

MONMOUTH COUNTY REGIONAL HEALTH COMMISSION NO. 1

REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, March 24, 2020
(Open Session: 35 min. 14 sec.)

CALL TO ORDER:

President Giles called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m. He then led the Regional Board of Health in the salute to the flag. President Gils next read the "Open Public Meeting Act Statement".

ROLL CALL (Remote except for President)

Fair Haven – Theresa Casagrande, Little Silver – Dr. Tim Sullivan, Monmouth Beach – Joe Nardone, Ocean Twp. – Vinnie Buttiglieri, Rumson – Therese Wollman, Sea Girt – Diane Anthony, Sea Bright – Dr. Meg Fisher, Shrewsbury Borough – Paul Roman (called in at end), Spring Lake – Mary Anne Donahue, Spring Lake Heights – Dr. Len Giles (attending in person), West Long Branch – Stephanie Dollinger

Upon completion of the roll call, the Secretary reported that 10 members were present.

ABSENT:

Boro of Brielle, Boro of Red Bank, Boro of Tinton Falls, Township of Middletown, Boro of Deal, Village of Loch Arbour, Boro of Interlaken, Boro of Allenhurst

OTHERS PRESENT:

David A. Henry, Health Officer(attending in person), Bruce Padula, Esq.,(remote), Heather Frketch, Commission Secretary/Office Coordinator (attending in person)

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

No Public Present Also: (Notification to phone in given)

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:

***February 25, 2020 Regular Meeting**

OPEN SESSION:

Mary Anne Donahue motioned to approve the Open Session Minutes of February 25, 2020, seconded by Theresa Casagrande.

VOTE: Unanimous by those who were in attendance.

CLOSED SESSION:

The February 25, 2020 Closed Session Minutes will be scheduled for review at the April 28, 2020 meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS:

President Giles applauded the MCRHC staff for their enormous efforts during this Coronavirus pandemic. A lot of hours have been put in. One hour state conference calls occur daily with the opportunity for question and answer sessions. Every community is experiencing a lack of testing supplies, testing sites...communication and guidance have not been easily forthcoming, but that is improving.

The Health Officer has been hosting weekly teleconference calls with our Mayors and Administrators as a way to update everyone on the COVID-19 situation in our jurisdiction. Additional conferences can be scheduled if needed email communications with other local health departments and the County HD are required to keep a necessary flow of information on a day to day basis.

HEALTH OFFICER STATUS UPDATE

The February 2020 Conferences & Meetings & Professional Trainings, the February 2020 CDRSS Report, and the PHN Monthly Report were previously mailed/e-mailed.

Per Administrator Stephanie Dollinger, West Long Branch ambulance attempting to bring biohazard waste disposal to Monmouth Medical Center was turned away within the last few hours. The Health Officer has reached out to MMC just prior to this meeting. Fear being that an untested decedent was under suspicion of having contracted COVID-19. Commissioner Dollinger updated the group a while later that the County intervened and the waste was taken back to MMC.

HEALTH OFFICER STATUS UPDATE (continued)

A related question arises for which the Health Officer has received a procedural email regarding the Medical Examiner including the autopsy determination of COVID-19 as a cause of death.

The Health Officer regretfully announced that the pandemic has claimed 2 lives in the MCRHC jurisdiction as of this moment.

Dr. Sullivan requested that the Health Officer announce on his weekly teleconferences identify the towns that have new cases and the number of those cases.

Theresa Casagrande referred to Freeholder Tom Arnone's comment referring to the direction of all COVID-19 positive case information info up through the County OEM LINCS agency. The Health Officer referred this to a request not law per the Emergency Health Powers Act.

Vinnie Buttiglieri also interested in a breakdown of cases by municipality.

President Giles of Spring Lake Heights has been at MCRHC, keeping up with all state and national updates and has also worked the phones. The public is scared and frustrated and looking for guidance especially in regard to testing.

Diane Anthony has offered her assistance with nurse case management in the area of contact tracing. Help is appreciated as the totals are expected to continue to increase for several weeks. At this point MCRHC is averaging 10-20 new cases per day.

Thank you to Vice-President Paul Roman in a recent interview providing good information to the press related to EMS and Coronavirus, during which he mentioned the Monmouth County Regional Health Commission No.1. He was being interviewed for his knowledge of the role a First Responder and a member of the First Aid Council.

CORONA VIRUS:

Some Events/Tools:

Weekly Health Officer MCRHC Teleconferences with Mayors/Administrators/Municipal Staffs

March 27, 2020 Webinar given by Dr. Meg Fisher

Website Resource: [COVID19.nj.gov](https://www.covid19.nj.gov)
MCRHC Press Releases/Health Alerts

CFO REPORT:

Not Present. No Report

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Statement of Accounts for period ending February 29, 2020 was previously emailed.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted as presented.

BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE:

New assessment methods are under review.

Theresa Casagrande stated that she has stopped all non-essential spending in Fair Haven.

She asked the MCRHC Budget and Finance Committee to look ahead to project the pandemic's effect on the 2020 budget and to identify any dollars we do not need to spend.

Coronavirus costs will be substantial and state aid is not forthcoming. President Giles and the Health Officer will have CFO Gallagher look into this.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

No Report

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: revisions and editing currently in a holding pattern

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

No Report

AUDIT COMMITTEE:

No Report

VNA COMMITTEE:

2020 Contract execution complete

RESOLUTION 2020-31 - Deferred

President Giles announced that approval to pay the MCRHC March 2020 Bills will be memorialized at the April 28th meeting. The CFO has not yet reviewed. For the time being, payment on an emergency basis of the outstanding bills will be under the Health Officer's review and authority.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Website Trial of Meeting Document Access

President Giles and Commissioner Wollman participated this past month. They received meeting documents from Heather by use of the Sharefile set up by City Connections as well being forwarded the same documents in the usual manner of email. Both reported the Sharefile method is easy to navigate, just requiring an additional click of the mouse.

A third Commissioner, Mary Anne Donahue, Spring Lake Commissioner, volunteered to be added to the trial access of meeting documents for the next month and will report back on her experience.

ORDINANCES:

No Pending Readings, Introductions or Adoptions

OLD BUSINESS:

ACCREDITATION: The Health Officer requested an extension due to the current extenuating public health circumstances. All efforts have been diverted to COVID-19. The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) has granted an extension of 90 days to all going through the process.

State rulings now categorize/designate governmental units such as the MCRHC as a "REGIONAL SERVICE AGENCY" under Public Law (P.L. 2019C.433) under which new authorities or joint agency powers (ex. owning property, floating bonds. Direct JIF membership) are granted. Attorney Padula is preparing a memo outlining if and how the MCRHC structure//operations can be revised.

Our Attorney is preparing a memo of explanation.

CONTRACT TOWN STATUS: Our Attorney has prepared a memo of explanation which he will forward to President Giles. He explained that it states all MCRHC towns have the same legal status. They receive the same service and are all counted toward our monthly quorum. It is understood that the Commission needs to work through issues with meeting attendance and the appointment of representatives.

NEW BUSINESS:

Proclamation for Public Health Week (April 6th -12th) – not prepared due to pandemic

Ethics Review Board – To meet PHAB standards. The Human Resources Committee will serve as the MCRHC Ethics Review Board. Also, a member or two of the staff can serve on this Committee as well.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Sea Bright Alternate Commissioner Dr. Meg Fisher was asked to speak in regard to her experiences with COVID-19 at the hospital to date. She sees the pandemic becoming worse before getting better. The virus is moving rapidly.

It has been hectic providing critical care to a significant number of positive confirmed adult patients. Child cases are few and those affected have done well. Issue with lack of PPE and circumstance of needed to reuse items which bring even further safety concerns than already exist. They continually run out of items and those items change by the hour. There is very high anxiety and stress for caregivers and the families of those taken ill.

Asymptomatic transmittal rates are not known for sure.

Diane Anthony asked if the pediatric population were presenting with GI symptoms. Dr. Fisher responded not seen, reminding her that for whatever reason, there have not been too many cases.

Her final statement “It is a hard time to live through”.

Other items briefly mentioned:

Problem with staffing pop-up hospitals

Contact tracing now spanning from 3 days prior to person becoming symptomatic to pinpoint vulnerable individuals within that time period.

Private physician lab tests are not yielding results that are entered into the state database in any reasonable time.

The Health Officer was questioned about percentages of individuals in the contact tracing who have contracted the disease. He gave the circumstance of 1-2 positive COVID results out of approximately 70 in one situation that was investigated, however trends are all over the place. In addition, mild symptoms not always reported.

Dr. Fisher will host a webinar on March 27th.

GENERAL COMMENTS (continued)

Theresa Casagrande expressed concern over essential service employees who may have relatives that are self-isolating. At a point extremely soon everyone will have contact with someone with a possible exposure and are working from home. The Health Officer explained current state guidance of less regulation for asymptomatic individuals who were contacts of contacts. He continued to relate that per the current guidelines, contacts of contacts are not considered contacts unless the contact tests positive for the disease. Those individuals can go to work, but wear a mask as precaution. He also mentioned that he has 2 persons on a 14 day quarantine working from home.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:37 pm on a motion by President Giles, seconded by Vice-President Roman.

VOTE: Unanimous

Next Regular Meeting of the MCRHC No.1 Commission will be held on Tuesday, APRIL 28, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. at the Regional's headquarters located at American Red Cross building 1540 West Park Avenue – Suite # 1, Tinton Falls, New Jersey.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather L. Frketich

Heather L. Frketich
COMMISSION SECRETARY

Reviewed by

David A Henry

David A. Henry
HEALTH OFFICER