

ADAIR COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020
2ND DAY APRIL ADJOURNED

The Adair County Commission convened at 8:30 a.m. on May 5, 2020 in the Courthouse at Kirksville. All Commissioners were present.

At the request of Adair County Clerk, Sandra Collop, the Commission agreed that absentee voting be held in the Adair County Annex beginning May 21, 2020. This will enable voters to absentee vote in person for the April 7, 2020 Municipal Election that was postponed until June 2, 2020. May 20, 2020 is the last day to receive an absentee ballot by mail. The Adair County Courthouse has been closed to the public for several weeks due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

At 1:30 p.m., the Commission participated in a weekly conference call with Tekesha Austin of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to conduct a follow up meeting on #4451-MO Disaster. The incident period of the disaster was April 29, 2019 thru July 5, 2019 when Adair County experienced severe storms and flooding. She continues to work with Diana Couch from the Adair County Road and Bridge Department and is waiting for maintenance records on culverts and bridges to continue with the project. The County is also working on material and labor costs. Ms. Austin stated that FEMA still needs to finish the site inspection. The next conference call will be May 13, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

At 1:40 p.m., the Commission reviewed logo entries for the Adair County emblem. Erica Speiser has submitted multiple entries. The Commission has spoken with her and will be combining two of her entries into one. A cash award in the amount of \$250 has been donated by an anonymous resident to be used for recognition of the winner.

At 2:00 p.m., the Commission participated in a zoom meeting conducted by Sheriff Hardwick to further discuss courtroom procedures and social distancing. Also present were Linda Decker, Adair County Circuit Clerk; Jeff Gottman, Adair County Sheriff's Deputy; Circuit Judge, Russell Steele; Associate Judge, Kristie Swaim; Tracy Salsberry, Adair County Sheriff's Deputy; Kevin Locke, Public Defender; Steve Farnsworth, Kirksville Chief of Police; Associate Judge, Tom Redington; Matt Wilson, Adair County Prosecuting Attorney; and Danica Collinge, Adair County Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff Hardwick thanked everyone for participating in this meeting as to what should be done about the Courts. Judge Steele said the approach would be based upon the local jurisdiction. Each court was to adopt policies to open their court system in a phased approach. Judge Redington said that in his courtroom, he has rearranged the tables, taped off 6-foot distances in all directions, and the Sheriff is letting people enter in small groups. The docket will be broken into small groups by the Bailiff. Everyone will stay outside and then would be given time to come into the building. The 1st phase allows only 10 people in the courtroom at a time.

Judge Steele said in Adair County the 19th would be the starting point to use "zoom" for people in custody. Dockets will be regulated in the future. There is no reason for their presence and will be encouraged not to come. Proceedings can be managed by attorneys, for example, by splitting up the docket. Mr. Locke is OK with opening the courts; however, the State courts should be offered guidelines. We are at Phase 0 now. Then we can move to Phase I, then having 10 people in the courtroom and then to 20. He is afraid a little bit and does not want to go back too soon. Judge Steele said they would rely on the Bailiffs to help with masks.

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County Clerk



Presiding Commissioner

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Sheriff Hardwick appreciated the use of video and zoom. The burden is having to wait for people to come to court. There cannot be any clusters. They are considered quarantined folks at this time.

Judge Steele wants to maximize the use of telecom and video conferencing to minimize people in the Courthouse. They now have a broader opportunity to utilize video conferencing and he is all for doing more of that. Mr. Locke said they were, too. Sheriff Hardwick said there are 30 -40 cases for the month of May for civil process. Judge Steele again said they are still operating under Phase O. Mr. Wilson said that for private attorneys, they know who and what should be done. They will let the courts know so we can control and limit people.

Judge Steele wanted to know who would be providing hand sanitizer and wipes for the Courthouse Mr. Locke said it took two to three weeks for personal protective equipment (PPP) such as hand sanitizer to go to his office. Judge Redington has sanitizer in his courtroom for public use.

Judge Steele thought there had been good ideas from both meetings and feels better about going in a forward direction. People can specify who they want at a time by video. Mr. Locke said it has been an easy transition to video in his office. Judge Steele told Sheriff Hardwick if any of his staff had suggestions, to please let him know.

Mr. Wilson asked Mr. Farnworth about municipal court concerns. There had been no discussion yet with John Slavin, the City Attorney. Judge Steele said the road map for that was still being developed.


Mr. Locke wanted to verify that everyone was moving to convene court on May 18 or May 19. Judge Steele said "No." It should be a zoom docket on the 19th. Judge Redington said his next docket was the 26th with the Drug Court docket possibly on the 19th. He has yet to decide that.

Sheriff Hardwick asked Judge Swaim when she would start, and she did not know. When Phase I did begin, she wanted to know what door of the Courthouse will be opened. Really credible cases should be looked at. People will have to wait in line. They need to let the public know about the procedures, longer wait, and longer time.

Mr. Wilson said Shelby County uses a metal detector and only one door. This limits how to get in and out. The Commission thought the Bailiff could limit access. Sheriff Hardwick said - so many in and so many out. The world is upside down. Convenience is gone and higher security at the Courthouse is needed. The Commission told him he needs to put it on the agenda, and they will talk about it. Commissioner King said they have been considering one door to be open for the Courthouse. Mr. Locke suggested passes.

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Sheriff Hardwick thanked everyone for their input. The next meeting to be updated on the situation is tentatively scheduled for May 12th at 2:00 p.m.
Judge Swaim said there would still be a Law Day.

The Adair County Commission adjourned at 4:00 p.m. on May 5, 2020.

Unscheduled Public Walk-Ins and other Non-Agenda Items for Tuesday, May 5, 2020:

None

ATTEST:



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