

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
September 14, 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 Gordon and Commissioner Mordhorst were present.

2. **MINUTES:** **COMMISSIONER MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER GORDON SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. COVID UPDATE

Jacqui Umstead, Public Health Administrator, reviewed the handout that she provided the Board with the Covid cases, case rate and case positivity. Last week in Oregon there were 14,055 cases reported, and 99 deaths. In Polk County there were 290 cases reported and 2 deaths, which is a total of 5,995 cases and 71 deaths. Ms. Umstead reviewed the case rate by age and zip code for the last week, as well as the number of pediatric cases. The current work related cases consist of 49 cases at the Dallas Retirement Village, 6 cases at Capitol Manor, and 9 cases at the Independence Health and Rehab. As of September 13th there were 1,075 hospitalized Covid positive patients in Oregon, 274 are in the ICU and 187 are on ventilators. In our region, there are 166 Covid positive patients hospitalized. In Polk County there are 8 positive Covid patients hospitalized.

The total number of Polk County residents that are vaccinated who are 12 years old and up as of September 13th is 50,843. 79.2% of Polk County residents who are 18 years and up are vaccinated. 73.3% of Oregon's population that is 18 year old and up are vaccinated. Ms. Umstead reviewed a chart showing the total number of Covid vaccines doses that have been administered in Polk County broken down by day and manufacturer. Commissioner Gordon requested that in the future her report include the vaccination rate in children 12 years old to 16 years old.

4. SHERIFF OFFICE UPDATE

Sheriff Garton informed the Board that the Sheriff Office is having a difficult time recruiting and retaining employees. There has been a 45% increase in retirements in the last year and 20% increase in resignations. There are currently two open positions for non-certified positions, one for a records technician and the other is for an evidence technician. There are also two open positions on patrol but they have offered one of those positions to someone and are waiting to hear back. They have been very busy lately with the illegal marijuana grows they have been taking care of, and are still working on. There have been an increase in traffic related issues, partially due to the school zones having more traffic since school started. In the jail there is a Control Technician position open and two Deputies are out on leave. They are also having trouble finding medical staff to work in the jail.

The Sheriff Office recently worked on a cold case from 25 years ago and were successful in identifying the remains. The suspect was apprehended and is currently being held in the Polk County jail. Sheriff Garton discussed the marijuana grow bust that was recently done. He explained that they had 24 members of the Sheriff Office work on that bust because of the guns and amount of drugs. Indoor grows are easier to bust because they are contained and more organized. It has been difficult to keep up with traffic stops because the deputies are so overwhelmed with the amount of calls they are receiving. Commissioner Pope mentioned some feedback he received from a citizen who claims that there was a violent attack on property and the individual committing the attack was clearly on drugs and hallucinating. The offender was arrested but the local police department released him shortly after. The citizen said that when asked why he was released the Police Officer said that the Polk County jail was closed to them. Sheriff Garton stated that they would never tell any local agency that the jail is closed and would never turn them away. Everybody housed in the jail right now is being held for very serious crimes. There has been an increase in person to person crimes as well as the emotionally disturbed individuals. The way the jail is set up makes it very difficult to keep them housed and separate. They are constantly trying to come up with ways to improve and he is open to suggestions. Sheriff Garton discussed the Sheriff

Advisory Team and explained that they are not active in policy making because they don't know the day in and day out protocols and don't have the knowledge necessary. Commissioner Pope encouraged the Sheriff to utilize that team more if possible. Commissioner also thanked the Sheriff and his team for taking a stand against the illegal grow operations in the county even though the federal government refused to help even though they were supposed to.

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

a) LANDSCAPE UPDATE

Matt Hawkins, Administrative Services Director,

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Minutes: Ciera Atha
Approved: September 21, 2021