

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 20, 2020

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Campbell, Rozell, Haff, Hicks, O'Brien, Ferguson, Losaw

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None

SUPERVISORS: Hall, Henke, Fedler, Shaw, Hogan, Clary, Griffith

Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Chris DeBolt, County Administrator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Accept Minutes – May 12, 2020
- 3) Department Requests/Reports
 - A. Discuss Parks
 - B. County Clerk – Office Update
- 4) Other Business
- 5) Adjournment

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 10:02 A.M. via teleconference.

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2020 meeting was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Losaw and adopted.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Matt Jones, Superintendent, addressed the following items:

PARKS: The Superintendent stated in a normal year, the parks would open next weekend for Saturday and Sunday until school was out, end of June, and then full time. As of right now, he is going ahead as if they were going to open under all the regulations. He stated the parks will not be ready until the weekend of June 13th to open up and he is getting new guidance from the State, Governor and Department of Health. He is proposing to go ahead with the June 13th date for the weekends until the end of June and then go full time. He recommends keep going forward towards opening. He signs an agreement with the Department of Health of how they are going to operate the park; staffing, water testing, safety, etc. There is not really a middle ground without reapplying for the permit process. He can change times and hours. Fencing off the beach is not a viable solution to the problem. The parks are going to be busy and feels they have to be staffed as a safety issue. People are using the parks at a record pace right now with it closed. Discussion ensued.

- Open or not open – not much room for middle ground. Cannot open and comply with the permit/agreement signed to operate the beach until June 13th. The gate at Hulett's has been open which has been the operating procedure established many years ago. The Superintendent recommends shut the gates until we do open but that is not how they have been operated. The park is definitely closed when the gates are closed.
- The County Administrator stated from his conversations with the County Attorney there is a different responsibility and different liability exposure whether someone is an invitee or a trespasser. If the parks are officially closed and the gates are closed then someone who is there is a trespasser. There is still liability but much less when we are not open.
- Mr. Haff suggested to continue to leave gate open and at your own risk. It has been stated a \$90,000 savings if the parks are not open. If we are talking about going into an austerity budget but yet we are going to have an expense for recreation, it does not make sense.
- Chairman Campbell stated people need an outlet.
- The County Administrator provided the budget figures for the parks: revenue – Huletts \$2,000 and Lauderdale \$18,000 = \$20,000 total parks; expense – Huletts \$47,772 and Lauderdale \$62,600 = \$110,372 total parks. Expense minus revenue = \$90,372 net savings.

- Mrs. Clary asked about storm damage. The Superintendent stated Lauderdale experienced a lot of storm damage; tree fell through part of the pavilion. The Superintendent stated he would not be able to open the pavilion or the playground per state regulations. He recommends cancelling the reservations for the month of June and then if under the same regulations if need be July reservations.
- The Treasurer provided the 2019 actual figures: Hulett's \$39,193 and Lauderdale \$26,410 for a total of \$75,513 net cost 2019 actual.
- Mr. Griffith based on the budgeted figures; the parks are 0.1% of our budget. This is a very small piece of our budget to take away the opportunity for residents to utilize the parks. It is not worth taking a benefit away from constituents in the summer time.
- Mr. Rozell recommends leaving them open. Mr. Ferguson agrees with Mr. Griffith. He stated leaving the gate at Hulett's open is the only access for town people to have access to Lake George for kayaks during the week and on weekends.
- Mr. Griffith suggested having the Reopening Advisory Committee address this item and place this topic on their agenda.
- The Superintendent stated he does have guidelines from the State regarding operating and feels he can have a plan in place by June 13th. Recommends issuing a statement not open until June 13th.

A motion to change opening day of the parks to June 13th operating under state regulations was moved by Mr. Rozell and seconded by Mr. Ferguson. Discussion.

- Mr. O'Brien asked what about safety issues if we leave the parks closed and unattended. The County Attorney stated if the gates are going to be closed then people entering would be trespassing. It is property the County owns and it should be monitored. Obligation to monitor would increase if circumstances lead to the possibility that more people might be inclined to go to the parks. Need to monitor regardless; some type of monitoring needed and done frequently enough to keep track of what is going on. You know beach is there and people will attempt to get there and therefore some obligation to monitor. Monitor when you know there could be a problem.
- Mr. Hicks suggested open the gates with a sign at your own risk and add a few portable toilets. Mr. Ferguson agrees. Mr. Griffith agrees, open, swim at own risk and then get rid of portable toilets June 13th when they open officially.
- Governor's guidelines attached.
- The County Administrator stated once the beach is open, we fall under the Department of Health regulations. If we open the gates and allow people in then as soon as we do that all the Department of Health regulations start. If closed and people enter they are trespassers and we have some obligation to monitor without triggering health regulations. The County Attorney stated the DOH regulations apply to the beach. Opening the beach triggers the obligations, regulations. If closed make sure it is enforced or monitored in some respect. The parks should be monitored but obligations are different whether open or closed.
- Mr. Hogan suggested having the Sheriff's Department monitor the parks until June 13th and keep the parks closed until June 13th.
- The Treasurer provided a breakdown of the revenue collected at Lauderdale: \$19,516 = \$4,500 contract with Cambridge – summer program, \$8,164 pavilion rental and \$8,852 parking fee.
- Mrs. Clary stated need to talk to the Sheriff about monitoring.
- Staff does sanitize and the Lifeguards are also cleaners and do maintenance. Cleaning will not be hired out. Will use State provided sanitizer.
- The Treasurer stated any additional costs that Building and Grounds has to incur to be COVID-19 compliant will be captured on our FEMA claim. They will be eligible expenses to claim. Anything that

you have to add to be COVID compliant is an eligible expense to FEMA.

- Mr. Haff stated previously towns have contributed towards the parks and ask towns to now contribute – towns of Dresden and Jackson.
- Chairman Campbell stated his understanding is that the gates at both parks will be closed until June 13th.
- The beach capacity is 500 and typically never come close to that number. The lifeguards limit how many people are in the water due to staffing. The lifeguards and Park Manager will regulate masks and if enforcement is needed then the Sheriff's department would be called.

A motion to change opening day of the parks to June 13th, park beaches and gates are closed with no access until June 13th, operating under state regulations was moved by Mr. Rozell, seconded by Mr. Ferguson and adopted on the following roll call vote: AYES (6) Campbell, Rozell, Hicks, O'Brien, Ferguson, Losaw, NOES (1) Haff, ABSENT (0), ABSTAIN (0).

A public statement will be made that Washington County's beaches and the gates to the parks will be closed until June 13th.

COUNTY CLERK – Stephanie Lemery, County Clerk addressed the following items:

- Office Update:
 - Clerk's Office - The Clerk since the beginning of COVID-19 shut down as of March 19th has been here processing mail and electronic communications; 1000 documents - recording documents and court documents. Last week, she brought in an additional employee on Tuesday for 8 hours to help with the workload due to the courts changing their operations. She plans to bring in another employee for an additional day to make sure they are not extremely backlogged when they reopen.
 - DMV – The NYS Commissioner of DMV has stated the earliest they will allow interaction with the public is June 8th and she thinks he will push that out again. She stated DMV is going to appointment only scheduling and working with IT on selecting a system that will work for both DMV and County Clerk. Three DMV employees three times a week are working in DMV. They are being bombarded with mail and the car dealers are back. She has asked the County Administrator with the tentative June 8th date to approve going to a five day work week with DMV and still meet all the requirements of the Governor and Commissioner. She is looking at half-staff which they can still social distance and alternate the half-staff every other day to try to make sure they are caught up prior to public coming in and trained on the scheduling system.
- Revenue update – The revenue for April, not being open, dropped between \$50,000 to \$60,000.
- Right now, very busy processing paperwork/mail and working with the car dealers. Anticipates in the next thirty days hopefully back on track with revenue and make up some of the revenue that was lost. She stated the residents have been great and the County did not lose very much revenue to the State or other counties. Just trying to catch up right now.

OTHER BUSINESS:

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, Chris Debolt, addressed the following items with the committee:

Carry Over Unused Vacation and Personal Time Due to COVID-19:

"Employees whose anniversary date occurred during the Emergency Closure of County operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic shall have any unused balance of vacation and/or personal time carried forward

past their anniversary date and such time shall expire at the employee's next occurring anniversary date.

Employees whose anniversary date occurs after the cessation of the Emergency Closure of County operations but whose ability to utilize their accrued vacation and/or personal time was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on County operations shall have such unused balance carried forward past their anniversary date and such time shall expire at the employee's next occurring anniversary date."

Mr. Haff expressed his disapproval. Melissa Fitch, Personnel Officer, stated many employees have been working from home and told they had to be available. When the County closed employees were told that when needed they had to report. There are about 135 employees with anniversaries during this time. Mr. Haff would be agreeable to those really impacted, not a blanket statement to treat everyone the same in this regard.

A motion to parse out those that were really impacted not everybody else was moved by Mr. Haff but did not receive a second.

A motion to approve policy to allow employees whose anniversary occurred during the Emergency Closure of County operations and those whose anniversary date occurs after the cessation of the Emergency Closure of County operations but whose ability to utilize their accrued vacation and or personal time was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on County operations to carry forward unused vacation and personal time and it shall expire at the employee's next occurring anniversary date was moved by Mr. Hicks and seconded by Mr. Campbell. Discussion. Mr. Losaw asked if department heads have a say in whether or not vacation is granted due to the workload. The County Attorney stated vacation is always granted at the department head's discretion. The motion to approve policy to allow employees whose anniversary occurred during the Emergency Closure of County operations and those whose anniversary date occurs after the cessation of the Emergency closure of County operations but whose ability to utilize their accrued vacation and or personal time was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on County operations to carry forward unused vacation and personal time and it shall expire at the employee's next occurring anniversary date was moved by Mr. Hicks and seconded by Mr. Campbell was moved by Mr. Hicks, seconded by Mr. Campbell and adopted. Mr. Haff opposed. (Board Resolution)

Survey for Department Heads – The County Administrator stated Tim Hardy, Deputy Director Public Safety, created a survey for department heads and a department head meeting will be scheduled for tomorrow to explain the survey and get some feedback. From the information known today should be able to start reopening two weeks from today. Every county he is aware of is developing a universal mask policy for the public. What counties are divided on is whether they are going to take temperatures and symptom screen members of the public as they come into building. The current goal is utilizing by appointment only to the greatest extent practical so that we limit the amount of public in the building. He needs guidance on the whether there should be a provision that the County will be taking the temperature and/or ask symptom checker for the public or whether that is something the Board does not want to do. Mr. Haff believes there are so many asymptomatic people that to take peoples temperature is just an exercise in futility. Public Health's recommendation was the CDC guidelines to screen temperatures. He believes the federal and state guidelines are temperatures of the visiting public be taken. Access points for temperature checks of the public would be at the A and B entrances at the Municipal Center plus other locations. The CDC cut off temperature is 100.5°. May require additional or reallocation of staff to perform the temperature checks. New technology will allow temperatures to be taken from a laptop without getting close to anyone. The County Administrator needs direction on if we are trying to come up with a solution to do symptom and temperature checks of the public or is that something the Board does not want him to

pursue. Chairman Campbell stated they are recommended by Public Health and CDC. Motion to move forward with Public Health and CDC recommendations for the public was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Losaw and Mr. Ferguson and adopted. Mr. Haff opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:38 A.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors

GOVERNOR'S PLAN REGARDING RE-OPENING BEACHES

The Governor also announced a multi-state agreement with New Jersey, Connecticut and Delaware to reopen beaches for Memorial Day Weekend. The Governor outlined specific conditions New York beaches must meet to reopen. State and local beaches and lakeshores in New York State may open the Friday before Memorial Day Weekend on the following minimum conditions:

- Mandating no more than 50 percent capacity by ensuring controlled exits/entrances and limiting parking
- Prohibiting group contact activities, including sports (e.g. volleyball, football)
- Keeping areas of social gathering closed (e.g. designated picnic areas, playgrounds, pavilions, arcades, amusement rides)
- Enforcing social distancing measures for both employees and visitors
- Requiring masks to be worn by all employees and visitors when social distancing is not possible
- Closing concessions
- Ensuring staff levels are adequate to achieve these measures and enforce crowd control.

City, town and county beaches may open on the same conditions subject to local government home rule:

- Local government must fully enforce minimum rules and may impose additional conditions
- If local governments do not enforce minimum rules, the beach will be closed
- Locals must notify the public by Wednesday, May 20 of their intention to open
- Beaches can open on Friday before Memorial Day Weekend, May 22, 2020



COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) INFORMATION

HOME THE SPREAD LEGS

BRIEFING FOR LOCAL OFFICIALS & FIRST RESPONDER LEADERSHIP

MAY 15, 2020 3:00 PM