

MONDAY

MARCH 16, 2020

The Governing Body of the City of Pratt met in a Recessed City/County joint meeting in the Commission Room located in City Hall.

PRESENT:	Gary Schmidt	Mayor
	Doug Meyer	Commissioner
	Don Peters	Commissioner
	Zach Deeds	Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:	Bruce Pinkall	City Manager
	LuAnn Kramer	City Clerk
	Regina Probst	City Attorney
	Diana Garten	Finance Director
	Glenna Borho	County Commissioner
	Joe Reynolds	County Commissioner Chairman
	Tom Jones	County Commissioner
	Sherry Kruse	County Clerk
	Tyson Eisenhauer	County Counselor

CALL TO ORDER:

The recessed meeting was called to order by Mayor Schmidt. The Mayor instructed the City Clerk to note that all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Leslie.

Mayor Schmidt reminded the audience that this meeting may be taped and/or recorded.

BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION ON EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN:

Emergency Preparedness Director Tim Branscom stated that he needed to update the City and fill them in on what was going on at the State level and the local level. Mr. Branscom was joined by Mr. Scott Harris, EMS Director, Ms. Sherry Besser PRMC, Mr. Paul Carrington, PRMC and Ms. Darcy Vandervyver, Pratt County Health Director. Ms. Vandervyver stated that they were listening to the CDC and KDHE and were getting a plan together to help the citizens in Pratt County. Ms. Vandervyver commented that there would be a public announcement concerning testing and social distancing. Ms. Vandervyver added that only two citizens had been tested in Pratt and both were negative, which was how we wanted to keep it.

Ms. Vandervyver stated that quarantine was the best prevention to this spreading. Mr. Carrington commented that there was an option out of a Wichita lab that you could get tested without approval from KDHE; however, it was at least a two day wait for results. Commissioner Meyer asked about payment options. Mr. Carrington stated that it was very new and the cost was around \$50, but insurance should pay for it. Mr. Carrington added that the test through the State was free. Commissioner Meyer asked if it was transported by standard couriers. Ms. Vandervyver stated that it was. Mr. Branscom stated that major health insurance carriers for the City and County would pick up the test costs. Commissioner Meyer questioned if they would go to a drive-thru method of testing if this escalates. Ms. Vandervyver

stated that a person should call their primary care physician and then come to the health department where the test would be administered outside. Ms. Vandervyver added that they should go to the ER after hours. Ms. Vandervyver commented that, if there was mass testing that needed done, they would set up a carport at the health department or Township 12 and the person would not have to get out of their vehicle.

Mr. Carrington stated that we needed to try and reduce exposure because this was a new virus. Mr. Carrington commented that they anticipate that people will get sick; however, some would be able to get better on their own. Mr. Carrington explained that people were being encouraged to seek shelter in their own homes. Mr. Carrington stated that there was not a standardized treatment, but they would hopefully be able to control the fever, etc. Commissioner Borho asked if a person should call if they have shortness of breath. Mr. Carrington stated that 30% presented the symptoms of shortness of breath and 90% were the fever. Commissioner Peters asked if they had enough ventilators. Mr. Carrington stated that they have enough that they could take care of patients in ICU. Ms. Sherry Besser stated that the first responders had identified their resources and would share if we ran out. Ms. Besser stated that the hospital had been screening visitors since Friday and were restricting entrances. Mr. Carrington stated that one of the recommendations with potential exposure was to do less surgeries and then those nurses could be pulled from that and help at the clinic.

Mr. Branscom stated that there was a possibility of limiting how big a crowd should be. Mr. Branscom explained that the bike race was eight weeks out; however, it usually brought in 250 to 300 bikers plus families. Ms. Vandervyver stated that the limit was 50 people now. Mr. Branscom commented that we need to be thinking about that and looking at the events we have coming up. Ms. Vandervyver stated that a quarantine was up to the County. Mr. Branscom added that a mandatory quarantine had to come from the Governor. County Counselor Eisenhauer stated that the local health officer could quarantine and that was Doctor Cannata. Ms. Vandervyver stated that he wanted to stay in the guidelines set by the CDC and could make it mandatory if we had a positive case. Mr. Eisenhauer commented that, if the doctor issued a quarantine order, the County would be the one to enforce that order. Mayor Schmidt asked how you get the word out. Ms. Vandervyver commented that it would be a press release, radio, Pratt County website, Facebook or other social networking.

City Manager Pinkall stated that the City had been cancelling larger events and there would be more coming up. Ms. Vandervyver stated that she would get the word from Dr. Cannata on what he had decided and that would be effective by 5:00 p.m. tonight and stay in effect until he lifts it. Mr. Carrington stated that the idea was to flatten the curve. Mr. Carrington commented that one thing to consider was the Miss Kansas Pageant and this could get into that time frame. Ms. Vandervyver stated that, if it would go into effect, the movie theatre, day cares, library, gym and skating rink would all be affected. Mr. Carrington stated that several of the nurses were parents and, if the school closing remains, they would have to come up with a different plan, which would be watching their kids themselves. Mr. Carrington added that a surge of patients would have to be cared for by less staff. Mayor Schmidt asked if we could use some type of warning that comes over the TV if this becomes serious. Mr. Branscom stated that he had media contacts that we could put it out over the air. Mr. Branscom added that a mass notification for the County would get most of the people in this area.

Commissioner Meyer stated that this was escalating very quickly and he was glad that the hospital and health department were on top of it. Mr. Branscom commented that this would definitely have an economic impact. Ms. Vandervyver stated that they had included some restaurants. Sheriff White commented that the court rooms held about thirty people. City Attorney Probst stated that they would have to keep an eye on the situation, but officers could write any citations to 60 days out if it gets closer to Pratt. Mr. Branscom stated that the State had issued a Disaster Declaration and counties did not have to declare an emergency; however, they were recommending it. Mr. Branscom added that a resolution

that declared a health emergency for sixty days would help us request assets if it were to come to that. Mr. Branscom added that there was no disadvantage to doing it.

Commissioner Borho stated that she had found out about Operation Red File and every senior could put one on their refrigerator. Commissioner Borho commented that it would have their information and they were free. Ms. Vandervyver stated that that was a good communications tool.

DISCUSSION ON SPRING CLEAN-UP:

Commissioner Borho asked if there was going to be a spring clean-up. Mr. Pinkall stated that he thought it would be a good thing; however, it would depend on staff and if we had the resources when the time comes.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- **Too many patients:**

Mr. Branscom stated that there was an agreement with the armory if there was an overflow at the hospital. Mr. Branscom added that they could also utilize the Municipal Building or the 4-H building if needed. Mr. Branscom commented that the South Central Region also had a mobile hospital. Commissioner Peters asked if they would have enough beds. Mr. Branscom stated that they had over 100 cots in the County and about 750 Level B suits and 2,000 masks. Commissioner Peters asked what they did with the things that an affected patient used. EMS Director Harris stated that it was thrown away.

- **Staying calm:**

Sheriff White stated that he was seeing some disgusting emotions over toilet paper and canned goods and he knew that there were people who were scared and angry, but everybody needed to stay calm. Sheriff White commented that these were good people and they needed to maintain that. Mayor Schmidt stated that you should check on your neighbors, especially if they were elderly.

- **Signs on Lake Road:**

Commissioner Reynolds stated that the signs on South Main Street off of Lake Road were blocking views. Commissioner Reynolds commented that they either needed to be higher or moved to the east. City Manager Pinkall stated that he would look into that.

- **KFC:**

Commissioner Jones asked if anything had progressed with the old KFC building. Mr. Pinkall stated that they were doing things that got them by, but he had not had Building Inspector Blankenship back up there. Commissioner Jones questioned if the trailers had been asked to move closer to the building. Mr. Pinkall stated that he would check on that. Commissioner Borho asked if the City could raise their minimum standards. City Attorney Probst stated that we were following the Statute and Ordinance and the Building Inspector had to make that determination. Ms. Probst stated that the City had talked about making them an offer. Finance Director Garten stated that the building was not for sale because the owner wanted to make it a drive-through taco shop. Commissioner Peters commented that we were not ignoring it. Commissioner Borho commented that the owner was holding the City hostage. Commissioner Reynolds commented that the City should have some type of ordinance. Ms. Garten stated

that he had met all the minimum requirements. Ms. Probst stated that there was the eminent domain option, which was never popular and it would open doors to a whole lot of other properties.

- **First responders:**

Commissioner Jones commented that he would like to see the City and County do something for the first responders. City Manager Pinkall stated that we could make it a day and recognize them.

- **Expungement Event:**

City Attorney Probst stated that she had been working alongside local attorneys concerning the expungement drive on June 4th. Ms. Probst commented that these would be cases in Municipal Court and District Court. Ms. Probst added that this would be a day that people could come and have assistance to fill out the paperwork. Ms. Probst stated that most people did not know that they could have things expunged from their record. Ms. Probst explained that this was funded by a grant and Judge Meisenheimer would also be present.

- **LEC:**

Commissioner Peters asked if the County Commissioners could bring them up-to-date on where they were on the LEC. Commissioner Borho stated that they had been waiting since January for window specifications and bids on the roof. County Counselor Eisenhower stated that they would be discussing this in executive session at their meeting tonight.

- **Ground east of town:**

Commissioner Peters asked if the County had any estimates on what the total cost of the full project was going to be to the citizens of Pratt County on the ground east of town. Commissioner Borho commented that it was being funded by wind farm money. Commissioner Peters stated that that was Pratt County money. Commissioner Borho stated that it was wind farm money. Commissioner Reynolds stated that it was not tax money. Commissioner Peters commented that, if that money comes into Pratt County, then it was part of his money and there were so many other things that could be done with that money. Commissioner Reynolds stated that that was his opinion. Commissioner Peters stated that it was his opinion. Commissioner Peters questioned how it was not County money just because it came from the wind turbines. Commissioner Jones explained that it was County money, but it was not County taxpayer's money. Commissioner Borho stated that it would not cost the taxpayers anything.

Commissioner Peters asked again how much the project was going to cost. Commissioner Borho stated that Mr. Dwight Adams had gone all over town telling people what the architect's estimate was. Commissioner Peters asked what that was. Commissioner Borho stated that it was \$6.9 million. Commissioner Peters questioned if that was on top of what they paid for the ground. Commissioner Borho stated 'yes, of course'. Commissioner Peters asked if they did not think that County taxpayers should have input with that kind of money. Commissioner Borho stated that the City would see what the taxpayers have to say when they build their \$4 or \$6 million pool. Commissioner Peters stated that we already had heard some comments. Commissioner Borho stated that that was just a pool and they were going to have EMS building where people were going to live.

Mr. Eisenhower interrupted the discussion and stated that the County had signed an architect contract, which was where the number came from. Mr. Eisenhower commented that they would have a meeting with the public when we got to that point and they would follow KOMA and KORA regulations.

Commissioner Peters asked if they were going to have meetings prior to accepting bids for construction. Mr. Eisenhower stated that they would talk to counsel and proceed accordingly and he envisioned that that would be with communication to the members of the community. Commissioner Peters stated that they were elected to represent the County, which he had respect for; however, that type of expenditure should have more County input from the citizens. Commissioner Peters added that they were saying it was not tax payers' money, but it comes into Pratt to be spent for the citizens of Pratt County. Commissioner Borho stated that they were building something for Pratt County. Commissioner Peters commented that \$6 million could be spent on bridges or any other improvements in the County rather than building a mile out of town. Commissioner Peters stated that some people did not want the EMS to be moved out of town and they like it where it was now.

Commissioner Peters explained that we would not build it if ten percent of the voters in the last election did not want the pool. Mr. Eisenhower stated that they would go on the advice of counsel and they would have an accurate understanding of what they needed to do and then they would have a meeting. Commissioner Peters commented that Pratt was not a growing community and we were lucky to hold where we were at now. Commissioner Borho commented that there would be the EMS living quarters, County fire and rescue, emergency management, communications, EF-5 shelter and a meeting room for thirty people. Commissioner Borho stated that they were not building because things were bad, but they needed to be progressive. Commissioner Borho added that they had not built a building since 1981 and that was the EMS building. Commissioner Peters stated that he trusted what she said; however, you could take \$250,000 and do renovations. Commissioner Peters added that he did not agree with the purchase of the ground. Commissioner Borho stated that he did not have to agree. Commissioner Borho explained that Mr. Dwight Adams had gone to an architect several years ago and designed an EMS and health department and the estimate was \$3 million, but now it had expanded to four departments and places for the community and it was \$6.9 million. Commissioner Borho stated that this was wind farm money and this would benefit the whole community.

Commissioner Peters asked about the increase in response time. Commissioner Borho stated that the response time would not be any longer and he should look at Sedgwick County. Commissioner Peters stated that he did not live in Sedgwick County. Commissioner Reynolds stated that he should go to Dodge City. Commissioner Peters stated that he did not live in Dodge City. Commissioner Borho stated that no one in town was going to sell land. Mayor Schmidt stated that he had a problem with their definition of taxpayer's money. Mayor Schmidt explained that the City's budget was \$23 million and \$5.5 million of that was in the general fund. Mayor Schmidt commented that that was all tax money and whether it was grants or reserve funds, it was all citizens' tax money and he looked at the County the same way. Commissioner Reynolds commented that he needed to check with the State and see what they say. Mr. Eisenhower stated that they were subject to the law and they were following that. Mayor Schmidt commented that they were making the argument that this was not tax money. Commissioner Reynolds questioned how much that \$6.9 million would raise the tax levy. Commissioner Reynolds added that we would be paying more on our taxes. Mayor Schmidt stated that they could use some of that money to reduce taxes. Commissioner Reynolds asked if they had figured up how much that would drop property taxes. Commissioner Borho commented that that would also benefit people that did not live here and it would give absentee landowners a tax break when they live in California.

Commissioner Meyer commented that he was talking as a taxpayer and not a Commissioner; however, he had heard talk about how much that could reduce taxes, but we did not know the facts. Commissioner Meyer stated that they had done nothing behind the scenes and he knew they were doing their job. Commissioner Borho stated that they needed to take a tour of the EMS building. Commissioner Meyer stated that he was good with that; however, the coffee shop talk was about the wind fall of money, which was a nice problem to have. Commissioner Meyer asked if there had been studies done from the EMS' current location, because the new location was going to be five minutes farther out. Commissioner

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Reynolds stated that it would depend on traffic. Mr. Eisenhower stated that they were not going to communicate until there was accurate information available and they would talk in an open meeting. Mr. Eisenhower commented that they were not contractually committed and that would be in an open meeting as well. Mr. Eisenhower stated that they would follow counsel's advice and they wanted to be able to provide information to the public; however, they were in the beginning stages.

ADJOURN:

Mayor Schmidt made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Meyer seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR:

GARY A. SCHMIDT, Mayor



ATTEST:

LUANN KRAMER, City Clerk