

July 6, 2020
The Board of Brown County Commissioners met in regular session via Zoom with the following members present: Chairman Dwight A. Kruse, Keith Olsen, and Richard L. Lehmkuhl. Also present was Brown County Clerk, Melissa Gormley. County Attorney, Kevin Hill was also present. Dwight A. Kruse opened the meeting at 8:10 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all. Richard Lehmkuhl led the meeting with a prayer.

COVID-19
Chastity Schumann, Brown County Health Department, presented the Brown County statistics to the commission. She also gave updates on surrounding counties. Schumann reviewed the symptoms of COVID-19 and how the virus is spread. Schumann also discussed how to slow the spread by practicing good hygiene and maintain social distancing. John Broberg, Hiawatha Hospital CEO, discussed his perspective from a clinical point of view. He thanked the commission for considering the benefits of following Governor Kelly’s executive order to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and allow our businesses to remain open.
Commissioner Lehmkuhl asked how many tests had been done in the past two weeks. Schumann stated approximately 200 tests were conducted. There was one positive over the weekend.
Commission Olsen asked how long it took to get a test back. Schumann stated it takes 48 to 72 hours, but some tests were taking longer.
Commissioner Kruse questioned the tracking of the virus. Whether the infections were work related or from mass gathering exposure. Schumann stated the recent case was work related where the business already required wearing masks. Schumann also stated that rural areas have less positive cases.
Commissioner Lehmkuhl, asked if any of the cases have been because of mass gatherings? Schumann stated only one case.
Commissioner Kruse, said the general take of the commission is to strongly recommend face covering and to put a strong emphasis on social distancing.
Commissioner Lehmkuhl stated the commission recommends face coverings, but they should not be mandated.
Commissioner Olsen, read a letter that he wrote. He stated that he had heard from both sides of the spectrum and the commission would not be able to make everyone happy. Olsen is in favor of leaving the county as is and not supporting the executive order.

Motion by Keith Olsen to accept Resolution 2020-14, to leave Brown County as is, exempting Brown County from the use of face masks and let business and individuals make their own decisions. Seconded by Richard Lehmkuhl. Motion carried.

Commissioner Lehmkuhl stated that it is important to let people make their own decisions. Businesses should post signs in their windows as to whether they want customers to wear masks or not. Brown County has been doing a good job of staying safe. He stated they may go two weeks and see a spike in cases and then the commission would have to revisit the matter.

Kevin Hill stated the county can have less stringent findings than the Governors Order. It would have been premature to take action on Tuesday since the Governor had not made an executive order. Hill stated the commission did follow HB No. 2016. Hill stated the Board of Commissioners consulted with the County Health Officer and did make the following findings:

- a. Covid-19 cases remain low in Brown County, Kansas
- b. Enforcement of the Governor’s executive order mandating masks would be difficult to accomplish given the restrictions placed upon enforcement by the Kansas Legislature and would place a stain on county law enforcement.
- c. That the use of face masks in Brown County under circumstances set forth in Sections 1 and 2 of Executive Oder 20-52 is strongly encouraged by the Board of County Commissioners but is not being mandated at this time.

SPARK
Don Pounds, Brown County Emergency Manager, presented a list of residents to be on the SPARK taskforce. Pounds asked for compensation at a rate of \$25/hour. Commissioner Kruse asked if a volunteer committee could be paid. Commissioner Lehmkuhl asked what the date was to have everything done. Pounds stated August 15, 2020 is when everything has to be in place.

Motion by Keith Olsen to accept the SPARK taskforce. Seconded by Richard Lehmkuhl. Motion carried.

Commissioner Lehmkuhl asked Pounds to explain what SPARK is. Pounds stated it was federal money that Brown County received in the amount of 1.9 million dollars to help address the health and economic challenges inflicted by COVID-19. Pounds stated that he has reached out to City Clerks to see if they were in need of anything.

Motion by Keith Olsen to adjourn. Seconded by Richard Lehmkuhl. Motion carried. Meeting closed at 8:53 a.m. The next regular meeting will be Monday, July 13, 2020.

ATTEST:

APPROVED BY:

MELISSA GORMLEY, COUNTY CLERK

DWIGHT A. KRUSE, CHAIRMAN

KEITH OLSEN, MEMBER

RICHARD L. LEHMKUHL, MEMBER