

**MANATEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
BRADENTON AREA CONVENTION CENTER, LONGBOAT KEY ROOM
One Habon Boulevard
Palmetto, Florida
JANUARY 6, 2021**

Meeting video link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUlgjuGhS-qV966RU2Z7AtA>

Present were:

Vanessa Baugh, Chairman
George Kruse, First Vice-Chairman
Kevin Van Ostenbridge, Second Vice-Chairman
Reggie Bellamy, Third Vice-Chairman
Misty Servia
James A. Satcher III
Carol Whitmore

Also present were:

Cheri Coryea, County Administrator
William Clague, Chief Assistant County Attorney
Vicki Tessmer, Board Records Supervisor, Clerk of the Circuit Court



Chairman Baugh called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

The invocation was delivered by Commissioner Satcher followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

AGENDA

BC20210106DOC001

1. CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE AND STRATEGIES



Cheri Coryea, County Administrator, referenced the Governor's Executive Orders 20-315 and 20-316. She introduced the idea of the vaccine stand-by pool, which will allow seniors 65 and over to register in a stand-by pool for vaccines. There have been questions with the website and there are plans for moving forward. Once the process is approved today, they can roll out the stand-by pool and there will be two methods to sign up, either online or by calling the 3-1-1 call center. There is no deadline to register, registration is open ended. They want to insure residents that credit card information, social security information, or bank account information are not needed. When the vaccination process expands to other services, and if they receive a vaccine, they should remove themselves from the pool. Once vaccines are received, there will be a selection process similar to a lottery.



Chairman Baugh, requested that questions be presented after each speaker.





Jacob Saur, Public Safety Director, used slide presentation to provide a brief COVID-19 update. The current positivity rate is 9.2 percent within the last seven days. There has been an uptick in hospitalized cases. He continued the slides to review the vaccination process, vaccines distributed by date, actions by the Governor's office, additional drive thru sites with Publix servicing rural communities, challenges with the Eventbrite website, vaccine availability. He continued the slides to review the registration process, testing sites, and the process for the second dose. There will be ongoing planning for additional vaccination sites.




Discussion ensued once the supply chain gets larger there will be more opportunities for distributing the vaccine, EMS staff is working overtime to distribute the vaccine, can the vaccine sites be taken to areas where there is a large senior population, there will be a way to


ensure residents are still in the system, family members allowed to sign up together, if they cannot make it to the assigned appointment, they will be put back in the pool, it takes approximately 40 employees to work the vaccine site, the vaccination supply is the biggest problem, there is no current plan to half dose or only one does, the second does is a faster process, the immediate goal is 2000 vaccines per day, if the vaccine is made available, concern with non-residents receiving the vaccine.

 Mr. Saur explained a random selection was chosen because some people do not have access to computers and this will help to avoid another mad rush on the website. There will be 34 people available to take 3-1-1 calls. There are no plans to the use the Fair grounds for a vaccine site.


 William Clague, Chief Assistant, the vaccinations are distributed through the State Department of Health. The Manatee County Health Department is created by contract, between the State Department of Health and the Counties, and they are governed by Florida Statute. Section 154.04 states that the employees of the Health Department are State employees. They are not under the employ of the County Administrator or the Board. The State makes the decision as to how the vaccines are distributed by the State. The State made the decision to allow non-residents to receive the vaccine.
(Audio down for 15 minutes)


 Discussion ensued that Spanish and Creole interrupters are available through 3-1-1, and there is a translate button on the website, approximately 3000 vaccines are available to each county through the state, encourage everyone to sign up on the website, as soon as the vaccines are received they will be distributed, hours for 3-1-1 are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday to assist those who cannot get on the website, possibly use the school buses that are providing hotspots for WIFI, and provide laptops for residents to use, have a booth at the fair for people to use, possibility of holding out 20 percent of the vaccines for first come first serve specific site, could a prescription from a doctor help to move those who are at high risk to the front of the line,


Dr. Jennifer Bencie, Manatee County Health Department, explained tiering of residents was not accepted by the State. The information regarding vaccines must be entered into the system within 24 hours of administration. The Health Department has been able to work efficiently due to CARES Act funding. The recovery rate is currently 88.8 percent. Mobile units will go out to area where it is difficult for people to get out once more vaccines are available. She responded that other health care providers will be able to distribute the vaccine once more vaccines are available. The booster dose will be distributed in a separate allocation from the State from the first dose.


 Paul Alexander, Information Technology Services (IT) Director explained IT works well with Public Safety. A new process is being implemented which should take care of the constraints on the website. The County website is hosted offsite with cloud based service. Internally the County hosts a firewall for everything that goes in and out of the system to monitor cyber threats. With the high demand the Firewall was constrained. The hardware has excess capacity to handle extreme circumstances. On a weekly average there are 100,000 webpages per week, but on January 5, there were 371,000 web pages on the system. IT leveraged more cloud services and shifted 50 percent of the web traffic to a different site. IT will open a different website with a form that requires basic information. Upon registration, either via the website or 3-1-1, citizens will get an immediate confirmation that they have been put into the pool. When the vaccine is received, IT will perform a random selection, and

Public Safety will reach out to citizens regarding appointment times and dates. Since the registration will be on a different website, there is no rush to register. The registration should eliminate multiple calls, and reduce traffic on the website. If changes are needed they will work on those changes. By using cloud services, the website can go to any level. IT did not anticipate exceeding the levels on the website seen during Hurricane Irma.


 Discussion ensued regarding being prepared for spikes in usage on the website, and staff was working to improve access on the website


 Ms. Coryea explained neither the County nor the Department of Health were notified in advance of the arrival of the vaccines. The form that is going to be used for registration, can be changed, in anticipation of any new orders from the Governor.


 Mr. Alexander, Information Technology Director, responded to question and assured the Board that IT anticipated issues with the website and staff reacted appropriately. They contacted Cloud Share, and traffic is being redirected to the Cloud, and moved around the firewall. Internal business systems have been moved to other servers, and IT is prepared to work content management. The system will not use Eventbrite. It is important to be careful and not rush with changes to the system, so other internal business systems continue to work.


 Discussion ensued regarding a pattern in spikes in positive cases,

Dr. Bencie stated spikes in numbers were expected after the holidays as there were more opportunities for people to mingle.


 Mr. Alexander confirmed the registration website will open at 10:00 p.m., on January 7. The constraint was fixed, and he is confident the issues from January 5 will not occur again, but he cannot confirm what it will look like from a residents PC, due to their internet provider and their firewall. There could be a constraint on the call center, since there are a limited number of telephone lines. There is no need for a mad rush and the site will be open ended.


 Mr. Saur explained it is their goal to get the vaccines distributed as soon as they are received.


 Mr. Alexander clarified an email confirmation will be sent if an email is provided, but if there is no email, a verbal confirmation number will be provided.


 Discussion ensued regarding multiple people trying to sign up one person on the website, residents from other counties were trying to get on our website and calling 3-1-1, important to support leadership to ensure the vaccines are distributed as quickly as possible, and ensure that what went wrong does not happen again.

RECESS/RECONVENE: - 4:03 p.m. - 4:13 p.m. All Commissioners present.


 Cathy Slusser requested people in high risk groups be given priority if possible, or give people with specific conditions an extra draw. She encourage the County to promote ways to reduce the risk of contracting the virus.


 Andra Griffin wants to know how many people are tested and how many of those tests are positive. She also commented on masks not working, if vaccines can be purchased, and the constitutional rights of people getting the vaccine and the effects it may have on their bodies.


 Connie Giff tried to get an appointment, and requested her mobile home park be used to distribute the vaccine

 Glen Gibellina stated Manatee County residents should get the vaccine before non-residents.

There being no further public comment, Chairman Baugh closed public comment.


 Ms. Coryea read the recommended motion to authorize the County Administrators office to implement the vaccine stand-by-pool and for the process effective January 7 at 10:00 p.m. and to remain open until further notice. The motion as read was made by Commissioner Servia, seconded by Commissioner Satcher, and carried 7-0.

 Dr. Bencie explained citizens are provided an information sheet on Moderna, and the vaccines are synthetic. Surgical masks are used in health care situations daily, and there are other types of masks that also diminish transmission of the virus.


 Discussion ensued that this special meeting was called because of the large agenda set for the Land Use meeting on January 7. BC20210106DOC002

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Bellamy


-  Encouraged the Board to have call for peace and to stand united, asking for protesters and all individuals to make the right decisions


Chairman Baugh

-  Wants to see things being done with the Board, with no arguing, and for the Board to work together and stand together to follow through with items. Doing the job for the people is what is important and making their quality of life better.

(Commissioner Comments continued later in the meeting)

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS


 Commissioner Bellamy requested to stay on the Public Safety Coordinating Council to continue with the progress that was started last year. He also requested to be on Metropolitan Planning Organization as the District 2 Commissioner since all the bridge options go through that district.

 William Clague, Chief Assistant County Attorney, read the rules regarding appointments to committees meetings.

 Commissioner Whitmore supported Commissioner Bellamy's request to remain on the Public Safety Coordinating Council.

Commissioner Kruse is willing to remove himself from the committee.

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitmore and seconded by Commissioner Bellamy to override the appointment of Commissioner Satcher to the PSCC and put Commissioner Bellamy as the representative, and Commissioner Satcher as the alternate with Commission Kruse willing to step down.

 Discussion ensued to hold off to have a discussion, Commissioners Bellamy and Satcher could work together, and come back tomorrow and have a discussion.

Commissioner Whitmore withdrew her motion, and Commissioner Bellamy agreed.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS (Continued from earlier in the meeting)

Commissioner Van Ostenbridge

-  Encouraged the Citizens of Manatee County to remain peaceful in light of events in Washington DC

Chairman Baugh

- Thanked Dr. Bencie for being in attendance.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Baugh adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Minutes Approved: January 26, 2021