

**POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 2, 2021**

1. At 9:00 a.m., Commissioner Pope declared the Tuesday meeting of the Polk County Board of Commissioners in session and led the Board and attending audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Mordhorst and Commissioner Ainsworth were present.
2. **MINUTES:** **COMMISSIONER AINSWORTH MOVED, COMMISSIONER MORDHORST SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2021.**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE**

Jacqui Umstead, Public Health Administrator, reviewed the COVID-19 case data from the most recent review period. As of February 2nd Oregon had a total of 143,373 COVID-19 cases and 1,958 deaths. The test positivity rate in Oregon for January 17<sup>th</sup> through January 30<sup>th</sup> was 5.3%. Marion County is at 8.6% and Polk County is at 7.2%.

Polk County has a total of 2,720 positive COVID-19 cases, 7 hospitalizations and 42 deaths. Positive cases who are currently isolating is 127, which is the number of positive cases identified within the last 10 days. Marion County has a total of 17,317 positive COVID-19 cases, 25 hospitalizations and 259 deaths.

Ms. Umstead reviewed the status of the outbreaks in Polk County's long term care facilities (LTCF). Capitol Manor has 18 positive cases; Dallas Retirement Village has 93; Blue Haven Residential Care has 16. Marquis Spa Corp continues to have 15 positive cases. Salem Health overall has had a total of 172 positive staff according to the Oregon Health Authority weekly report and that is the total number of positive since reporting began.

Western Oregon University (WOU) continues to manage all of the contact tracing for Polk County. There are currently 105 close contacts to positive cases. In regards to internal staffing for Public Health they are currently training the two new Public Health workers and another one starts tomorrow. OHA has been providing intermittent support with case investigation when that is needed.

The testing event scheduled for last Tuesday was canceled due to the snow. There are two more dates scheduled this month, February 9<sup>th</sup> and also the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Those are free drive through events and are open to the public. Those will take place at the Polk County Fairgrounds.

Commissioner Pope asked about the fund for staffing these positions and how long it is expected to last. Greg Hansen, Administrative Officer stated that staffing since July 1 has gone through Public Health and it has been tracked. He expects there is close to \$200,000 of available funding for things such as staffing, hotel reserve. There is another fund of Coronavirus Relief Fund which has about \$140,000 left which covers the economic development efforts and absences. He expects that money will last through March 2021. We do not know what will be coming or if anything will after that.

Based on data from January 10<sup>th</sup> through January 23<sup>rd</sup> Oregon had a case rate of 296.3 per 100,000 residents and a 5.5% positivity rate. Polk County had a case rate of 306 cases which gave us a case rate of 368.9 per 100,000 residents with a 7.8% positivity rate and are still in the extreme risk category.

During the week of January 17<sup>th</sup> overall Oregon 1.8% of emergency department visits were COVID-like symptoms. During that same week 120 COVID-19 cases were admitted to a hospital in Oregon and of those 4 were from Polk County. 99% of cases were followed up on within 24 hours, 54.5% of

cases during the week of January 17<sup>th</sup> were traced to a known source. The majority of cases were considered sporadic and for that week Dallas had the largest number of cases at 46 positive cases.

For January 10<sup>th</sup> through January 23<sup>rd</sup> Marion County had a total of 1309 cases and a case rate of 376.4 cases per 100,000 residents and a positivity rate of 9.4%. During the week of January 17<sup>th</sup> 29 Marion County COVID-19 cases were admitted to a hospital. 92% of cases were followed up on within 24 hours and 51.4% of cases during the week of January 17<sup>th</sup> were traced to a known source.

Polk County School metrics were based on the time frame from January 17<sup>th</sup> through January 30<sup>th</sup> and had a 7.2 positivity rate and a case rate of 297.8, which has come down significantly. Marion County for the same time frame had a test positivity rate of 8.6% and a care rate per 100,000 residents of 313.4.

Oregon has vaccinated 353,028 people and 80,561 have had both doses and are considered fully vaccinated. In Polk County 9,537 people has received a COVID-19 vaccine and 1,859 have had both doses. Right now Polk County is 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the state for vaccination per 10,000 residents. This week the West Valley Hospital vaccination clinic at Western Oregon University is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday and they are continuing to vaccinate phase 1a and early childhood educators and childcare providers. This week Polk County received 800 doses of the vaccine but had requested 3,500. West Valley hospital does have the capacity to vaccinate up to 2,400 people each day, but due to the shortage of vaccine they are not able to reach that number. The vaccine clinic has a call list to avoid wasting any doses of the vaccine and have been very successful at not wasting it. Ms. Umstead stated that the state does not share information about the vaccine production rate with Public Health. Johnson and Johnson will be submitting their application to the FDA for emergency use authorization, that vaccine is 85% effective and is only one dose. Commissioner Pope would like the state to address why there is a shortage of vaccine and what is being done to help reduce that challenge. He challenges the media in the meeting to challenge the state and try to get answers.

#### **4. MONMOUTH INDEPENDENCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Sarah Ramirez, Board member with Monmouth Independence of Commerce and Visitor Center, gave the Board some history about the Visitor Center. The Chamber has taken steps to strengthen the Visitor Center presence in Polk County. Ms. Ramirez explained that the Visitor Center has worked hard to procure collaborations with other agencies to promote and encourage community engagement. The visitor center believes that Polk County has relied solely on agriculture and timber and they would like to promote tourism to highlight other business and activities that are available.

The Chamber requested that Polk County help to support this tourism effort by a \$5,000 donation this fiscal year and another \$5,000 in fiscal year 2021-2022. This would provide one part time employee, up to 19 hours a week that can help staff the visitor center and assist the Polk County Tourism Alliance with administrative support house in the Chamber office and focus the social media outreach.

Commissioner Ainsworth would like to know how much the cities pay to support this. Each city pays \$5,000 in addition to a platinum level membership. Western Oregon University supports the Chamber with in kind services as well as a platinum level membership. The chamber will be partnering with all cities in Polk County including Falls City and West Salem. Commissioner Pope believes that it is not a good time for this request because the Board is already in discussions with Polk County Tourism Alliance and he hasn't heard anything be mentioned that the Visitor Center would be the hub for this tourism push. He believes it's important to give the Tourism Alliance the time to continue what they have started that includes all of the cities. Ms.

Ramirez understands and that it is important to strengthen tourism in the County and she looks forward to working with all of the agencies in the future to move tourism in Polk County forward.

**5. COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY UPDATE**

Brent DeMoe, Family and Community Outreach (FCO) Director, expressed his appreciation for the staff at Community Action Agency (CAA) has stepped up since the pandemic. They will be highlighting the partnership between Polk County FCO and CAA. The agency received almost \$6.4 million in COVID Emergency COVID Rental assistance. The program only used about 5% of the staff and building to run that program. \$5.3 million went to keep people from being evicted. Last week CAA notified Mr. DeMoe that they will be granting FCO \$500,000 to ensure that every Polk County household has access to those resources. After that money is spent they can possibly grant another \$500,000. Total rental assistance to Polk County was \$973,914.81 on 241 households. The Board expressed their appreciation for the work that Mr. Jones and all of the CAA staff provide for not only Polk County but everybody they help.

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

None

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:16 a.m.

Minutes: Ciera Atha  
Approved: February 9, 2021