

**BUTLER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Thursday, March 19, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Commission Chairman Marc Murphy called the Butler County Board of Commissioners to order at 8:02 a.m. Present were Commissioner Jeff Masterson, Commissioner Ed Myers, Commissioner Mike Wheeler, Commissioner Dan Woydziak, County Administrator Will Johnson, and Clerk Recorder Chelsea Noel.

(00:01:12)

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

(00:01:17)

**ITEM #1 – PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY DECLARATION**

Will Johnson, County Administrator, came before the Board for approval of Resolution #20-09, a Public Health Declaration. Due to the multitude of changes that have occurred since the Commission Meeting on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, Administrator Johnson felt it was necessary for the Board to consider signing the Declaration. Administrator Johnson stated one of the major changes was the State of Kansas closing all offices to the public for two weeks, March 23<sup>rd</sup> – April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Butler County Motor Vehicle and the Driver's License Office are state functioning systems and no support would be available to deliver these systems to the public, except for online functions. Administrator Johnson also discussed child care options with the Board. It was noted that a Public Health Declaration must be signed in order for the County to provide child care for employees. Administrator Johnson felt it would be easier to sign the declaration now in order to be more prepared should things continue to evolve in the following weeks.

Keri Korthals, Emergency Management Director, stated 38 counties in Kansas have now declared a Public Health Emergency and there are eight counties with active cases of COVID-19 in Kansas. Ms. Korthals stated this is a 60-day declaration and does not apply to any other public health emergency.

Commissioner Myers stated he is concerned with media perception and asked if the facts in Butler County have changed since Tuesday regarding the number of cases and hospitalizations. Ms. Korthals informed Commissioner Myers that we are not currently dealing with a community spread of the virus, however, Johnson County is and felt it was important that Butler County take all of the available precautions. Administrator Johnson stated the virus is beginning to transmit via community spread within the Metropolitan Area and this is more of a preventative measure than it is presumptive. Administrator Johnson also stated the declaration is essential for employees so the County can do everything they can to help with child care. There are currently 733 childcare slots gone in Butler County.

Commissioner Woydziak inquired about employees using their vacation and sick time in the event of a total shutdown. Administrator Johnson stated employees would be required to use their vacation and sick time. Commissioner Woydziak disagreed with making employees use vacation and sick time if the County forces employees to stay home, unless an employee travels to a restricted area during this time. Butler County currently has three employees in quarantine

right now because of traveling. Ms. Korthals informed the Commission that the test for the virus is of no use unless someone is showing symptoms and they are trying to reserve the tests for people who are actually symptomatic. Commissioner Masterson stated he feels comfortable signing the Declaration at this time. Administrator Johnson stated it is important to show compassion and understanding to all employees that are fearful.

***Commissioner Wheeler motioned to approve Resolution 20-09, declaring a Public Health Emergency in Butler County and authorized the Chair to sign. Commission Chairman Murphy seconded the motion. Commissioner Myers opposed. Motion carried 4-1.***

(00:35:17)

**ITEM #2 – CLOSURE OF BUTLER COUNTY FACILITIES TO THE PUBLIC**

Will Johnson, County Administrator, came before the Board for discussion on the closure of Butler County's facilities to the public. Administrator Johnson stated beginning March 23<sup>rd</sup> the Court House will be closed and citizens will enter by appointment only, no walk-ins. There will be grace periods for expired tags and anything else that is out of anyone's control. All Butler County Departments are working hard to minimize the impact to the public. Administrator Johnson stated there is an election scheduled for USD 375 on April 8<sup>th</sup> and the County Commission has no authority to cancel the election or change it to a mail ballot, the School Board is the only one with authority to cancel or change and they are meeting tonight to discuss their options. Administrator Johnson stated County Commission meetings will be closed until April 3<sup>rd</sup>, but will be available to watch and listen through livestream, which is in compliance with the Kansas Open Meetings Act. Administrator Johnson stated they will address County employee compensation later on down the road if it comes to that and no external work will be performed if it involves public contact. The landfill will remain open. Commissioner Woydziak stated this virus is going to be very detrimental to our economy and every person needs to do their part in taking care of their own hygiene. Commissioner Myers stated he likes the idea of staying open for appointment only and anyone with pressing needs. Administrator Johnson stated for now it is in everyone's best interest to ~~amend~~ *(Amended by Commissioner Myers to strike "air" and change to "err")* on the side of caution.

***Commissioner Myers motioned to approve the closure of Butler County public facilities to the public beginning Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> through Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, with the exception of still providing essential business appointments and mail deliveries. Commissioner Masterson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.***

(01:07:30)

**ITEM #3 – WORK SESSION – COVID – 19 RESPONSE**

Will Johnson, County Administrator, presented the Board with a draft of the Butler County COVID-19 protocols.

*Commissioner Masterson left the meeting at 9:12 a.m.*

Jamie Downs, Health Department Director, will be notifying the State of all daycare closings that she is informed about. The protocol stated that all insurance companies will be required to cover testing and treatment for COVID-19, once someone has been exposed. No employees are allowed to travel to restricted areas and all out of state work travel has been cancelled.

Administrator Johnson stated he will come back to the Board to discuss a protocol for the possibility of furlough if need be.

No action was taken.

(01:25:28)

**OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD OF BUTLER  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

*No items of business at this time.*

(01:25:42)

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Commissioner Wheeler motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Board at 9:28 a.m.*

*Commissioner Woydziak seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.*