

# **YADKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

## **REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

**Tuesday, March 24, 2020**

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Yadkin, State of North Carolina, met in Recessed Session in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Yadkin County Human Resources Building located at 217 East Willow Street, Yadkinville, NC on March 24, 2020 at 9:00am.

### **Present were:**

Chairman Kevin Austin  
Vice Chairman David Moxley  
Commissioner Gilbert Hemric  
Commissioner Marion Welborn  
Commissioner Frank Zachary

**Staff present:** County Attorney, Ed Powell (by phone); County Manager, Lisa Hughes; Clerk to the Board, Tanya Gentry; Assistant County Manager, Drew Hinkle; and Finance Officer, Lindsey Cearlock.

**Chairman Austin called the recessed Meeting back into Session on March 24, 2020 at 9:05am.**

### **Human Services Update**

Jessica Wall addressed the Board. There have been 47 Yadkin County residents tested for coronavirus and 22 of the test results have come back as negative. The other test results are still pending. There are no positive cases in Yadkin County. They received a memo from the State Epidemiologist confirming that there has been community transmission of the coronavirus in North Carolina. The local Health Departments have been asked to make a shift in their approach to the coronavirus. Containment is no longer the number one priority. The containment approach mainly consists of identifying the people who test positive and testing the people they came into contact with and continuing to trace and test contacts until the contacts that are being tested get negative test results. Human Services has moved from the containment phase to the mitigation phase. The mitigation phase doesn't focus on testing as much. People who are experiencing manageable symptoms of the coronavirus should stay home and isolate themselves until it has been seven days since the onset of their symptoms and they have been symptom free for 72 hours. They can call their doctor's office and speak with the doctor about their symptoms to see if they need to come in. They shouldn't go to the doctor's office until directed to do so because if they do have the coronavirus they could transmit it to other people who are waiting to see the doctor. Human Services can continue to do contact tracing during this phase; it is just not as important. Since community spread has begun, it will be harder to trace everyone that a person who has tested positive has been in contact with. The number of positive cases will increase faster and there will be instances where Human Services can't make a connection and determine how the person contracted the coronavirus. Some of the surrounding YMCA's are being utilized for emergency child care. The Yadkin County YMCA is not providing that service at this time. Human Services currently has 2 coronavirus test kits. They have ordered 12 more test kits. Staff is going to reach out to the adult care homes and the nursing facilities in the County and speak with them about the proper use of PPE and offer them some guidance on things they can do to help prevent the spread of coronavirus. They are tracking their coronavirus response expenditures in case the County is able to receive some type of reimbursements for those costs. The expenditures being tracked includes staff time so the staff has been asked to add a coronavirus (COVID-19) line to their timesheets. The schools are closed until May 15<sup>th</sup>. Secretary Cohen has issued a request for healthcare volunteers. The hospitals have been asked to cancel elective and non-urgent procedures. The Medical Clinic is looking into telemedicine. They have not received any information on the rapid test kits that people are hearing about from the media. It is currently taking several days to get the test results back but it is very important that people who are tested stay home until they get their results back because they could end up infecting a lot of people if they have the coronavirus. They should also try to isolate themselves from other people that live in their home with them because there is a chance that those other people haven't been infected. The other people that live in the home would still be advised to stay home until the person with the symptoms gets their test results back. The prioritization of who should be tested has changed with the switch to the mitigation phase. People in long term care facilities, people that have underlying health conditions that put them at risk, and healthcare professionals will be given a higher priority now.

### County Update

County Manager Hughes addressed the Board. Currently 93 counties have declared a State of Emergency. She gave the Board a copy of the Telework Policy and the agreement that goes along with it so they can review it and let her know if they have any questions. Gary Hayes has received advice from the OSFM for Chief Code Officials. Inspections are being encouraged to do live remote inspections. Any of the inspections they do for an occupied home or business can be done by live remote. The inspector is supposed to note on the report that the inspection was a live remote inspection due to COVID-19. Some live remote inspections can also be done for new construction.

### Water Disconnects and Fees

County Manager Hughes addressed the Board. There has been a lot of talk about public water systems on the School of Government listservs. It is important that people have access to water right now. Everyone is being asked to wash their hands more and people are doing extra cleaning in order to try and prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Those that provide water to the public are being asked to not disconnect people's water service for nonpayment. They are also being asked to not charge people late fees. Money is getting tight for some people because they have lost their jobs or had their hours reduced because of the coronavirus. County Manager Hughes requested that the customers that the County bills directly for water not have their water service disconnected for nonpayment and that they not be charged any late fees. Chairman Austin asked if the Towns in Yadkin County that provide public water are also doing that for their customers. County Manager Hughes said that the Towns are doing that. The Board discussed it and the consensus was to temporarily not charge Yadkin County's direct customers' late fees or disconnect their water for nonpayment. The disconnections and late fees should resume when the children return to school. That is a good sign to the community that things are returning to normal. If the School System doesn't reopen before school is out for the summer, the Board can reconsider the matter of when the disconnections and late fees will resume. Chairman Austin asked if people can pay their water bills by credit card. County Manager Hughes said that people have to pay their water bills by cash or check. The system isn't setup to accept credit card payments. The Board asked Finance to look into additional payment options that would allow people to pay online. That would help keep people from having to come into the office. County Manager Hughes said the companies that process those payments charge a convenience fee that is paid by the customer. The Tax Office accepts online payments and the people who pay their taxes by credit card are charged a convenience fee. The Board discussed it. If the County establishes an online payment method for the water bills, the County will temporarily waive the convenience fees. The water customers will have to start paying the convenience fees when the disconnections and late fees resume.

### Animal Shelter

County Manager Hughes addressed the Board. Currently there are several steps that have to be followed for someone to be approved to foster an animal from the Animal Shelter. In an effort to keep the number of animals in the Animal Shelter down, they would like to be able to approve foster home providers faster. County Manager Hughes requested that she and Jason Roels temporarily be authorized to approve people to foster animals without them having to complete all of the steps that are usually required. **Commissioner Welborn made a motion to authorize the County Manager and the Animal Shelter Director to approve temporary foster homes for animals during the COVID-19 pandemic. Vice Chairman Moxley second. Vote: 5/0.**

### Resolution Urging Against a Statewide Shelter in Place Order

County Manager Hughes addressed the Board. She gave the Board a copy of a resolution that urges the Governor to not issue a statewide Shelter in Place Order. Each county is unique and the coronavirus is affecting them differently. The counties and municipalities have the authority to declare their own State of Emergency. The State of Emergency declaration allows local governments to control the movements of individuals. The decision to Shelter in Place should remain with the counties and municipalities. County Manager Hughes read the resolution. **Commissioner Zachary made a motion to adopt the Resolution to Support Protecting a County's Right to Issue a Shelter in Place Order. Commissioner Welborn second.**

**Vote: 5/0.**

[The Resolution is attached as Appendix A]

## EMS

County Manager Hughes addressed the Board. The County charges an assessment fee of \$50.00 when EMS responds to a call, assesses the person, and the person doesn't get transported. Insurance doesn't usually cover that fee. EMS is on standby if there is a structure fire. If EMS needs to assess a firefighter or if they are assisting the Sheriff's Office on a call and need to assess someone, should EMS charge them an assessment fee? If EMS is at an active event where Incident Command is established, County Manager Hughes recommended waiving some of the EMS fees for Public Safety Personnel that is involved in that incident. The fees that EMS would not issue a bill for would be:

1. Monitoring Public Safety Personnel during rehab;
2. Checking vital signs of the Public Safety Personnel during rehab or after incidents;
3. Providing general NCCEP assessments;
4. Checking and dressing minor injuries (i.e. bumps, scrapes, bruises, etc.);
5. Cardiac monitoring to include a 12-Lead ECG that does not result in transport.

The waiving of these fees would not be temporary. The fees would remain waived permanently unless the Board takes action to reinstate them. Public Safety Personnel that are involved in the established incident would still be billed for services if they have to be transported or the services are workers comp related. For example, if a firefighter is assessed and is not transported then he would not be charged the \$50.00 assessment fee. If a firefighter is assessed and has to be transported then EMS would bill for that service. Chairman Austin asked about temporarily waiving the \$50.00 assessment fee for everyone. The Board discussed it and more information is needed on those types of assessment calls so that matter can be discussed at a later date.

Any hospital or medical care facility has to request any additional PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) that they need through the county that their home office is in. Even if they have facilities in multiple counties, the request can only come from their home county. There are some medical care facilities that Yadkin County is the home county for. Keith Vestal said that they have received requests for PPE from nursing facilities and long-term care facilities in Yadkin County. The requests that are submitted for those types of facilities aren't given as high a priority. The requests that are submitted for PPE for hospitals, EMS, and medical healthcare staff are given the highest priority. Chairman Austin asked if Yadkin County is having any issues with PPE, other than the N95 masks. Keith Vestal said there are also issues with gowns, gloves, surgical masks, and eye wear. EMS has done an inventory of the PPE that they have and they are ok for now. Prior to the coronavirus, the nursing homes and long-term facilities didn't really have a need for a lot of PPE. EMS is being careful to conserve the PPE that they have because it may be a long time before they can get anymore. Keith Vestal said the Yadkin County School System contacted them to request take-out containers. They are running out of the containers that they have because they are providing take-out meals for all of the school children. Take-out containers aren't really used much when the children are in school but now all of the meals are being put in them so that they can be taken home to the children. EMS asked Steve Potts about it and he was able to find some foam boxes for them. The restaurants are also needing the containers so it will get harder to find them as time goes on. Jessica Wall said that Human Services staff could assist the School System with finding ways to conserve the containers.

The Board reviewed the information that County Manager Hughes had given them regarding the waiving of some of the EMS fees for Public Safety Personnel that is involved with an Incident Command that has been established. **Commissioner Hemric made a motion that in the event that Yadkin County Emergency Services/EMS is dispatched to, or requested at, an active event, both actual and training, where Incident Command is established, the EMS Crew will not bill for the following:**

1. **Monitoring Public Safety Personnel during rehab.**
2. **Checking vital signs of the Public Safety Personnel during rehab or after incidents.**
3. **Providing general NCCEP assessments.**
4. **Checking and dressing minor injuries (i.e. bumps, scrapes, bruises, etc.)**
5. **Cardiac monitoring to include a 12-Lead ECG that does not result in transport.**

**Vice Chairman Moxley second.**

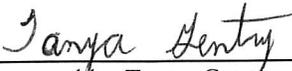
**Vote: 5/0.**

**Chairman Austin made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) (1)(3)(4)(5)(6) to discuss Personnel Matters and to Protect Personnel Information that is Confidential under NCGS 153A-98, and to discuss the potential Location or Expansion of Industries or other Businesses in the County, to Establish the County's Negotiating Position for Acquiring Real Property and to Instruct the County Staff on that Position, and to have a Privileged Consultation with our County Attorney and Pursuant to NCGS 131E-97.3 to discuss Confidential Competitive Health Care Information. Commissioner Welborn second.**

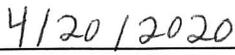
**Vote: 5/0.**

**Commissioner Zachary made a motion to recess the meeting until Friday, March 27, 2020 at 9:00am. Commissioner Welborn second.**

**Vote: 5/0.**

  
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Prepared by Tanya Gentry  
Clerk to the Board

  
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Kevin Austin, Chairman  
Yadkin County Board of Commissioners

  
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Date approved by the  
Yadkin County Board of Commissioners

*Kevin Austin, Chairman of Board  
David Moxley, Vice Chairman  
Gilbert Hemric, Commissioner  
Marion Welborn, Commissioner  
Frank Zachary, Commissioner*



*Ed Powell, County Attorney  
Lisa Hughes, County Manager  
Tanya Gentry, Clerk to the Board*

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT PROTECTING A COUNTY'S RIGHT TO ISSUE A SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER**

**WHEREAS**, there are 100 Counties in North Carolina and while there are similarities among them, each County has its own unique demographics and issues; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of North Carolina issued Executive Order No. 116 on March 10, 2020 declaring a State of Emergency to address COVID-19 as the World Health Organization declared the Coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic on March 11, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 23, 2020 hospitals in North Carolina submitted a letter to the Governor of North Carolina asking him to immediately order a "Shelter in Place"; and

**WHEREAS**, The Yadkin County Board of Commissioners acknowledges the public health dangers associated with COVID-19, which can reach all 100 Counties in North Carolina, affecting each one differently; and

**WHEREAS**, the Yadkin County Board of Commissioners recognizes the negative impact COVID-19 has had on the economy of the United States of America, North Carolina and Yadkin County; and

**WHEREAS**, the third largest employer within Yadkin County has already temporarily laid-off 500 employees as a result of "Shelter in Place" orders in other states across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, the Yadkin County Board of Commissioners acknowledges that a "Shelter in Place" order would be extremely detrimental to the economy of Yadkin County, which had already suffered due to COVID -19; and

**WHEREAS**, the Yadkin County Board of Commissioners again wishes to express its deep commitment to protecting the liberty and freedom of Yadkin County citizens and businesses during this public health crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina General Statute 166-A gives authority to a County or Municipality to locally and individually issue a "Shelter in Place" order under issuance of a State of Emergency;

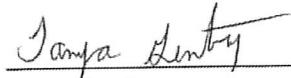
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Yadkin County Board of Commissioners urges the Governor of North Carolina not to issue a statewide "Shelter in Place" order and allow Counties and Municipalities to exercise their authority to make the best decisions for their individual Counties and Municipalities.

*Kevin Austin, Chairman of Board  
David Moxley, Vice Chairman  
Gilbert Hemric, Commissioner  
Marion Welborn, Commissioner  
Frank Zachary, Commissioner*



*Ed Powell, County Attorney  
Lisa Hughes, County Manager  
Tanya Gentry, Clerk to the Board*

Adopted the 24th day of March 2020 by the Yadkin County Board of Commissioners.  
Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tanya Gentry  
Clerk to the Board

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Austin  
Chairman  
Yadkin County Board of Commissioners

