



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE  
LINN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL SESSION  
LINN COUNTY COURTHOUSE – ROOM 200  
FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2020**

**The Linn County Board of Commissioners met for the regularly scheduled meeting on Friday, April 17, 2020.**

Those present at various times for the matters as indicated below were: Todd Noble, Linn County Health Services Administrator; Neva Anderson, Linn County Health Emergency Manager; Eric Anderson, Linn County Disaster Planner; Jim Yon, Linn County Sheriff; Joe Larsen, Lieutenant Emergency Management, Linn County Sheriff's Office; Robert Wheeldon, Linn County Planning and Building Director; Torri Lynn, Linn County Juvenile Department Director; Lisa Walker, SEIU President and Alex Paul, Reporter for the *Democrat-Herald*. Ralph Wyatt, Linn County Administrative Officer and Andy Stevens, Linn County Assessor, were present via teleconferencing.

1, 2. At 9:30 a.m. Chairman Nyquist called the meeting to order. The flag salute and roll call followed. Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Chairman and Will Tucker were present, as well as, and Marsha Meyer, Recorder for the Board of Commissioners. John K. Lindsey, Vice-Chairman, was not present for roll call.

3. Approval of Agenda.

**Action – Commissioner Tucker moved to approve the agenda. The vote was called. The motion passed.**

4. Update on plan for COVID-19 testing availability for Linn County residents.

Commissioner Nyquist called upon Todd Noble, Linn County Health Services Administrator, to start the conversation.

Mr. Noble stated that one of the issues to get the County and Oregon back up and running was to have comprehensive testing to see where the COVID-19 disease was and, right now nationally, less than one percent of the population had been tested; clearly that's an issue. He stated that on Tuesday, April 14, 2020 he was tasked by the Board to look at all the congregate sites within Linn County. He stated that they have developed a tiered system and the first most vulnerable population were the seniors in long-term care facilities. They have been identified and most of the facilities had been contacted. The facilities are eager to have testing done. Mr. Noble stated that, along with the some of the information Commissioner Nyquist provided, there were potential tests that could be purchased.

Mr. Noble then publicly acknowledged and thanked the Emergency Operations Center and, especially, his two planners Neva Anderson and Eric Anderson who have done an outstanding job and excellent work. There has been close collaboration with Sheriff Yon and Joe Larsen, Lieutenant, Emergency Management. Commissioner Nyquist also thanked them as well.

Commissioner Nyquist stated that, after the Board meeting on Tuesday, April 14, 2020, he didn't have a plan but by Tuesday evening he had been made aware of WVT Laboratories in Corvallis, Oregon; they are cued up to begin testing. He talked with Mannie at WVT (Commissioner Nyquist did not have his last name or title) and they are in a joint effort with the OSU Veterinarian School. WVT does medical testing and come with the highest recommendations and they are accredited. He stated that Linn County has entered into an agreement, yet to be written, that the County would purchase 1,000 test kits a week for up to eight weeks with the first two weeks guaranteed to WVT. He did not disclose the cost as it was proprietary and he believed that WVT would be besieged with requests once this agreement was announced. Commissioner Nyquist stated that the turnaround time would be 3-days and was told WVT has the capacity to do much more than what the County's agreement is for. He stated that the reason the agreement was not for more than 1,000 tests a week was because of the County's ability to administer the tests. He then asked for Mr. Noble's thoughts regarding that issue. Mr. Noble stated that there would definitely have to be partnerships in getting the test done and for disease tracing; he was working to put teams together. Mr. Noble agreed that the 1,000 tests a week was reasonable. Commissioner Nyquist stated that, within a couple of weeks, the identified facilities in Linn County could be tested. He stated the other reason he wanted to go out eight weeks was that other citizens serving on the front line, such as public safety, fire and essential workers, would begin asking to be tested. Employers would also begin asking for testing for their employees as the County and State work towards reopening the economy. Commissioner Nyquist stated that planning for that capacity, as well as, those facilities that they planned for seems like a prudent thing to do. The 3-day turnaround will help us accomplish our goals for the health, safety and welfare of the residents and employees in those facilities.

*Commissioner Lindsey entered the meeting at 9:40 a.m.*

Commissioner Tucker agreed with Commissioner Nyquist. The care facilities have represented a large percentage of the deaths and where the illness has been within Linn County; if we can get that under control and monitored, it will be a great pulse point for figuring out what is going on within the County. Commissioner Tucker stated that he supports the efforts moving forward.

The next topic of discussion was tracing after the testing. Commissioner Nyquist stated that Mr. Noble would need six positions for tracing and Mr. Noble stated that, currently, he has one person and they are up to their neck so more positions would be needed. Commissioner Tucker stated it will be a game changer. Mr. Noble stated that having between six and ten people doing the tracing he can repurpose some people and residents are willing to help as well. He stated that he is in the planning stage right now. Commissioner Lindsey asked about tracing people who have already had the infection and have recovered. Commissioner Tucker stated that he was correct that some have had the disease and have recovered; some are asymptomatic and they don't know. The testing they are talking about today would test to see whether or not the disease is active in the body at the time of testing. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Nyquist stated that, for the purpose of this meeting, the Board was giving Mr. Noble the authority to spend the money needed to hire positions or whatever mechanism he needed to get the tracing done. Jim Yon, Linn County Sheriff, stated that he may have some staff available to help with the tracing. Mr. Noble stated he would get it done.

Next, there was discussion of PPE (personal protective equipment) availability and how the County was going to pay for all the cost associated with this event. Joe Larsen, Lieutenant Emergency Management, Linn County Sheriff's Office (and Command Leader for this event), stated that they have been filling PPE requests as needed and Public Health had some in reserve for contingencies; they're doing okay right now. He stated that he just put in a request to the State yesterday, Thursday, April 16, 2020 for 10,000 PPE masks. Commissioner Nyquist stated that he has been on a couple of telephone calls that indicated the breakdown of federal funds to the State and flowing down to local government. He projected that, on a representative basis, Linn County was likely to get between \$1 million and \$1.5 million dollars for our costs. He stated that he believed the money was flowing from the feds to cover this; if not, the Board would figure it out and it would be the right investment to make because we can't afford for commerce and business and our economy to be closed. Discussions followed regarding these two matters.

Commissioner Nyquist asked if the County should begin to develop a strategy to reopen at the local level and what that would look like identifying the barriers. He asked if Shane Sanderson, Linn County Environmental Health Program Manager, would be capable to start working on a draft. Mr. Noble stated it would be step in the right direction but getting the testing done will be what defines the response going forward. We are getting ahead of the game and it will

inform us of what we can do. The data will drive what and how we need to move forward. When we have a better snapshot of what recovery will look like it is a step toward reopening for sure.

Commissioner Tucker asked how the testing and teams going into the facilities would be organized and Commissioner Nyquist stated that that was a detailed plan that Mr. Noble would work through. Commissioner Tucker agreed. Lastly, Commissioner Nyquist referred to Commissioner Lindsey's questions about using antibodies from those that have recovered from the disease. Mr. Noble stated that, in the future, they will need to see who had been exposed; some have been exposed and don't know it. That, ultimately, would work once they have a full picture of who has been exposed. Right now, the antibody testing is in the beginning stages and has been on a trial basis without a lot of approval. Mr. Noble stated that they need to first see what the acuity is so they can get that information and, over the next 6-12 months, that will be a key component across the board. Commissioner Lindsey stated that we need to test, test, test and we can't wait six months; we need to start soon and Mr. Noble agreed. Commissioner Tucker added that the County will be spending an unknown dollar amount to move this testing and everything else involved forward. Commissioner Lindsey stated that the citizens need confidence and moving forward with the testing will help give the workers and care home facilities that confidence.

Commissioner Tucker asked Ralph Wyatt, Linn County Administrative Officer, if he had anything to add and he stated that, at this time, the County would figure it out as they go and Mr. Noble would come back before the Board as he has more information.

5. Business from the Public (3 minute limit per speaker): There was no one present from the public wishing to use this forum.

6. Adjournment. There being no other business to come before the Board; the Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 9:56 a.m. by unanimous consent.

The next regular public meeting of the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2020.

[Redacted Signature], Recorder  
For Board of Commissioners  
Marsha Meyer

**LINN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

[Redacted Signature]  
Roger Nyquist, Chairman

[Redacted Signature]  
John K. Lindsey, Commissioner

[Redacted Signature]  
William C. Tucker, Commissioner

Date 4-21-2020