

## YUMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

November 25, 2020

### Special Meeting Minutes<sup>1</sup>

On November 25, 2020 at 9:00 a.m., the Yuma County Board of Commissioners met for a special meeting as members of the local Yuma County COVID Task Force. Chairman Dean Winfield, Commissioner Robin Wiley, Commissioner Trent Bushner, and Administrator Andrea Calhoon were present throughout the meeting with meeting members joining via teleconference. Also in attendance was Northeast Colorado Health Department Director Trish McClain and various municipal and hospital officials. The administrators of the four Yuma County school districts and Yuma County Jail Sergeant Joe Wells joined the meeting as guests.

*COVID Task Force* – McClain provided a report on a call received from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regarding the state's intention to move Yuma County to COVID Dial Level Orange effective Friday, November 27 based on metrics seen over the last 30 days in Yuma County. McClain provided updates on potential paths if continued growth in local case counts and metrics is seen. McClain reviewed for the group the differences in restrictions between levels Yellow to Orange and Orange to Red, respectively. Also discussed were various options for implementation of local public health orders that could be issued in an effort to implement tailored restrictions applicable to the local data trends. The group reviewed the most common sources of community spread for Yuma County and discussed the limited spread currently seen through local restaurants. McClain and the group discussed the state's requirements for local enforcement and links to financial relief as compared to the availability of local resources that could be used for enforcement.

Commissioner Wiley requested input on the impact to local hospitals and local schools with changing restrictions from Yellow to Orange and Orange to Red, respectively. McClain reviewed the importance of in-person learning for students and discussed NCHD's intent to continue supporting each individual school district's interpretation of appropriate guidelines for their organization and reiterated that NCHD holds no intention to issue a directive to any school to close. Jennifer Kramer and Beth Saxton of Wray Community District Hospital and Yuma District Hospital, respectively, discussed the potential implications to elective procedures and the recent requirement for hospitals to submit surge capacity plans including staff augmentation and surgical decision-making matrices. School representatives expressed their intent to continue in-person learning as consistently as is safely possible and discussed a few of the creative measures and personal sacrifices made by educational staff to facilitate in-person learning during times of limited staffing. The group inquired of McClain as to impacts on school sports both in the sense of competition and spectators within the confines of the various dial levels. The group weighed the pros and cons of issuing a local public health order outside of the state's dial metrics if Yuma County were to move from level Orange to level Red.

The group discussed the challenges with the Orange change implementation timeline with respect to the Thanksgiving holiday and the closure of local government offices on the implementation date. The group requested that McClain request a delay in implementation from November 27 to November 30 to allow local governments the opportunity to be open to assist impacted local businesses in understanding the changes in metrics. McClain will make that request on behalf of the Task Force and will send out information on the state's response when it is received.

The group discussed the increase in reinfections being noted within both communities and requested assistance from NCHD in messaging surrounding prevention and control of reinfection. The local hospitals provided updates on data trends seen within their facilities especially statistics related to hospitalizations. Commissioner Bushner inquired as to state-wide transfer of patients from facilities that are operating at capacity. Saxton provided an overview of the information being exchanged between hospitals in relation to transfer of patients between and amongst facilities across the state. Saxton and John Hart of Wray Community District Hospital provided updates on discussions surrounding potential political moves that may be considered regarding the transfer of patients across the state.

Representatives from the various communities discussed the impacts of the various levels on places of worship and how to provide messaging and guidance to places of worship within our communities as restrictions change for indoor gatherings and places of worship. The group discussed a recent lawsuit heard at the Colorado State Supreme Court

---

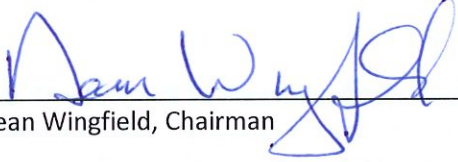
<sup>1</sup> Minutes prepared by Andrea Calhoon are a summary of discussions, not a verbatim account.



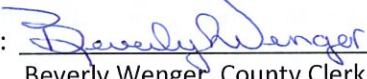


regarding the constitutionality of placing restrictions on places of worship and concern over providing express guidance on an issue that is being actively considered for legality and constitutionality.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m. The next COVID Task Force meeting will be set for the week of November 30, 2020 based on group availability.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean Wingfield, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anna Calhoon, Administrator

ATTEST:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Beverly Wenger, County Clerk

