

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
March 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 MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER AINSWORTH SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 23, 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 March 2nd Oregon had a total of 155,787 COVID-19 cases and 2,212 deaths. The test positivity rate for February 14th through February 27th was 3.9% with a case rate of 129.2 cases per 100,000 residents.

For that same time from Polk County has a positivity rate of 5.3% and a case rate of 184.5 per 100,000 residents. Polk County had 3,061 cases, 6 hospitalizations, 44 deaths and there are 68 people currently isolating. This is the number of positive cases identified within the past 10 days.

Blue Haven Residential Care is the only active outbreak in Polk County and they did not have any more positive cases this week. Their outbreak is expected to end this week if they do not have any more positive cases. At the testing event on February 23rd there were 29 people tested for COVID-19. There are no more testing events scheduled at this time. The case numbers will be monitored by Public Health and if they feel the need for more testing they can schedule another testing event.

There are eleven counties in Oregon that are currently in the High Risk Level category, including Polk County. For the period of time from February 14th Polk County had 152 positive COVID-19 cases which is a case rate of 183.3 per 100,000 residents and a 5.2% positivity rate. For that same time frame 63.8% of cases were traced to a known source.

Ms. Umstead informed the Board that all of the school in Polk County are meeting the metrics for on-site & hybrid learning. All of the school has begun on-site & hybrid except Dallas, which will start that on Monday.

In Oregon 345,648 people have been fully vaccinated and in Polk County there have been 9,063 people vaccinated. Oregon is second in the state for vaccination per 10,000 population. The West Valley Hospital (WVH) vaccination clinic at Western Oregon University (WOU) will be open this week Monday/Wednesday/Friday vaccinating phase 1A; educators/early learning/child care providers and the 65+ population. This week's allocation of vaccines is 900 first doses and 800 second doses. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine has been issued an emergency use authorization for their single dose vaccine. Commissioner Pope asked if Public Health has heard anything about the state implementing a "buffer week" to prevent counties from toggling back and forth from level to level. Ms. Umstead said she has not heard anything about that but will inquire about it in her meeting with OHA later this afternoon.

Dean Bender, Emergency Operations/Communications Manager, reviewed the handout he provided the Board which showed the various orders for PPE the county has filled and received. The handout also listed the PPE that Polk County currently has on hand and the estimated monetary value. Mr. Bender also informed the Board that schools will now be putting in orders for PPE and those will be

routed through the local Emergency Manager and he will then send the request to the state. Whatever they request will come out of the county's allocation.

4. STORM DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Mr. Bender reported on the initial damage assessment from the 2021 ice storm that hit the county the week of February 12, 2021. He stated that they collected all of the damages around the cities, all except the city of Salem, which would go to Marion County. The preliminary estimate of damage is \$3.3 million and the threshold for Polk County is \$293,000 for the state that has a threshold of almost \$6 million. Mr. Bender is expecting to be able to have all the data this week and submit that to the federal government.

Todd Whitaker, Public Works Director, informed the Board that the priority for Public Works was to get all roads open to at least one lane and there are still some roads that only have one lane open. The next priority for Public Works is eliminating the hanging limbs, which is taking longer than expected. When they see one limb hanging they have been finding that there are many more once they are up in the bucket truck. Those are a big concern because they could cause a lot of damage if they fell on vehicles or people.

5. WEST VALLEY HOUSING AUTHORITY

Christian Edelblute, Executive Director of West Valley Housing Authority (WVHA), appeared to request support from the Commissioners for the Asset Reposition Plan that is being proposed to HUD. In order for HUD to consider approving the repositioning of certain assets for WVHA they must receive letters of support from the local municipalities. There are two homes located on Laura Lane in Polk County that WVHA is wanting to sell, and would like to allocate those funds to securing and developing additional multi-family homes or use it to make necessary improvements to existing multi-family housing.

Mr. Edelblute explained to the Board that the houses they are wanting to dispose of are aging and in need of substantive capital improvement. The capital improvement fund is decreasing and is not enough to keep up with the maintenance needed for properties that are 50+ years old. Mr. Edelblute also reassured the Board that although some tenants may be displaced temporarily, WVHA will be ensuring that nobody is homeless and that they will receive a tenant protection voucher and relocation assistance, from financial to cover moving expenses and staffing assistance in locating replacement housing.

The Board expressed concern about displacing any tenants. They would like to review the proposal in more detail and have individual conversations with Mr. Edelblute before they make a decision to support the repositioning of the assets in question.

6. OR – READY EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

William Chapman, Statewide Interoperability Coordinator, presented "OR-Alert" which is a statewide system for alerts, warnings, and notifications (AWN). He explained that OR-Alert will provide statewide access to a modern and interoperable alerts, warnings, and notifications system, enabling real-time sharing of hazard information across Oregon's 36 counties and Tribal governments and providing access to FEMA's Integrated Alerts and Warnings System (IPAWS). The availability of timely AWNs through multiple channels, including text, landline and cellular phones, social media and broadcast media, will enable people in Oregon to make critical decisions in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters and emergency incidents. Statewide deployment of OR-Alert will facilitate cross-jurisdictional collaboration and mutual aid, provide for local control, enable efficiencies in scope and scale, and ensure that all jurisdictions have foundational AWN capabilities. More specifically, OR-Alerts provides the

following Everbridge products, features and support to County and Tribal governments choosing to opt-in to the system, at no cost: Mass Notification with Incident Communications, Community Engagement, SMARTWeather with Resident Connection and Everbridge Technical Account Manager (TAM). Each County and Tribal jurisdiction will also be provided with a customizable opt-in portal for resident sign-ups and have the ability to rapidly publish temporary and incident-specific webpages using the Everbridge platform. OR-Alerts implementation team has deployed the alerting system within the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Klamath County, and the office of the Governor.

The Board would like to review Mr. Chapman's presentation in more depth before making a decision to switch to OR-Alerts for AWNs.

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

- a) **ANNOUNCEMENT** - Commissioner Ainsworth announced that he will be retiring at the end of July, 2021. They will follow the same process that was developed when Commissioner Wheeler retired. Commissioner Ainsworth will be involved in the process being and he is still an acting County Commissioner.
- b) **CITIZEN QUESTION** – Joe Rivera, asked the Board if they have any intention of passing a Resolution making Polk County a Sanctuary from gun laws. Mr. Rivera stated that he was concerned about some gun legislation he read about and also saw that Yamhill County had proposed it become a Sanctuary county. The Board responded that they do not plan on becoming a Sanctuary County from gun laws. Commissioner Pope advised Mr. Rivera to reach out to the state representatives that are pushing legislation and let them know how the constituents feel about the proposed legislation.

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:21 a.m.

Minutes: Ciera Atha
Approved: March 9, 2021