

**POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 25, 2020**

1. At 9:00 a.m., Commissioner Ainsworth declared the Tuesday meeting of the Polk County Board of Commissioners in session. Commissioner Pope and Commissioner Mordhorst were present.
2. **MINUTES** : **COMMISSIONER MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER POPE SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 18, 2020**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE**

Jacqui Umstead, Public Health Administrator, reviewed the Covid case data for Oregon, Polk and Marion County. As of August 25<sup>th</sup> Oregon has a total of 25,155 positive Covid cases, 420 deaths. Test positivity for Oregon the week of August 16<sup>th</sup> through August 22<sup>nd</sup> has come down from the week prior from 5.4% to 5.1%. Polk County has a test positivity rate of 4.4% and Marion County is at 11.2%.

Polk County has 395 Covid cases, 0 hospitalizations and 13 deaths. Polk County is averaging 8,391.3 tests per 100,000 people and 476.2 positive cases per 100,000 people. Marion County has 3,547 Covid cases, 5 hospitalizations and 75 deaths. Marion County is testing 11,710 tests per 100,000 people and 1,020 positive cases per 100,000 people.

There have been no additional Covid cases at Capitol Manor, Dallas Retirement Village has 5 positive cases, Prestige has 3 positive cases, and Salem Health has 38 positive staff members. Ms. Umstead reported that the long term care facilities have been very easy to work with and have had great communication with Public Health.

Public Health is still using the Contact Tracers from Western Oregon University. There are 10 Contact Tracers, 2 Coordinators, and 2 Professors providing oversight. There are currently 98 individuals being monitored in Polk County. The MOU with Willamette Workforce has been signed and Public Health is still reviewing applications for a Case Investigator. Polk County has 1 full time Public Health Worker who is cross trained and working cases on her own and will start covering weekends in September. They are in the process of recruiting another Public Health Worker that will be a temporary position. There are 2 communicable disease RN's and another RN who has been cross trained to do case investigation and then there is also 1 back up RN. Additionally, they have a Public Health Worker who was hired through the modernization grant that is also cross trained. Polk County Public Health is considering an MOU with Douglas County in order to utilize their Case Investigators as they are available, in the case of a Covid surge or if people are out.

Ms. Umstead reviewed the public health indicators for Polk County and Marion County both separately and combined. Polk County is under the target for Emergency Department visits with 0.6%. Our trend in percent of tests that are positive in the last 7 days has seen an uptrend at 6.9%, which is looking at just the last 7 days not comparing it to the week prior. During that 7 day period there were 487 people tested and 34 were positive. The third metric is percent increase in new cases in the last 7 days which saw an increase of 58%. Percent of cases not traced to a known source in the last 7 days had an increase of 33%. This metric tells us that the virus and is community spread. Polk County has no trend for hospitalization over the last 14 days.

Marion County is also under the target for Emergency Department visits at 0.6%. Their trend in percent of tests that are positive in the last 7 days is 10.9%, which is an uptrend. During that 7 day period Marion County tested 2,477 people and 272 were positive with a 21% increase in cases. Marion County also is at 33% of cases not traced to a known source in the last 7 days as well as no trend in hospitalizations in the last 14 days. Ms. Umstead also provided the Board with a copy of a newsletter that WOU produced that shows how Oregon counties rank in Covid cases per capita. Polk County is currently ranked at number 14.

The CDC has changed their guidelines on testing asymptomatic individuals and Commissioner Pope asked if that has affected Local Public Health Authorities. Ms. Umstead stated that mask guidelines have not been changed by the Oregon Health Authority yet. OHA does tend to follow the CDC guidelines but sometimes it takes a while for that change to happen. There is still finite testing resources so it is hard to predict if OHA will decide to follow CDC changes. There are testing events happening around the County, one is coming up on Wednesday, which is being run by Alluvium and Mano Y Mano. This event is to test specifically migrant farm workers. There has also been discussion about planning more in September and October for populations that have higher incidents and don't have access to healthcare.

Dean Bender, Emergency Operations Manager, informed the Board that last week 31 orders were filled for personal protective equipment (PPE), valued at approximately \$23,000. Polk County also received a shipment of 40 boxes of gloves of various sizes. The county inventory of PPE still has a sufficient amount of stock and everything has now been loaded onto 36 pallets.

Commissioner Pope asked if he had any information about the decision the e-board made to spend \$1.5 million on PPE. Mr. Bender said that the e-board has not reached out to the county at all. Commissioner Pope told Mr. Bender that he would like him to get an answer from OEM about where the \$1.5 million was spent on and what the county should be expecting as far as shipments of PPE.

#### **4. DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY**

Liz Dent, Oregon Department of Forestry's State Forests Division Chief, stated that the Forestry Board directed her department to too look for new ways to improve financial and conservation outcomes and to look into the possible benefits of a habitat conservation plan (HCP). The forestry's department legal mandate is to manage the lands for the greatest permanent value. The land is being managed to provide timber revenue to the counties, of which 2/3 of the revenue does go. The other 1/3 of the revenue goes to the forestry department and into a dedicated fund for managing the forests. An HCP is an agreement with the federal services, which are the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries. The department of forestry has to demonstrate how they will protect any species listed as endangered under their management specifically during harvest. As of now prior to any harvesting of an area that has potential habitat a survey is conducted to determine if those endangered species are present. If so, the Department of forestry then determines what the risk is to the species if they move forward and it is sent to US Fish and Wildlife and if the risk is low they can proceed. These surveys cost approximately \$2 million annually, and if the survey finds the risk is too high for the species then the Department of Forestry has to drop the timber sale.

With an HCP is an agreement with the agencies that will have a greater list of species protected as well as a specific areas that will be managed for conservation and in return there is an agreement on how they will manage the rest of the forests. An HCP would eliminate the need for costly surveys, improve efficiency, and would be a long term agreement, possibly up to 70

years. This HCP would only apply to the western Oregon forest land, which covers approximately 600,000 acres.

The Department of Forestry completed an analysis for the Board and were directed to pursue the HCP. In October they will provide a more thorough analysis to the Board with more information about what the services expectations are and they will decide if they want to proceed. If they want to proceed then the HCP will move onto the federal process which includes public engagement.

Commissioner Pope refers to the handout and the draft harvest level outcomes and the fact that the estimated draft harvest level is about 10% lower than current harvest levels. There is a class action lawsuit going on right now that is about harvest levels and returns to the partners. Commissioner Pope stated that he sees the pro's and con's with the HCP and that Polk County has been a habitat conservation area for a long time because of the owls and it has hindered revenues. Another concern Commissioner Pope expressed is that it is expensive to fund the agency that will do the habitat conservation work in compliance with the federal law. Ms. Dent acknowledges that the possibility of it costing more is a possibility but they will be doing a thorough analysis on that before deciding to move forward and the numbers she has drafted in the summary she provided are preliminary.

**5. NON-LISTED ITEMS** - (Pursuant to ORS 192.640, the Board of Commissioners considered the below identified non-listed items.)

Commissioner Ainsworth adjourned the meeting at 10:01 am.

Minutes: Ciera Atha  
Approved: September 1, 2020