancelled, they don't have face to face visitation, it's done via video, the municipal court judge is doing arraignments via video rather than by transport, any inmates that arrive, they are asked a series of questions and their temperature is taken in the sally port prior to being taken in to the jail. If they do have a positive test, they will be separated and those they had been in contact with. Sheriff Hildenbrand explained that the Dispatchers are trained to ask questions of 911 calls that have symptoms. If the 911 call is for symptoms, fire and EMS personal are limiting the amount of personal going in to the residence and handling the patients. Sheriff Hildenbrand stated that the Health Department met with all Police Chiefs and the are meeting next week with the Fire Chiefs.*

*Human Resources Administrator Kathy Hostutler inquired about employee travel being limited, and are we able to ask questions of employees about their families. Mr. Quade stated that travel is your decision, but a lot of travel is being cancelled for many reasons, using 8<sup>th</sup> grade D.C. trips as an example, and that would be an obvious trip to cancel. If you are in an airport and*

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*touch something, hopefully your washing your hands rather quickly. Commissioner Dvorak expressed concern for safety of employees and asked for suggestions and recommendations for the safety of the employees. Mr. Quade stated that prevention is the same as what has been told for years, wash your hands, eat right, get plenty of rest and stay home when you are sick. Your hands are your culprit, wash your hands, clean the things you touch and don't touch your face. Mr. Quade stated that soap and water is best, hand sanitizer is good.*

*Director of Board of Elections Pete Zeigler stated that they are proceeding with the election, that they have moved one polling location and that if locations are closing that they be made aware so that they can assure voter access. Mr. Zeigler explained that they are losing poll workers and if employees could assist. It was noted that classified employees cannot be poll workers, but those in the unclassified status could. There was discussion about poll workers and training.*

*Mr. Lennon thanked everyone for attending, that the last 8 hours had been very strange and that as this moves forward, communication will be the key to staying on top of this. Mr. Dvorak expressed that they had been working on cancelling the local pancake breakfasts that were scheduled. Mr. Spidalieri expressed using updates via a group email for communication.*

*There was a brief discussion about the age of the employee population that has children in school that would need to be home, and if employees could be staggered as a way to keep offices functioning. While at this time Mr. Peterson isn't sure on whether the Board needs to declare an emergency, but that there are purchase orders in place that can be used. Sheriff Hildenbrand noted that the State did the declaration to avoid the bidding process threshold.*

*The Board added that if anyone needed anything, to please let them know.*

**BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD**

*Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 p.m.*

*Geauga County Board of Commissioners*

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*Timothy C. Lennon*

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*Ralph Spidalieri*

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*James W. Dvorak*

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*Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk*

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