

ADAIR COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2020
7TH DAY APRIL ADJOURNED

The Adair County Commission convened at 8:30 a.m. on May 18, 2020 in the Courthouse at Kirksville. All Commissioners were present.

At 10:00 a.m., the Elected Official's monthly meeting was held at the Adair County Annex at 300 N. Franklin in Kirksville. Attending the meeting were Adair County Presiding Commissioner, Mark Shahan; Adair County 1st District Commissioner, Bill King; Adair County 2nd District Commissioner, Mark Thompson; Adair County Public Administrator, Rhonda Noe; Adair County Assessor, Kent Bryant; Adair County Clerk, Sandra Collop; Adair County Treasurer, Lori Smith; Adair County Collector, Sonja Harden; Adair County Sheriff, Robert Hardwick; Adair County Circuit Clerk, Linda Decker; and Adair County Prosecuting Attorney, Matt Wilson. Those absent were Adair County Recorder, Pat Shoush, and Adair County Coroner, Brian Noe.

Presiding Commissioner Shahan began the discussion with the continued closure of the Courthouse to the public. Mr. Wilson stated he had talked with Judge Steele earlier in the morning. According to Supreme Court rules, the Court system will not open until the number of COVID-19 cases no longer increased and a two-week quarantine was maintained. As a result, Judge Steele would not be opening the court system in Adair County on June 1 as previously planned. He has cancelled all jury trials in the Circuit until July 1, 2020. It was noted that COVID testing had been performed at Smithfield Farms (a meat packing plant) in Milan, Missouri and positive cases of employees working in Milan but living in Kirksville were discovered.

Mrs. Decker stated that emergency court situations were being taken care of by polycom. Commissioner King asked about wearing masks in the courtrooms which could cause hearing difficulties for some people. She said that the courtroom would be limited to 10 people and people need to use the sound system, however, the sound may be muffled.

Mr. Wilson stated that most cases were being done by polycom. He was concerned about the large size of Judge Swaim's docket. She would need to continue to do "zoom" and polycom, but there was still the situation of people being outside the Courthouse wanting to see their incarcerated family member. Mr. Wilson said some judges could change easier than others as far as having defendants appear in person. He said that 90% of the time the family did not need to be there.

Sheriff Hardwick appreciated Judge Steele's standing on not allowing family in the Courtroom. Mrs. Decker said that Judge Swaim dealt with clients' not being represented by an attorney. If not represented, then she made a referral to the Public Defender's office. Judge Swaim typically wanted to see them if they did not have an attorney.

Presiding Commissioner Shahan discussed the possibility of sending Municipal Court back to City Hall. Mrs. Decker said it could be done if they were ordered to do so. It would cost approximately \$2,000 in equipment needs to accomplish this; however, her office was only receiving \$650 per year from the City of Kirksville for Municipal Court expense. Presiding Commissioner Shahan said the Commission was merely kicking things around for a solution. Mrs. Decker added that Wednesdays were not good due to the volume of cases that are heard on that day.

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Sheriff Hardwick believed that scheduling the people and cases would help solve the problem. Mr. Wilson said that multiple hearings were scheduled on one day, but it was only a drop in the bucket for Municipal Court cases. Mrs. Decker has spoken with Judge Swaim and Law Enforcement has done a slow down on issuing violations. The Municipal Court docket could not be moved to another day as they were earmarked for other cases. You can invest money to provide tech operating at City Hall, but people will still have to come to the Courthouse to make payments. She thought Judge Swaim was very aggressive with polycom, zoom, as well as other media. Commissioner King still did not think Judge Swaim could get thru the docket in a timely manner. Mrs. Decker reminded everyone that a study of Circuit Clerk offices by the State revealed that Adair County was #1 in clerks versus the size of docket in other Counties. The Adair County Circuit Clerk's office is currently 2 clerks short.

Sheriff Hardwick asked how the City could pay such a low fee for the Circuit Clerk's expenses. His office pays \$3500 per year just to have a spot on one of their towers for his communication system.

Mrs. Noe said it was a no-win situation for people. Her association was having a conference in Columbia the first part of June and is on the planning committee. She asked if anyone knew how to hold a meeting virtually. Mr. Wilson said that was how one of his conferences was held.

Mrs. Smith suggested archive viewing of conferences. They were being video typed and then viewed later. The State will not waive the training requirement for Elected Officials for them to receive their final paycheck of the year. Her association also did a closed group that was available on U-tube.


Presiding Commissioner Shahan discussed Courthouse security. He stated the Courthouse would remain closed if the Court system was closed. As a result, the Courthouse would not open on June 1 as previously considered. Sheriff Hardwick spoke of comprehensive security for the Courthouse and had many ideas on how to achieve that goal.

Mrs. Collop spoke of absentee voting which will take place beginning May 21st at the Adair County Annex. Absentee ballots are only available by mail until May 20 then in-person voting will go into effect.

Commissioner Thompson reported that the County had received Federal funds in the amount of \$2.9 million dollars for COVID-19 relief efforts. The Commission is considering Northeast Regional Planning for administration requests of the funds. The Commission, however, would have the final decision of the awards. Funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis only. The cost could potentially be \$17,000 for their services. Mr. Wilson suggested that clarification be given as to why the County spent money for an administration fee. Commissioner Thompson also mentioned a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Fund that has been created. This involves 75% reimbursement of eligible expenses with the possibility of an extra 10% from the State.

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Mrs. Collop asked that any COVID-19 related expenses be listed separately on blue sheets sent to the Clerk's Office for payment. She is going to maintain a COVID-19 file for possible reimbursement.

Mrs. Decker then clarified that the County would be staying with the schedule of the Court System which was confirmed by the County Commission.

The meeting ended at 12:00 p.m.

At 2:30 p.m., the Commission spoke telephonically with Ivan Schraeder, Legal Counsel for Adair County. Also present was Adair County Treasurer, Lori Smith, and Adair County Clerk, Sandra Collop.

First topic of discussion was E-911. Ms. Smith was not sure if the County has been receiving the correct amount of E-911 funds from land line providers as well as cell phone providers. She has been receiving varying amounts from different companies which seemed unusual. Ms. Smith asked if she should call the companies and tell them to change their amounts. Mr. Schraeder stated that you cannot decide until you know who is paying what so the problem can be addressed. There continued to be many questions as how to administer these fees and the County needed to get clarification from the State. He said not to change anything until we knew what we needed to do and receive clear direction as to what should be done.

The second issue regarded the Federal money received for COVID-19 relief efforts. The Commission spoke of the Northeast Regional Planning Committee (RPC) to serve as the administrator of the grant but wanted clarification from Mr. Schraeder. The Commission will send the current 2020 Regional Planning contract to him for determination of a possible conflict of interest. Mr. Schraeder mentioned that counties were administrating the funds using several different avenues. These included an in-house County Elected Official, the RPC, or a CPA firm which would ensure that the audit function would already be in place.


Discussion included giving proportionate shares within the County and the Federal/State Governments not giving reliable information on what to do. Mr. Schraeder stressed the money needed to be considered for COVID-19 related issues only. If needed, he would be available for ongoing questions.

The Adair County Commission adjourned at 4:00 p.m. on May 18, 2020.

Unscheduled Public Walk-Ins and other Non-Agenda Items for Monday, May 18, 2020:

None

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