

MINUTES
JAMES CITY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING
County Government Center Board Room
101 Mounts Bay Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185
March 17, 2020
11:00 AM

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

P. Sue Sadler, Stonehouse District - via phone
John J. McGlennon, Roberts District
Ruth M. Larson, Berkeley District
Michael J. Hipple, Vice Chairman, Powhatan District
James O. Icenhour, Jr., Chairman, Jamestown District

Scott A. Stevens, County Administrator
Adam R. Kinsman, County Attorney

Mr. Icenhour called the Board of Supervisors to a Special Meeting following Virginia Governor Ralph Northam's 11 a.m. update on the coronavirus, COVID-19.

Mr. Icenhour requested a motion to allow Ms. Sadler to participate remotely for the Special Meeting due to a medical condition which did not allow her attendance.

A motion to allow Ms. Sadler to participate remotely was made by Ruth Larson, the motion result was Passed.

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 1

Ayes: Hipple, Icenhour Jr, Larson, McGlennon

Absent: Sadler

ADOPTED

APR 14 2020

**Board of Supervisors
James City County, VA**

C. BOARD DISCUSSIONS/GUIDANCE

Mr. Icenhour noted Mr. Stevens would address Item No. 1.

1. Confirmation of March 13, 2020 Declaration of Local Emergency

A motion to Approve was made by Michael Hipple, the motion result was Passed.

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0

Ayes: Hipple, Icenhour Jr, Larson, McGlennon, Sadler

Mr. Stevens noted the County Attorney could address the point in more detail, but further noted the appropriate actions were taken to ensure the County was set up to accept whatever assistance or reimbursement might become available.

Mr. Kinsman addressed the Board noting the resolution before it was a confirmation of the Local Emergency Declaration adopted on March 13, 2020. He further noted an amendment to that resolution, which included the word "disaster", allowed the Board to avail itself of a few more Virginia Code sections.

Mr. Icenhour asked about the resolution and the amended declaration.

Mr. Kinsman noted the amended declaration detailed what the resolution allowed Mr. Stevens to execute.

Mr. Icenhour asked for a motion to Adopt the resolution.

2. COVID-19 Update of Current Conditions and Future Considerations

Mr. Stevens noted, with the Board's approval, several short briefings would take place followed by discussion. He further noted Fire Chief Ryan Ashe, Ms. Rebecca Vinroot, Director of Social Services, Mr. Jason Purse, Assistant County Administrator, and Ms. Latara Rouse, Communications Manager, were in attendance for discussion on the four main topics of Fire, Social Services and community issues, County operations, and Communications. Mr. Stevens further noted he would address budget implications in his remarks.

Chief Ashe addressed the Board with an update on the 11 confirmed cases in the Peninsula Health District, of which James City County is a part of that district. He noted coordination and work over the past weeks regarding the virus, but enhanced efforts over the weekend with the confirmation of the first fatality in the County. Chief Ashe noted on March 16, 2020, the Peninsula localities joined together to form a regional operation center in Newport News where County representatives will be sent to help coordinate Law Enforcement, Fire and EMS, Emergency Management, and Public Information sections. He further noted representatives from hospitals, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the Peninsula Health District, and other such disciplines would be sent on a rotation basis from each locality so that each jurisdiction was not sending someone on a daily basis and coverage could be extended over a longer time. Chief Ashe noted rather than an operation center, it served as a coordination point to ensure timely and accurate information in a joint packet for Public Information Offices. He further noted the coordination and support from the various county administrators, city managers, fire chiefs, police chiefs, and emergency management from the surrounding localities in the process. Chief Ashe noted assistance from the Hampton Roads Incident Management Team, based in the City of Chesapeake, of which most localities have area representatives who participate on the Team. He further noted several members of the Team had experience in other localities with establishing hurricane emergency operations centers and brought extensive knowledge in the coordination efforts among the participating localities.

Ms. Larson asked how the information was deciphered. She questioned the drive-through testing and hospitalization and the distribution of that information through various channels.

Chief Ashe noted that was part of the coordination process the operations center would address. He further noted that as of today any testing done at a state laboratory was reported to the Virginia Department of Health. He added that confirmation was quicker since it was a state laboratory facility. Chief Ashe noted testing being done at hospital systems or outside laboratories such as LabCorp or Quest would then send that information to hospitals or doctors, which would then be relayed to the state. He further noted this was part of the streamlined process the regional group was hoping to achieve. He noted the strict Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations involved in the process, but noted the importance of sharing information and "flattening the curve".

Ms. Larson expressed her appreciation for all the efforts. She noted her frustration regarding information, a cluster in the County, and cited the example of a patient who tested positive. She further noted she did not need the patient's name nor address, but rather information such as if that patient had been in a particular doctor's office on a particular day and time as a precaution for other patients. Ms. Larson expressed frustration at communication, but noted

the importance of HIPAA laws and protection. She noted the cluster and containment, and further noted if people did not stay where they should to contain the virus, what good was “flattening the curve”?

Chief Ashe noted once a case was confirmed, then a series of questions were asked to establish locations, times, dates, and such information to determine if notification or quarantine were acts to take.

Ms. Sadler noted the flow of information lacked a central point. She further noted the number of citizen calls the Board received and acknowledged the importance of those calls. She asked Chief Ashe if the Health Department could notify the County Administrator with timely updates so current information would be available to the Board members on a regular basis, which could be shared with the citizens.

Mr. Stevens noted he and Chief Ashe had worked on that piece all weekend. He further noted the information flow was not there yet, but it was getting better. Mr. Stevens noted the phone calls from residents that she and other Board members received were because the Department of Health had directly called the residents without contacting County Administration first. He further noted County Administration told the Department that was not helpful and noted time spent ‘chasing rumors’ on Thursday and Friday due to those calls. Mr. Stevens noted continued efforts were ongoing on that point. He further noted a call on Monday with the state Health Commissioner, Peninsula County Administration Officers (CAOs), and Emergency Management Directors to express the frustration surrounding the calls. Mr. Stevens referenced the death in the community and noted a resident had identified the location, but the Health Department had not provided any information to the County. He noted HIPAA restrictions, but further noted Chief Ashe and the move to a centralized location would prove beneficial in providing communication and information. Mr. Stevens noted the challenges citing the flow of information to the localities as of yet had not been great, but “we will get there.” He referenced hearing about positive tests pretty quickly, but noted if a person was dropped off who had been transported by County EMS, did that person meet the criteria and was that person tested. He noted that information was not getting to the localities in a timely manner. He further noted the test results were usually available within several days, but he wanted to know within an hour if a person was going to be tested to ensure the EMS team had its protective gear on during the transport. Mr. Stevens noted the teams were wearing protective gear, but noted the situation needed to get better per CAOs, and he added he believed it would.

Mr. McGlennon thanked Chief Ashe, County Administrator, staff, and other involved parties for all their efforts. He asked if they were confident that the number reported by VDH was the current number of cases in the County.

Mr. Stevens noted in viewing the VDH website that there were more confirmed cases than on its website.

Mr. McGlennon noted the vital importance of conveying that concern about accurate information. He further noted concerns from other localities on that information. He noted the testing with private labs and concern about the information being relayed to VDH. Mr. McGlennon asked about a central report from these labs to VDH.

Chief Ashe noted he could not answer that question and further noted some reporting was obtained electronically automatic, while other information had to be communicated. He added that would be an action point for follow-up with the regional team.

Mr. Stevens noted the hospitals had indicated they would work with the County for testing to provide local information, but the private laboratories could be more difficult. He further noted that should be resolved in the future.

Ms. Larson asked if local doctors' offices were currently testing and submitting that information to VDH.

Chief Ashe noted LabCorp and Quest were offering some testing, but unsure if it was at doctors' offices. He added he would follow up on that point.

Mr. Hipple asked Chief Ashe what was the scenario if a call was received and how employees handled the situation if this call was a possible issue and what action items were required.

Chief Ashe noted implementation at the 911 center with initial questions that covered travel information. He further noted initially travel outside of the United States was asked, but that point quickly turned to travel locations in general. Chief Ashe noted the 911 operators asked callers about contact with known or suspected COVID-19 patients, which was then forwarded to the field personnel so they had some level of precaution prior to their arrival. He added that personnel were also screening for flu-like symptoms, fever, and coughing to give personnel additional information prior to arrival. Chief Ashe noted this was flu season and not every patient was a COVID-19 patient, but the information was important to relay to personnel. Chief Ashe noted there were not enough personal protective equipment, but that situation was not unique to James City County as it was a nationwide issue. He further noted there were not enough masks to be worn by everyone on a daily basis for the next few months with the assumption everyone had the virus. Chief Ashe noted testing was ongoing, screening the triage stage and mask use. He further noted limited personnel was sent on calls, adding that on typical breathing problems, two medic crew and three crew on the fire engine would be sent. Chief Ashe noted, rather than committing five members to possible exposure, the commitment of one or two crew to evaluate the patient was being implemented. He added that if all five crew members were needed, they would all assist. He noted this was a procedure already in place in certain situations. Chief Ashe further noted the use of protective gear and compliance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) protocol did not constitute exposure. He added additional cleaning protocol for equipment. Chief Ashe detailed the process of transporting a patient to the hospital, notifying the hospital if the patient may be exhibiting signs of COVID-19-like symptoms, and then the more detailed hospital screening. He noted these steps put crews in a better position to be protected with as much information as possible. He further noted there was the possibility something could slip through, but that was the importance of communication from the Department of Health and the hospital systems on positive testing to County staff. Chief Ashe noted the importance, at least within the Peninsula Health District, that everyone was aware of the definition of self-isolation, quarantine, containment, and exposure and sharing the information correctly. He emphasized why the regional operations center was so important for the public to understand the use of those terms also.

Mr. Hipple emphasized the importance of getting that information out to the public. He noted the 'snowball effect' of information and the importance of sharing the correct information and the County's safety measures in place with the public.

Ms. Sadler asked Chief Ashe if his teams needed more protective gear and if so, what equipment.

Chief Ashe noted more protective gear was needed regionally as well as on a state level. He further noted each department in the Peninsula District had a cache of equipment, but was unsure when that supply would run out as it is based on the number of potential calls that met the criteria for use of protective gear. He noted a request through the state for additional equipment had been submitted. He further noted the VDH had some additional supplies that could be used, as well as a cache of supplies on the Peninsula through some grant funding. Chief Ashe noted the concern of maintaining the supply to ensure it was not depleted too

quickly and the importance of following the triage protocol. He added that both the state Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management were working on filling the equipment requests either through the strategic national stockpile or other vendors.

Ms. Sadler thanked Chief Ashe.

Chief Ashe also noted doctors' offices and citizen concerns, citing the different percentages that some people could have mild symptoms according to VDH, while others may be critically ill and require ventilators and hospital stays. He further noted if people suspected they had the virus, they should call ahead to the hospital or provider, and not everyone needed to call 911. Chief Ashe emphasized that if a person thought it was a true emergency, be sure to call 911 and share information on that person's symptoms to allow first responders the opportunity to wear protective gear. He further noted that with mild symptoms, some tele-medicine services were able to screen patients using Skype or Facetime to limit exposure. Chief Ashe noted 'the flattening of the curve' within the public as well as within first responders and sustaining a level of manpower and health care workers over the duration of this event.

Mr. Stevens asked Chief Ashe to reiterate the first contact, second contact, third contact, and the Department of Health guidance on those points.

Chief Ashe cited the example of a positive patient and you had direct contact with that person. He further noted definitions of close contact included being within a 6-foot range, over a sustained time, and with direct exposure. He noted this classified you as a second-hand person as a suspected contact. He continued stating if you then went and met someone that same day that would be considered a third-hand contact, which would not count as an exposure. Chief Ashe noted the Epidemiology Department of the Health Department still wanted that contact information in the event a person tested positive, it would be able to contact those individuals. He further noted the details of the CDC guidelines and streamlining them to one page for communications people to share regionally and provide clarification and definition.

Ms. Sadler noted her participation in a Town Hall telephone meeting last night with the Honorable Virginia Congressman Rob Wittman and his medical experts, Dr. Michael Dacey, President and Chief Clinical Operating Officer of Riverside Health System, Dr. Richard S. Williams, MPH District Director, Three Rivers District, and Dr. Michael Reitz, Vice President Medical Affairs, Sentara, Northern Virginia Medical Center. She noted the group had also clarified the terms and self-isolation as if a person was positive. She questioned drive-through testing and test kits in certain areas during a press conference. Ms. Sadler noted if we reached that critical level and were overloaded, Congressman Wittman assured her we would have access to those items in this area. She further noted assurance from those doctors that area hospitals were capable of handling incoming patients.

Mr. Icenhour complimented staff on the website with the COVID-19 Hotline access telephone number and information availability. He expressed his concern with the slowness of some of the testing. He noted quicker testing turnaround could help with flattening the curve. Mr. Icenhour further noted the issues with communication and how those had been highlighted. He expressed his appreciation on the hard work regarding the communication issues. Mr. Icenhour noted concern after a conversation with a James City County resident, who was exposed and in self-quarantine, and was aware of a large number of people in a group who they felt were exposed with direct exposure to someone who was confirmed. He noted the group was going through the process of contacting each other and self-quarantining. Mr. Icenhour expressed concern that this information had not gotten to the official Department of Health figures or that it was aware of the situation. He noted he had a clear understanding that there been no contact from the Health Department at the lower level of this group and that a telephone number had been provided for the information to be relayed to the regional center.

Mr. Icenhour requested the ability for the public in a similar circumstance, who had concerns of being officially counted, to contact the regional group with awareness of the situation. He noted there were possible areas where some places were not in the 'sight pattern' and requested a portal for contact at the regional health department be advertised to assist people who may be in that same situation.

Ms. Larson asked about the Matthew Whaley Elementary School situation. She inquired when that situation was known and taking forward steps for preparation. She noted the country was not prepared and her concerns for the elderly population of the County. Ms. Larson cited 'lessons learned' from this experience. She stressed her appreciation for Chief Ashe and his team and the regional effort. She questioned the timeline of the school volunteer's diagnosis and how quickly the school reacted in sharing that information. Ms. Larson noted those answers were not for today, but needed to be known as that timing was a concern.

Mr. Stevens noted the information flow, the Department of Health, and a tie to one couple who had traveled outside the United States, of which six of the 10 cases were tied. He further noted that after several days, administration learned there had been several calls to people who had interacted with that couple. He noted the couple's test was positive last Wednesday. Mr. Stevens further noted the timeline would have been March 10-13, but the Department of Health had made calls to people who had interaction with the couple as early as March 3. He noted those citizen calls were the ones received by administration asking if it knew anything about the calls to which the response was no. Mr. Stevens noted the question of the timeline and when the couple returned to the country, to which the answer was sometime in February, but he added getting that information had been almost impossible. Mr. Stevens said he was not sure if the information existed since the Health Department was 'ramping up' that kind of information and charts. Mr. Stevens noted the Department shared that the couple, who he stressed did nothing wrong, had a slight cough. He further noted that couple had significant contact with many people. He noted, while someone may feel well, do not have meetings or have gatherings. Mr. Stevens said the timeline of information had been challenging. He noted the Health Department will get better, but tracing on the "why" will diminish as cases increase. Mr. Stevens noted the regional call center was a vital step for information flow, particularly for the County.

Ms. Larson noted if a person had the COVID-19 virus, it was no one's fault. She further noted sharing information, acting accordingly, and working together.

Chief Ashe noted, from an epidemiological standpoint, that the timeline was harder to pin down over time, but the actions to be taken like handwashing, social distancing, and not gathering in large groups were critical steps. He noted checking timelines could be valuable in the event of clusters, but follow the steps as noted on the local, state, and federal levels.

Ms. Sadler asked if the WATA buses were still running and if so, what precautions were in place. She noted information that the virus could live on surfaces in excess of three hours.

Mr. Stevens noted he would follow up with Mr. Zac Trogdon, WATA Director. He further noted he had spoken with Mr. Trogdon and buses were running on a limited schedule. Mr. Stevens noted WATA staff was taking precautions with distancing and cleaning. He further noted he would get back to Ms. Sadler after the follow-up.

Ms. Sadler thanked Mr. Stevens.

Ms. Vinroot addressed the Board in the next presentation. She noted essential services were available to citizens such as SNAP benefits, Medicaid, and other services. She further noted the telework option for some employees. Ms. Vinroot addressed protective services and home visits, noting some were necessary in person, while others were telephone screenings.

She noted sharing information and continuing services. Ms. Vinroot noted close contact with the County's community partners for the care of individuals. She further noted over the weekend that the residents of the Community of Faith Mission (COFM) winter shelter, which shut down earlier, were provided safe shelter. She added that the Department had worked with area hotels and the City of Williamsburg Social Services Department on that task. Ms. Vinroot noted the distribution of food for schools and the use of drive-throughs. She further noted concern on supplies from several local distributors and delivery. Ms. Vinroot said maintain communication and check on the elderly. She noted she had been contacted on ways people could help and her suggestions included phone trees with church members. Ms. Vinroot noted the balance of informing people with addressing their needs without alarming them.

Mr. Hipple noted several people had asked why the County had not shut down. He thanked Ms. Vinroot for the continued efforts to maintain services to the community. Mr. Hipple noted availability of medicines and WATA transportation. He stressed the importance of taking care of all of the County's citizens. Mr. Hipple noted Mr. Mark Morrow of Crosswalk Community Church had offered help in the community. He noted other churches might also be available, as well as citizens offering assistance. Mr. Hipple noted working together to deal with what was going on in the community and helping each other.

Ms. Vinroot noted some people had to work outside of the home, but encouraged those who could work from home to do so. She further noted to take care of yourselves and your families now as your help may be needed later.

Mr. McGlennon asked if there was a central information source for volunteers.

Ms. Vinroot said there was no formal source, but she had a list of contacts if needed. She noted the Social Services Department had 24/7 access to calls. She further noted the emphasis on staying healthy now in the event of the need for volunteers at a later time. She commended the hours staff had put in at various agencies as their volunteers remained at home. She noted the possible need to assist those agencies with volunteers in the future. Ms. Vinroot further noted monitoring the supply issue whether with food or volunteers.

Ms. Larson thanked Ms. Vinroot and expressed her appreciation to staff as always for stepping up to assist. Ms. Larson noted feeding children, the most vulnerable, was an imperative need. She further noted how long this situation could go on and the need for WATA to transport people to work. She emphasized the area was a service industry town. Ms. Larson noted the need to evaluate who delivered the foods. She further noted rather than the lower wage earners with children, use higher paid persons who have a salary regardless. Ms. Larson noted 30 people were laid off in an area with no confirmed cases in the Commonwealth, due to the lack of people traveling. She noted the quick response to curtailing large group gatherings.

Ms. Vinroot noted the need for waivers for certain things done in the schools. She further noted she had contact with them and they were doing all they could.

Mr. Icenhour noted he had received calls from several churches and he had passed that information to County Administration. He further noted the overwhelming sense to help and be of service.

Ms. Sadler noted she had also received calls from churches. She asked about a central information source as referenced earlier.

Ms. Vinroot said that would be something to work on and to forward information to her to centralize it. She noted churches could 'turn inward' and support members, particularly the

elderly at this time. Ms. Vinroot further noted she would go forward from that point.

Ms. Sadler asked if Ms. Vinroot had compiled protocol or informational resources for church members in regards to supporting within and for each other.

Ms. Vinroot noted she could work on that point. She referenced some good tips she had received from a local faith leader. Ms. Vinroot said she would work on that and get it sent out.

Ms. Larson noted the president of her homeowners association (HOA) sent an email to its list serve list asking for volunteers to get groceries, etc. for those who might not be able.

Ms. Vinroot said that was great.

Ms. Larson noted neighborhoods could help also.

Mr. McGlennon noted part of community service embraced remaining at home and preventing further spread of the virus.

The Board thanked Ms. Vinroot.

Mr. Purse addressed the Board noting County offices were open but closed to the public. He noted the online availability to pay bills, drop boxes for plans at Community Development, and staff to answer telephone calls and emails. He further noted he and Mr. Stevens had spoken with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) about the availability of staff to telework and social distancing within office areas, as well as limits on intraoffice meetings and the use of conference calls. Mr. Purse noted the closing of County parks to curtail public congregating on the basketball courts. He further noted exercising outside was great, but monitoring the courts would be necessary.

Ms. Sadler asked if the local playgrounds were closed.

Mr. Purse confirmed all the playgrounds and Recreation Center were closed until March 29 at this time.

Mr. Icenhour asked about reaching out to HOAs and providing them with a list of guidance on limited use as many had their own playgrounds.

Mr. Stevens noted the convenience centers were staffed and open to the public, but noted people might have to help themselves a bit more to keep distance. He further noted wherever staff was, emails and questions were still being monitored and answered. He encouraged patience as problems were worked through at this time and encouraged questions if the community had them.

Ms. Larson asked about parks being closed.

Mr. Stevens clarified that the facilities within the parks were closed noting areas where close contact or gathering of groups took place. He noted walking trails were available, but reminded people of social distancing.

Ms. Sadler noted the doctors who spoke at the Town Hall meeting had encouraged temporary closing of playgrounds due to germs.

Mr. Purse noted trails were open at Warhill Sports Complex and Freedom Park.

Ms. Larson asked for the best number if a citizen called in with a question and wanted to

speak to a human.

Mr. Purse noted services were listed on the website with information.

Ms. Larson noted her elderly father did not have a computer and inquired how he, or others in similar situations, would have access to that information. She further noted the need for a telephone number if someone had a question regarding James City County.

Mr. Purse noted the Citizens' Guide, available to the public, offered information for different departments.

Mr. Stevens noted Ms. Rouse would be able to offer more information during her presentation on communications.

Ms. Larson noted with the closing of the County buildings through March 29, what were the next steps regarding reopening of the buildings.

Mr. Purse noted the County was following state guidance and what the Health Department said were safe practices in relation to community spread.

Mr. Stevens noted in talking to other Peninsula localities, a similar course among them would be in place. He noted the cases had to peak and then drop off to determine the timeline. He further noted as better reporting data was available then the administration could readdress the situation in the next week or week-and-a-half.

Mr. Purse noted monitoring the types of interaction with citizens to meet all service needs. He further noted adjustments might be needed.

Ms. Rouse addressed the Board citing this unprecedented situation, communications, and the challenges to information flow. She noted the public had been requested to direct any medical questions about the coronavirus outbreak to the VDH. She further noted its website, www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus was also posted on various County media sources. Ms. Rouse noted the Peninsula Health District had set up a call center, available 8 a.m.-6 p.m., seven days a week, and could be reached at 757-594-7069. She further noted this information was on the County website and that citizens could call the Department of Health's Public Information at 1-877-ASK-VDH3. Ms. Rouse noted the challenges to the information flow and the wide ranges of options to get that information to citizens. She further noted a link on the website, jamescitycountyva.gov/covid, provided current information and was updated regularly. She noted a daily news release adding more releases could be added if needed. Ms. Rouse further noted the latest information was available at the top of the release with previous releases in the lower section as noted daily. She stated the County's homepage, jamescitycountyva.gov, had the Public Information Hotline number listed. She noted the number was 757-564-2140. Ms. Rouse addressed Ms. Larson's point of citizens without access to the website. She noted that while information was pushed out on the website and social media, a recording on that Hotline number was also available for citizens to receive updates and information. She noted a PIO team consisting of 11 County employees have mobilized to help support the Public Information Office in relaying information to the public. Ms. Rouse further noted the team would monitor social media for updates and websites, VDH releases as well as releases from the Governor's office, and to make that information available promptly. She continued noting reminders on how to limit disease transmission, questions and comments from the public, and establishing a Facebook chat on social media. Ms. Rouse noted a PIO team member would be available at the regional joint information center to work with the other localities. She further noted updating signage on County buildings, updating information on the County's television channel, as well as internal communication to staff.

Mr. Icenhour asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Hipple noted the importance of the internet across the County. He further noted he was one citizen who did not have internet access and his frustration with Cox Communications. Mr. Hipple referenced the number of people in the County in relation to access and how this impacted school students.

Ms. Larson noted a friend in the Richmond area had mentioned Spectrum and free internet. She noted Cox had some type of program, though she was unsure of the details, but she questioned if any such program had been advertised.

Ms. Rouse replied no.

Ms. Larson noted T-Mobile had supplied mini hotspots for Henrico County students. She questioned what Verizon might be doing for James City County students. Ms. Larson referenced Mr. Hipple's children attended County schools and had no internet access. She asked Ms. Rouse to check on possible options.

Ms. Rouse noted she would look into it, but added that some cell service providers had sent messages. She further noted she received a T-Mobile message regarding expanded unlimited service.

Mr. Hipple noted a news article stating Cox had a program for people with the service, but who could not afford internet, would supply an increase in megabytes for school work. He noted where Cox was, it was providing. Mr. Hipple referenced issues with cell phone upgrades and companies not being available and the impact of citizens without cell service.

Ms. Larson noted college students returning home and online classes at the College of William & Mary. She questioned the bandwidth capacity in the County as well as the Commonwealth.

Mr. McGlennon noted the County Public Information Hotline number was 757-564-2140. He asked about its capacity.

Ms. Rouse responded it was only a recording.

Mr. McGlennon asked if it could allow people to get specific questions.

Ms. Rouse responded no and it was just a recording, but it was a 10-minute recording. She noted if citizens had medical questions then they were directed to call the Peninsula Health District Call Center at 757-594-7069 with staffing available 8 a.m.-6 p.m., seven days a week. She further noted additional questions could be directed to the Virginia Department of Health at 1-877-ASK-VDH3. Ms. Rouse noted an earlier question about calling to the County. She further noted if the caller was unsure of the number, the caller could always contact the Public Information Office at 757-272-3337. Ms. Sadler expressed her appreciation for the hotline. She asked if the Health Department numbers and COVID-19 information was right up front. Ms. Rouse noted yes, but a later part of the recording. She further noted per the recent PIO meeting that that information would be available at the front of the recording.

Mr. Stevens noted the focus of emergency response over the past week. He further noted contact with Ms. Sharon Day, Director of Financial Management Services, and Ms. Jenni Tomes, County Treasurer, regarding budget impacts. Mr. Stevens noted a highlight of current year with a \$2-3 million loss in revenue, which was a changing number but based on today's information. He further noted \$36 million as fund balance and noted the County was in good shape for the next couple of months. Mr. Stevens noted expenditures were being held and

some revenue shortfalls were anticipated. He further noted that he and Ms. Day would be more involved in purchases that normally they were not. Mr. Stevens noted that once approved, some level of spending occurred within departments. He further noted that as of today, Ms. Day would review purchases over \$5,000 expenditure and he would review purchases beyond \$10,000 expenditure. He noted the message to departments was if it is not essential then we are not buying it. Mr. Stevens addressed holding back some unissued purchase orders and projects. He noted adjustments. Mr. Stevens further noted several questions had recently been asked with one being if late fees be waived on tax payments. He noted that there were limitations due to codes, but that could be discussed at a future meeting. He further noted the waiving of the convenience fee, and while it was a cost to the County, and after conferring with Ms. Day, it was determined to be a \$150,000 revenue loss impact. He noted this was also a point for a later discussion, but noted the online option might provide a better option for citizens. Mr. Stevens noted local businesses and the uncertainty of the overall federal state assistance to them. He further noted the Economic Development department had been tasked with reaching out and promoting to County businesses to keep up with their revenue and business losses as well as costs associated. Mr. Stevens noted working consistently with York County and the City of Williamsburg to get that same message out to businesses and encourage them to call the County's Economic Development department at 253-6607. He noted there was no promise of federal assistance, but he felt there would be some help and noted tracking those losses from day one. Mr. Stevens also noted he had spoken with Mr. Doug Powell, General Manager of James City Service Authority. He added that Mr. Powell had assured him and the Board that the County's water system was safe. Mr. Stevens wanted the community to be aware of that point as well as the safety of the water supply in terms of the virus. He noted possible staffing impacts that Mr. Powell was addressing. Mr. Stevens noted daily informational calls with York County, the City of Williamsburg, along with both hospitals, the school system, Colonial Williamsburg, and the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation with VDH partners since last Friday and felt these would continue. He further noted regional calls, some state calls, and the sharing of information. Mr. Stevens noted future Board meetings and guidance on how to conduct those meetings. He further noted County attorneys were reviewing State Code and how to proceed. Mr. Stevens noted the upcoming Work Session and discussion later on that point. Mr. Stevens told the community to call and ask questions, but he also asked the community for its patience as administration worked through this over the following weeks.

Mr. Icenhour noted questions to Mr. Stevens followed by guidance on where the Board wanted staff or administration to go moving forward.

Mr. Hipple noted concern about the finances and the community impact with companies now out of work. He referenced the Honorable Senator Thomas Norment's comment on the \$444 million loss to schools this year in the Commonwealth. Mr. Hipple noted the state's debt and inquired if the state would be able to help localities. He further noted looking forward to this year and next year's budgets in relation to citizens and future projects. Mr. Hipple noted the County had done well with reserve money and this would help the County. He added some assistance might be asked from businesses in the community. Mr. Hipple noted a team of three-four people to look at what businesses were out, like Busch Gardens, and the financial impact. He further noted the budget impact on staffing and services and letting citizens know the Board was looking forward.

Ms. Larson asked if Police Chief Brad Rinehimer could address protection for County police officers. She noted some calls might involve contact with people who may not know they are infected.

Chief Rinehimer addressed the Board and noted traffic on the roads, adjustments in officer involvement with each other, and reduction to public exposure. Chief Rinehimer noted the use of telework where applicable, but noted the nature of police work involved direct contact. He

further noted use of protective gear if needed and using protocol to keep the citizens protected and safe.

Ms. Larson asked about employees, particularly lifeguards or park workers and others who may not be full-time, and how long could that continue fiscally.

Mr. Stevens noted the commitment to paying full-time employees, but there could be some potential impacts to part-time staff. He further noted some full-time employees were being used in their regular capacity, or assisting in cleaning at the Recreation Center, or assisting at convenience centers by using younger Parks and Recreation employees in these areas, where typically older employees worked, in an effort to limit exposure. He noted the goal was to keep the full-time employee as 'best we can' and continue paying as 'best we can'. Mr. Stevens further noted if anyone felt sick, stay home and use leave time if available and if not, leave could be advanced. He added many localities were granting sick leave for several weeks if employees need it regardless. Mr. Stevens noted administration may move to that, but no decision to that point had been made yet. He further noted the goal was to keep staff earning paychecks in a safe manner, whether here or telework. He expressed concern for part-time employees.

Mr. Icenhour expressed appreciation to staff for its flexibility in doing assorted jobs they had not done previously while maintaining and continuing the existence of essential County services in the safest manner possible.

Mr. McGlennon noted Mr. Hipple's comments on fiscal implications and responsibility going forward. He further noted the County was viewed as the front line government for assistance to citizens, but stressed the importance of state and federal assistance. He noted Governor Northam's comments on the waiving the week's wait for unemployment benefits. Mr. McGlennon noted the importance of letting citizens know of these opportunities. He further noted adding that information to the communications briefing. Mr. McGlennon noted legislation in Congress that could offer assistance to significantly affected businesses, child care access, sick leave, and stimulus payment to citizens. He noted remaining in contact with federal representatives to assist those businesses. He further noted some federal discussion on a financial stimulus package of \$30 billion infusion to the nation's economy for rent and food. Mr. McGlennon noted as part of a federal government, there was still responsibility at the local level and providing as much information as quickly as possible to citizens was necessary.

Ms. Sadler noted a current press conferences from both the Governor and the President. She further noted the amount of information available to the public from these conferences. Ms. Sadler thanked County Administration, her fellow Board members, and staff for ongoing work as everyone worked together for the community.

Ms. Larson noted her appreciation to everyone's hard work during this time. She expressed her sympathy at the loss of two lives in the community. Ms. Larson further noted citizens watching this meeting's broadcast and the information presented here. She expressed her frustration at the lack of public communication and that information was not flowing as it should, particularly as she felt this was a public health crisis. Ms. Larson noted people tended to react poorly without communication. She further noted sometimes relaying that information was not known, but that people were working to get that information for the community. She noted when a website said one thing, and people hear other things, then doubt begins and that created situations. Ms. Larson implored the Commonwealth to assist the Health Department and get accurate information out to the community. She noted fiscal responsibility and budget constraints. Ms. Larson further noted some of the frustrations aimed at the state Health Department level probably centered on budget constraints already in place in that department that were stretched during the virus outbreak. She noted the flow of information and hoped for the opportunity to meet for next week's Work Session.

Ms. Larson expressed her appreciation to gas station attendants, grocery store workers, teleworking County staff, and many others.

3. **Waiving of Credit Card Convenience Fee Until the End of the Fiscal Year June 2020**

A motion to Approve was made by Michael Hipple, the motion result was Passed.

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0

Ayes: Hipple, Icenhour Jr, Larson, McGlennon, Sadler

Mr. Icenhour noted there was a question that the County Administrator had asked the Board to consider. He further noted it involved waiving the credit card convenience fee for a specific time.

Mr. Stevens noted the timeframe would be until the end of the Fiscal Year.

Mr. Hipple and Mr. McGlennon were in agreement with the waiver, especially for keeping citizens from coming out to pay.

Ms. Larson asked if the County was passing on that amount and there was no profit of any type, what was the financial impact and was it being cut from another area.

Mr. Stevens noted it was a revenue item and they felt it was estimated to be approximately \$150,000 in lost revenue, but that the actual amount due would still be collected. He further noted that would be a \$150,000 expenditure to the credit card companies that the County would have to address on that lost revenue.

Ms. Larson asked where would that revenue normally go and how it impacted the budget and was it part of the General Fund.

Ms. Day noted it was a General Fund item, but currently it was not shown in either expenditures or revenue as it was considered a flowthrough item. She further noted when the cash was collected, it was then paid back to the credit card companies. Ms. Day said there was no profit per se, but estimated fees varied based on different credit cards used. She noted if there was a difference then it was carried forward to pay those credit card payments. She further noted the proposal, if waived, would offset against the revenue and rather than show as an expenditure item in the budget, it essentially was a loss of revenue.

Ms. Larson asked if that could be done through May 1 and then reevaluated. She noted the importance of not having people come out to make payments for health reasons, and further noted the concept of not coming would cost citizens money.

Ms. Day noted it would have a positive impact on the cash flow. She further noted it was an additional way for citizens to pay so the likelihood of accepting more cash would go up. Ms. Day noted the Information Technology (IT) department had been in touch with various vendors regarding payment software, depending if it was tax payments, Parks & Recreation fees, and such. She further noted IT had been in contact with those vendors today to find out their lead times and noted there would be some reprogramming to those systems.

Mr. Icenhour asked if the Board agreed today, and after staff implemented the changes, then the fee waiver would be in effect until the end of June this year.

Ms. Sadler asked for clarification to waive the convenience fee on credit card use until the end of June 2020.

Mr. Icenhour confirmed yes, with a reevaluation after that time.

Mr. Hipple noted challenges of these times to the Board, the staff, and the community. He further noted the commitment to continued safety for the community by maintaining a 6-foot distance from others, fewer than 10 people in a gathering, and people of 65 years or older to stay home. He noted using take-out or delivery for restaurant services. Mr. Hipple noted watching out for each other, prayers for the County, state, and federal government, and staying positive. He further noted the stress of confinement that affected everyone during this difficult time. Mr. Hipple noted the Board was working to help citizens and the community. He further noted the stress on staff and having understanding and patience as everyone worked through this difficult time.

Ms. Sadler offered her condolences to the family and friends of the Stonehouse resident who passed away from the virus. She noted the Board was here for help. Ms. Sadler thanked staff and her fellow Board members for all their efforts and working together as a team.

Mr. Icenhour also extended his thanks to staff. He noted the regional cooperation and the group and community efforts to be helpful throughout this difficult time.

D. CLOSED SESSION

None.

E. ADJOURNMENT

1. Adjourn until 4 p.m., on March 24, 2020, for the Work Session

A motion to Adjourn was made by Michael Hipple, the motion result was Passed.
AYES: 5 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0
Ayes: Hipple, Icenhour Jr, Larson, McGlennon, Sadler

At approximately 1:20 p.m., Mr. Icenhour adjourned the Board of Supervisors.


Deputy Clerk