

**CITY OF FORT SCOTT  
SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING**

**Minutes of June 24, 2020**

**Special Meeting #6**

A special meeting of the Fort Scott City Commission was held June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. in the City Commission Meeting Room, 123 S. Main Street, Fort Scott, Kansas.

**ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Kevin Allen, Pete Allen, Randy Nichols, Lindsey Watts were present with Mayor JoLynne Mitchell presiding.

**AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:** None

**CONSIDERATION:**

Discussion of Aquatic Center and Buck Run Community Center and the rise in COVID-19 cases.

Dave Bruner, Fire Chief, informed the Commission that Becky Johnson, Public Health Officer, was on a conference call and was going to attend this meeting and has been delayed. She has some recommendations that she posted recently about Common Ground Coffee Shop and if you visited there during a certain period of time, she recommended that you quarantine. That was a recommendation and she was going to put some strongholds on some things to get control of their contact tracing. As these cases rise, if there is an increase in cases, each case has contacts that they need to trace and find out where they have been. For two people to do this in Bourbon County is quite a chore. Dave made the recommendation to temporarily close the pool for seven (7) days and let Public Health catch up and we can see where we're at and reevaluate this after that time period. The other issue is Buck Run and their activities.

Tom Robertson, Buck Run Community Center Director, said that he was concerned about keeping our citizens safe. He said that they just started games this week. He does not want to close down ball leagues and they've had two big nights. He thinks with the pool closing for a week, they will see an influx of kids at Buck Run as they have nothing else to do in the afternoons. He is open to whatever the Commission desires. They will continue to keep things as clean as they can and move forward.

Kevin Allen asked if the summer leagues can practice safe distancing in the dugouts.

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Tom said that they are taking precautions and have towels and extra sanitation bottles in the dugouts. He has extra staff that are wiping down railings and doorknobs and countertops at each facility. Extra sanitation is available to all the coaches in the dugouts. He would hate to cancel because they just got started. To postpone it would throw the schedule off. The season is for six weeks. This would move it to the first week of August with school starting the second week of August. He believes it will start August 13<sup>th</sup>. Open houses are usually the week before.

JoLynne asked if it would make any difference if he would limit his spectators?

Tom said that you could ask for one parent show up instead of two. He said that he could propose that to the parents and asked them to social distance as much as possible.

JoLynne said she was at a game the other night and thought everybody did a good job.

Kevin asked if Tom had a problem with these recommendations?

Tom said he didn't have a problem.

Dave Bruner said he just got off the phone with Alice. They are at the Courthouse now and drafting an order to be put out. He said that he mentioned seven (7) days. It sounds like they are going to do a fourteen (14) day quarantine period and make quarantines strongly suggested. They are recommending the fourteen (14) day quarantine period.

Randy said that Chasity Ware and her staff at the pool have done a remarkably good job with their cleaning and distancing. This has nothing to do with that. He asked Dave when the 14 day period was from. Was this from the exposure at Common Ground and 14 days from that?

Dave said that he couldn't answer that. He doesn't know what date they will put on the order. He said that he can confirm that there are two new cases as of this morning. There was one yesterday and one last night. He does not know how many negative cases versus positive cases there are.

Randy said that even at the end of the recommended quarantine period, what is our criteria for reopening. Are we going to test all our employees? What are we going to do? In the younger population there are a number of asymptomatic people that are still putting others at risk. That is his background and paranoia. We don't need to keep going through this. We need recommendations on closing but also on reopening.

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Dave said that he can work on that, get with Becky Johnson, and get back to him.

Kevin asked if it would ever end. We are speculating 7 days and 14 days, and he's had a bunch of phone calls since this meeting was scheduled this morning. He has not had one person say we need to shut the pool down. They have all been to keep that pool open. That is a lot of their hearts speaking because these kids won't have nothing to do. He asked if we were worried about social distancing at the golf course.

Dave said he does not know the answer to that. He doesn't know what her order is going to say.

Kevin said that there has been loss of revenue, safety, social distancing, and asked if the golf course would be addressed today.

Susan Bancroft said that the only two issues that can be talked about is the pool and Buck Run.

Lindsey asked if there was a call at 9:00 a.m. from Public Health? She had a question she wanted to get answered, but wasn't able to call in. She asked how many beds we are looking at and is that how we are looking at it. Are we looking at active cases, total cases, hospitalized cases? What data are we looking at to shut down City entities as well as going further. She feels like we need to know that before looking at recommendations. If you look at Pittsburg's number, they were close to 200 and there was only eight (8) people that had been admitted to the hospital, and four (4) had been discharged.

Dave said that he didn't know what the matrix is that Public Health uses. Via Christi said today that they are doing well.

Lindsay said that if that is our metric to flatten the curve, then we have done that. We were going off that. What is our measure to shut things down? We can't say that the curve is flattened now. A couple of her friends say if we shut things down, what will we do in December, or next year when we have another outbreak. If the bed count is 105 and she understands we don't want our hospitals overrun.

Dave said that you have to also understand if the bed count is 105, we are still sharing with another county.

JoLynne asked if we have an option or if they have made our decision.

Dave said that they could be putting an order out shortly.

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Randy said that he made a motion to follow the recommendation of Dave Bruner or the order of the Public Health Officer with the addition that they give us criteria to reopen.

Kevin said that we should table this until we hear from them.

Lindsay asked Kevin if he disagreed with the Health Department? Are we wanting to go opposite of them? Is that something this board is wanting to do? She said that was a harsh reaction.

Randy said that he wanted to get a motion on the table. If you delay two or three days and some of these cases are positive, they will grow. If you sit on it and there is a community spread, it will get much, much larger later on. He thinks we need to make a decision now and move forward with it. That's his opinion and his motion.

Kevin asked if we should wait until the Courthouse meeting is over and see what happens.

Dave said that the reason this meeting was called now is we have a 1:00 p.m. opening at the pool. Do we open? Once we get the order, do we just follow that order?

JoLynne asked if they would send it right over to him?

Dave said that it could be on the Courthouse facebook page.

Pete said that his comment is that the pool has taken many precautions. All those precautions and rules and regulations with everything that he's seen, he thinks the pool environment is safer than walking downtown. Chasity has done a great job. He can't see any advantage to shutting the pool down. What are those kids going to do if they can't play at the pool in safe conditions? The chlorine kills the virus. All the precautions they are taking shows that we have a safe situation at the pool.

Randy asked Chasity if she had two staff members on quarantine.

Chasity said yes she does. They are quarantined with association by contact from the original two cases.

Kevin asked if the motion was to act on the recommendation that comes from the Health Department? If so, he will second Randy's motion. But we aren't taking any action until then?

Lindsay said that with this motion we are giving Staff the directive to make action based on what they do.

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Kevin said that what he was seconding was if they say to enforce the shutdown, then we shut down.

Dave said since Monday when the Governor changed the phases, one of the things the Health Department asked the Aquatic Center staff to do was to take the names and contact numbers of everyone that came to the pool. They also lowered their number of individuals allowed in the pool. He said that Chasity and all her staff have done a great job in sanitizing and keeping the pool clean.

Lindsay said that since the motion has been moved and seconded, she said because of all the steps that have been taken, we need a different method and a real metric in place to shut these places down.

City Clerk read the motion to the Commission, "The motion is to follow the order of the Public Health Officer and to get criteria to reopen".

Susan asked for clarification in case this order from the Public Health Officer is vague. In that event, do you want to come back together as a public body and have another meeting about it?

Kevin said absolutely. He said if the Public Health Officer says you must shut down and there is no option, then we go with that. If they say you have an option, and it is a recommendation, he wanted to reiterate that if it is mandatory we follow it, but if just a recommendation, then we meet again as a body.

Randy said that he would drop the motion and follow Dave Bruner's recommendation that we close for 7 to 14 days. He said he would leave his original motion on the table.

Kevin said he withdrew his second to Randy's motion.

Lindsay asked if Randy was willing to amend his motion that if it is mandated by the Public Health Officer, then we would give Staff the directive to follow.

Randy said that he feels more strongly about closing the pool than the rest of the board does.

JoLynne asked if we were going off of the cases or the need for the Public Health Department to catch up.

Dave said that you could say both but most of all the contact tracing. Each case has numerous people and we have two people on quarantine. They are

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employees of the pool. They are not infected but affected. This is so they can get a grasp on everyone and an account and make sure somebody's not where they don't need to be.

Randy left his original motion. Dave's recommendation is at a minimum of a seven (7) day closure.

Dave said he thinks the order will state 14 days.

Tom Robertson said his concern is that they have ball games tonight and the pool opens at 1 p.m. today. They need some kind of direction. He will have to contact coaches, umpires, scorekeepers, and supervisors. Based on what your motion is will we have games tonight?

Randy said that for clarity, he will amend his own motion to say that we follow the initial recommendation which is to shut down for the initial seven (7) days and then follow the recommendations of the Health Department when they come out.

Chasity said that she is willing to take any recommendation that they choose, and she is willing to shut down for seven days. What she wants them to understand is that she has kids waiting for jobs. She knows there is a step they can take, and they are able to draw unemployment for up to two weeks. She does not know how that works.

Deb Needleman said that all employees of the City are eligible for the Paycheck Protection Plan. They would be eligible to be paid for any shifts they were scheduled to work up to a maximum of 80 hours. That would occur first.

Susan said that they will be paid through the City while they are off.

Kevin said that his concern isn't with the employees having paychecks, but the kids having something to do. He reiterated that we need to hear from the County first and see their recommendation. We should continue on as normal. We could reconvene then after we hear from then.

Chasity said that we need a decision. She asked Kevin if he was wanting the pool to stay open?

Kevin said yes.

Pete said he agreed with that. He said he didn't know where the motion or the advice to close for seven days came from. Is that a local decision?

Kevin said that was Dave Bruner's recommendation.

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Pete asked what that was based upon.

Dave said that he doesn't know what Becky Johnson's plans are. Since she wasn't here, he made the recommendation to close down for 7 days. Then he got a phone call that said they were going to do an order for 14 days.

Pete asked when that order will be out.

Dave said that they were working on it now.

Pete asked that you're asking us to make a decision not based on facts or reality.

Dave said it is based on the cases that have occurred in the City and the contact tracing is what he based the seven days on.

Randy said he wanted to give them a motion to move forward.

Lindsay asked to clarify the motion again.

City Clerk read the motion is: Randy Nichols moved to follow the initial recommendation from Dave Bruner to shut down the pool and Buck Run for seven (7) days and then follow the recommendation of the Public Health Officer. Lindsay Watts seconded this motion. R. Nichols, L. Watts and J. Mitchell voted aye. K. Allen and P. Allen voted no. Motion carried 3-2.

**APPROVED TO SHUT DOWN THE POOL AND BUCK RUN FOR SEVEN (7) DAYS AND THEN FOLLOW THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER.**

Lindsay Watts moved to adjourn the special meeting at 11:37 a.m. Randy Nichols seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNED SPECIAL MEETING AT 11:37 A.M.**

The next regularly scheduled meeting is to be held on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

**RECORDED BY:**

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**DIANE K. CLAY  
CITY CLERK**