

directed the County Administrator to look at the phone and appointment system to ensure it is working smoothly and more user friendly for all departments using the system.

- The County Clerk side of the department is going well; safety wall installed, by appointment only, processing passports and staff starting to also add more information and expanding their information on their programs so the online people have the ability to search more information. The online service is flourishing very well and the monthly revenue is up \$5,000. This was very beneficial during COVID.
- Mortgage taxes have increased and with interest rates low a lot of individuals refinanced. She has provided all Supervisors with her year-end report. Last year, the mortgage tax total basic increased by \$300,000, the additional by \$111,000, and the local was at \$455,000 and that is designated for SUNY Adirondack. The Treasurer stated the mortgage tax is trending up about \$20,000 a month for the first two months of this year as well higher than last year.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS – Commissioners Tom Rogers and Jeff Curtis addressed the following items:

- Review of Past Year & 2021 Plans – Commissioner Curtis stated last year, the purchase of their clear ballot scanning machine, paper folder and letter opener were a great success and helped them out greatly. They sent out over 5100 absentee ballots and received over 4300 back. It would have taken two weeks to count the absentee ballots by hand and it was done in one day with the high speed scanner. Commissioner Rogers stated the trend is toward absentee ballots and early voting and they now have equipment in place for it to work. Commissioner Curtis stated looking ahead for 21 plan to use the same room for early voting at Burgoyne as last year and yesterday started the designating petitions process and filing goes through the 25th. New this year for 2021, suspended the opportunity to ballot petitions and those were the write-in petitions. The next petitions will be the Independent petitions which are in May with the filing dates May 18th – 21st. At the town level, the Republican towns do petitions and seven do caucuses. The Democrats do all caucuses. Only one county-wide election this year for District Attorney and nothing on federal or state level. They ran two village elections in March, school in May, primary in late June if there is one and the general election in November. There are now only four major constituted parties: Democratic, Republican, Conservative and Working Families. They are looking into inspector training and possibly a video training session rather than in person. Total number of voters in the County 39,068 and active voters total 37,124. Seventy two percent voted in the November presidential election. Over 5,000 did early voting, over 4,000 absentees and almost 18,000 went to the poll sites. Commissioner Rogers has appointed a new Deputy Commissioner Elizabeth Ashley Skogsberg. Possibly some money down the road for new voting machines noting the current machines are thirteen years old and the need to start switching some of these machines out. Commissioner Curtis would like to set up a zoom call with the voting machine vendor for a presentation on the new machines. Warren County is switching some of their machines out and leasing rather than purchasing them. Commissioner Rogers asked if the building has to remain locked and Chairman Hall stated yes for now until clear guidance is provided from the CDC. They do appreciate being in Burgoyne with the extra space and it is a good location.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Matt Jones, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, addressed the following items:

- Parks Updates:
 - Moving forward like a normal year and following all the guidelines. Looks like picnic tables can be put out and pavilion can be rented. He would move forward according to NYS Health Department guidelines, adapting as they change, and update the committee monthly. No objections express regarding moving forward in this manner. (*Agenda Item Next Month – Parks Update*)

- Buildings & Grounds Updates:
 - Roof project starting April 1st, construction will start. Chairman Hall stated they will use the building on the weekends which should be alright with the construction and looking at doing one pod a week. If vaccine comes in that has to be used they will look for an alternate site for that purpose. The completion date is weather dependent but probably about a month.
- Electric charging stations – Waiting for more information. Electrician gave a price for getting power out there and brought up some other ideas about how to get the power out there. They do have some things to discuss but does not have all the information yet. The discussion of electric charging stations/electric cars was referred to the Public Works committee meeting. (*Forwarded to Public Works Committee*)
- DPW Barn Update – Sent out the proposal from the engineer on the study that would provide the feasibility analysis, study to get us to the next point, for the proposed consolidated DPW sites at Fort Ann and Easton for the county and town. Now is the time to decide how much each partner pays and who wants to participate. Mr. Haff stated the proposal reads like we have a city connection for water and sewer and if a well and septic are needed that should be part of the study. The Superintendent stated Fort Ann does have municipal water and sewer but not Easton. This study will state what needs to be done. The quote for these first steps is \$53,500. Need to decide if Easton and Fort Ann plan to participate. Mr. Campbell stated there are two barns and four partners so he stated the County is two shares and each town one share is the easiest way to get started in his opinion. Possibly Fort Ann village will be involved but unknown at this time and would be part of what Fort Ann is paying. Chairman O'Brien stated the breakdown of the cost is \$26,750 for the county and \$13,475 for each town. Mr. Haff stated even though the towns needs are larger than the County's. Mr. Campbell stated it would be figured differently once you get to the engineering, next break out by the size of the buildings. The Superintendent did ask the engineers to develop the percentage to go forward with out of this study. Mr. Hicks stated this is an agreement between the County and engineering firm and should have resolutions from the towns that they agree to go forward and pay the \$13,375 each before we sign this agreement. A motion to forward the agreement with the engineering firm to the Finance Committee with the cost split as discussed contingent upon receiving something formal, resolution, from the towns stating their commitment to pay their share was moved by Mr. Campbell (*not a committee member*) and seconded by Mr. Hicks. Discussion. Mr. Shaw, Easton Supervisor, would like something official to bring to his town board. The County Administrator in conjunction with the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds and the County Attorney will provide a formal request to the towns with the information needed. There would be a new ratio for the costs as the project goes forward. Mr. Shaw asked if somehow the savings for doing this project together between the county and town could be highlighted. Regarding savings, Mr. Campbell stated the towns can use the County's bond rating to secure money cheaper and shared services. There is information on savings and shared efficiencies in the original barn consolidation study. Mr. Hicks asked what we do if a town cannot make a decision by April. Where is the deadline here? Need a commitment date to not keep this strung out. Mr. Shaw suggested the cut off would be the May Board meeting. Mr. O'Brien volunteered the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds to attend the town board meetings to answer any questions. The motion to forward the agreement with the engineering firm to the Finance Committee with the cost split as discussion contingent upon receiving something formal, resolution, from the towns stating their commitment to pay their share as adopted by voice vote all in favor. (*Forwarded Engineering Study to Finance Committee*)

DISCUSS GOOD FRIDAY BAN ON ALCOHOL SALES FROM 12 – 3 PM – Roger Wickes, County Attorney, stated there is a regulation with the State Liquor Authority stating that the county prohibits alcohol sales on Good Friday from 12 PM to 3 PM. The Board must pass a resolution requesting this to

be deleted and the State Liquor Authority will hold a hearing in the County and thereafter approve the change but this will not happen for this year. A motion to forward to the full Board a resolution to request the State Liquor Authority to delete the regulation prohibiting alcohol sales on Good Friday from noon to 3 PM was moved by Mr. Ferguson, seconded by Mr. Hicks, and adopted.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Emergency Closure Plan dated March 17, 2020, attached – Chairman Hall asked what is that you think needs to be done and what has been done that shouldn't have been done. Mr. Haff stated a year ago everyone was talking about flattening the curve for fourteen days and it was considered to be a short-lived thing that needed some flexibility to operate on the ground but it is a year later and had it been know it would go on this long probably would not have given the Incident Management Team the wide latitude of powers that they have. Now with zoom meetings there is no need for an Incident Management Team to make on the spot decisions. This is a democracy and a zoom meeting could take place. The Incident Management Team can assign duties at their own sole discretion and the document has no sunset clause. He would like to see this suspended right now and we have other plans. He does not like the power this gives to unelected officials and after a year this shouldn't be. Tim Hardy, Deputy Director of Public Safety, and a member of the Incident Management Team, stated all the decisions are all made by the Chairman. They advise on guidance or anything that's happening in the communities relative to vaccine or current infection rates and he doesn't feel any one person is making any of those decisions other than the Chairman. Mr. Haff stated the document states differently and the document should not remain as it is. Chairman O'Brien stated COVID is not over yet and asked if there could be potential restrictions on revenues being reimbursed to us if no plan is in place. Mr. Henke stated that's probably fairly likely. He stated the plan needs to be nimble to coincide with the manner in which state guidance is issued. Mr. Campbell stated it is not worded correctly for the next emergency and Government Operations should review the plan annually. Chairman Hall stated the policy belongs in Public Safety not Government Operations. Mr. Haff stressed the importance of oversight. Mr. O'Brien stated our oversight also has to be able to respond quickly. He asked if the Government Operations Committee wanted to make any changes at this point or make sure we're prepared for future pandemics. He stated we will leave alone at this time. Mr. Campbell thinks this should be an emergency plan to cover other things than just a pandemic. Chairman O'Brien stated a group will get together to work on this and better wording for going forward and future needs.
- County Treasurer – Al Nolette addressed the following items:
 - He thinks this Board has done an excellent job representing its constituents during this COVID crisis. He also commended everyone working at the Burgoyne Avenue vaccination site and that it was a pleasant experience. Everyone did a wonderful job.
- Received a notice of retirement from an employee in his office effective May 5th and requesting to backfill and unsure at this time what position he will be requesting but will know by Personnel after an internal canvas. A motion to forward backfill request to the Personnel Committee was moved by Mr. Campbell (not a committee member), seconded by Mrs. Fedler, and adopted by voice vote. (*Forwarded to Personnel Committee*)
- Mr. Shaw stated at last month's meeting, the County Attorney was asked to inquire if the Town of Argyle was interested in the property with the PV water line and various wells and the status of the negotiations with Centers regarding the water line to the fire suppression pond and asked if there was any update. The County Administrator contacted Larry Paltrowitz, Esq. and still in conversations with Centers and trying to figure out what is it they are apprehensive about and expect to hear back from him. The County Attorney stated the letter was not sent to the town of Argyle about the property with the wells and water line because we need to know what we are giving them and need Centers water

line straightened out. Centers has offered to let us continue to operate the pipeline while they pay us but there has been no interest by this Board to do that. Argyle has a permanent easement on the property. Mr. Shaw stated the need to find out from both parties' their positions before you can negotiate a deal. Mr. Henke is interested in pursuing but do need to know what would be conveyed to them. The Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds stated it is the easement from the water line to Washington Center that we don't want and then decide what to do with the property. The County Attorney stated not just the easement we don't want the obligation to send water down the hill and get the County out of this. He is hopeful of a response from Centers and will update at the next meeting. (*Agenda Item Next Month – Water Line to Centers Update*)

- DSS Cars – Mr. Campbell is looking for permission to go to bid to purchase electric cars for DSS. Not obligated to accept the bids. DSS cars purchased for \$25,000 or less can go into the car pool after three years and the rules change if they cost more. There is grant funding that could be applied toward the cost of the cars and would like to purchase these cars timely so the grant funds are still available and on the same time table as the charging stations. Seeking permission to go out to bid and if the bid is accepted it would go to Finance and the full Board. A motion to go to bid for electric cars for DSS was moved by Mr. Campbell (*not a committee member*), and seconded by Mr. Hicks. Discussion. Mr. Shaw suggested bidding both ways. Mr. Campbell stated he is looking for electric cars to fit the price requirements in DSS in conjunction with the charging stations. The motion to go out to bid for electric cars for DSS was adopted. Mr. Haff opposed. (*Bid award would come back to a committee.*)

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 A.M.

Note: Erroneously Mr. Campbell made several motions but he is not a member of this committee and regretfully that error was not recognized during the meeting. He made four motions: three were to forward items to other committees for consideration with unanimous support from committee members - no committee members objecting and one was to go out to bid for electric cars with one objection – any award would come back to a committee. All motions passed with enough votes from committee members to move forward.

*Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors*

Washington County Emergency Closure Plan



Prepared in Response to the 2020 COVID-19
Pandemic

March 17, 2020

Prepared by the County's COVID-19 Response Taskforce

Overview

COVID-19 is a novel strain of the Coronavirus that emerged in the city of Wuhan in China's Hubei province in late 2019. Despite travel restrictions and other mitigation measures, the United States identified its first case of COVID-19 in January of 2020. The number of cases within the United States has increased steadily since the first occurrence and on January 31, 2020 Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar declared a public health emergency for the United States.

Following a significant outbreak of COVID-19 in the city of New Rochelle in Westchester County, Governor Andrew Cuomo declared a State of Emergency on March 7, 2020 via Executive Order number 202 and deployed the National Guard to establish a containment zone encompassing the city of New Rochelle.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially designated COVID-19 as a pandemic. On the heels of the WHO declaration, and increasing numbers of confirmed cases throughout the country, President Donald Trump declared a National Emergency on March 13, 2020 regarding this matter.

The CDC, Federal and State government as well as our local public health officials have all indicated that COVID-19 poses a significant and imminent danger to our population and has recommended the implementation of sweeping mitigation measures to combat the spread of this infectious disease.

Pursuant to the President's National Emergency declaration, a travel ban has been enacted effecting travel from mainland Europe, China and Iran. In conjunction with the State of Emergency declared by Governor Cuomo, mass gatherings of more than 500 people have been prohibited, and all gatherings of less than 500 people are required to be limited to half of the current maximum occupancy level of the venue.

Public Health officials continue to advocate for social distancing measures to be enacted to slow the spread of this disease and avoid overwhelming the medical system with a surge in patients that could potentially far exceed the current capacity of the health care infrastructure of the country. Social distancing and other non-pharmaceutical interventions represent the most effective means available at this time to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

This plan has been created by Washington County to create an implementable framework through which to achieve social distancing goals while continuing the delivery of essential services to the public. The application of the entire plan, or portions thereof, will be dependent on the status of this rapidly

evolving situation. While significant thought and planning effort has gone into the creation of this plan, it is understood by the preparers and the Board of Supervisors that changes to, and deviations from, this plan are likely to be required as this pandemic unfolds.

Measures Currently Implemented:

Effective March 16, 2020, Washington County is operating under a globally declared Pandemic, a Federal National Emergency declaration, a gubernatorial State of Emergency and a Countywide State of Emergency related to the COVID-19 outbreak. In response to these declarations, the County has implemented the following steps:

- All non-essential in-person meetings, both internal and external, have been canceled
- The Municipal Center has been closed to the general public. Members of the public have been instructed to make appointments prior to visiting the Municipal Center to conduct their business.
- Each department has been instructed to send all non-essential employees home immediately.
- Visitation at the County Jail has been suspended.
- Events, classes and other gatherings coordinated by or involving the County have been canceled.
- Additional IT equipment is being provisioned to allow more employees to work remotely if possible and/or necessary.
- Policies have been enacted by the Board of Supervisors providing increased flexibility to department heads and administrative staff to limit interpersonal contact while allowing critical work to be accomplished.
- Enhanced signage and cleaning procedures have been implemented to heighten awareness around the importance of good hand hygiene and limit the transmission of the disease among staff and the public.
- The COVID-19 taskforce is meeting daily to assess the situation and make appropriate recommendations to the Chairman of the Board and the Full Board of Supervisors regarding preventative or other measures they feel should be implemented.

Emergency Closure of Operations:

In order to adequately plan for potential continuing developments in the nation and local response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the County has developed plans in the event that County operations must be suspended for some period of time. These plans have been created with the input of Department Heads, labor unions, public health and emergency management officials, as well as many other stakeholders.

If necessary, for the protection of public health and the safety of the County workforce, the County may temporarily suspend operations via order of the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. Should such an action be taken, the following guidelines, procedures and protocols shall be in effect:

- The Department of Public Safety, the Sheriff's Office and Public Health are hereby deemed to be essential departments and shall continue operations in their current form to the greatest extent practicable.
- All other departments not identified as essential shall be deemed to be non-essential and staff will cease operations immediately upon an order from the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors.
- Employees of non-essential departments shall be considered to be available on an "As Needed" basis and may be called in to perform those duties that may be assigned to them at any time during the period of Emergency Closure.
- The Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and the COVID-19 Response Taskforce shall have the authority to direct "As Needed" employees to report to work and carry out such duties as the taskforce may assign them at their sole discretion. Department Heads of employees so tasked may be consulted, but shall not have the ability to object, modify or reject any request or determination made by the taskforce.
- Upon enactment of an Emergency Closure action, the municipal center will be closed to all members of the public and all employees who are not deemed essential as outlined above. No employees are to report to the municipal center or any other County building unless explicitly directed to do so by an authorized individual.

- An order of Emergency Closure may be lifted by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors at any time after its issuance and may be modified, adapted or otherwise altered by he or she in whatever way necessary to respond to the situation facing the County and its residents.
- All employees directed to remain at home and not report to work shall be paid their regular wages without the need to use any accrued benefit time for the duration of the declared Emergency Closure.
- In recognition of the dedication and additional personal risk taken by employees mandated to report to work during an Emergency Closure, all such employees shall be paid at a rate of one-and one-half times their standard rate of pay for all hours worked during the Emergency Closure.

The County carries out a number of functions that are mandated by the State and Federal governments. While the County will make every effort to continue the provision of essential services throughout the ongoing crisis, there may come a point where the risk to the health safety and welfare of employees and the public is greater than the benefit provided to residents through the continued operation of the County and therefore the decision will be made to suspend County operations until such time as the risk posed by resuming operations decreases to an acceptable level.