

Emergency Menard County Board of Health Meeting – 4/15/20

Attendance:

Dara Worthington
Allen Anderson
Dawn Kelton
JD Stewart
Mike Berg
Bob Lott

Board of Health:

Dave Bagot
Brienne Satorious
Dr. Hartman
Jeff Fore

Health Department

Director Gail O'Neill
Assistant Director Bill Dart

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. with a quorum of members BOH members present.
- II. The members noted that JD Stewart, Dr. Hartman and Bob Lott needed to be recorded on the minutes as in attendance on 4/8; with that revision to the minutes, motion/second to approve minutes was made. Minutes with revision noted were approved.
- III. Latest developments.

Discussion commenced about the latest testing results and the addition of other tests from facilities which had made the total number tested increase somewhat more than usual. The report now includes the number recovered in the totals, which may bring some hopefulness but also could result in apathy. Recovered in this context means that the Health Department team doesn't have to contact those individuals any longer.

The Menard media contacts need to be added to the distribution that includes the Menard county COVID-19 numbers. The HD will make sure that happens.

Director O'Neill shared that, Sangamon, the HD has had to issue a few cease and desist orders to businesses staying open in defiance of EO. Initially, a request is made for compliance from law enforcement; if that doesn't work then a cease and desist letter is issued. This generated some conversation about some businesses

getting restless.

Discussion then turned to issues. Director O'Neill noted there are some concerns that we're getting false negatives reported as since we're only testing sick people, the number of positive results seems quite low. There is still no general population testing as criteria for testing must be met. Awaiting anti-body testing to begin but there is no timetable when that will commence on a large scale.

There is a group from SIU that is working with blood centers to see if plasma donations from persons that have recovered from the disease can be obtained; these donations could help someone with COVID.

Alternative housing plans were discussed. The Menard EMA has plans to use a wing of the county nursing home if necessary as a resource to quarantine individuals if needed.

Brief discussion was had on the hope and desire for testing strategies for the nation to foster a return to normalcy especially in light of the clarifications that someone infected is spreading the virus well before that person feels ill.

The last topic concerned the meatpacking facility in Beardstown, JBS Pork. Word is circulating that things are not well there regarding efforts to keep employees healthy and sick ones home. There are rumors that employees are encouraged to work sick even offered bonuses if employees don't miss a day of work in this period. According to Cass County Health Department, employees are working close on the line without masks. Memorial Health Systems has been intervening to mitigate issues.

- IV. The concept of a public service announcement regarding telehealth was revisited; the idea is a PSA to remind people not to forgo medical care until they become acutely sick; this PSA would urge people to maintain their health and not end up going to the ER. The HD will discuss this with its medical consultants.
- V. No new business was brought up but the group will continue to monitor for developing issues.
- VI. The group decided that Chair Bagot, Director O'Neill and County Coordinator Worthington would discuss when to meet again.
- VII. There was no public comment.
- VIII. The meeting adjourned at about 6:16 p.m.