

YUMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

April 29, 2021

Special Meeting Minutes¹

On April 29, 2021 at 2:30 p.m., the Yuma County Board of Commissioners met for a special meeting as members of the local Yuma County COVID Task Force. Commissioner Robin Wiley, Commissioner Scott Weaver, 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 as well as various municipal, hospital, and school district officials.

COVID Task Force – Northeast Colorado Health Department Director Trish McClain provided updates on county-wide statistics including school-age children and staff, county case counts, positivity rates, hospitalizations, and testing rates. Yuma County maintains no current hospitalizations and a current positivity rate of 3.9% with a decrease in overall testing. The group requested updates from McClain on discussions regarding masking requirements for students in school settings. McClain reported her anticipated continuation of mask guidance through the rest of this school year and potential guidance for next school year to be issued some time in July. The group discussed the importance of timely information to allow adequate planning and the need for earlier release of information from the State and inquired of McClain as to what the Task Force could do to encourage information to be released in a more timely fashion. McClain also confirmed the re-authorization of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine with an additional warning issued.

Beth Saxton of Yuma District Hospital provided updates for their facility including no hospitalizations since March 20 as well as positivity trends and vaccine administration trends. Saxton reported a decrease of vaccine demand similar to what is being reported state-wide. Saxton reported that county-wide vaccination percentages remain at about 25% of total population.

John Hart of Wray Community District Hospital provided updates for the Wray hospital facility including hospitalization, testing, and vaccination rates. Hart also reports a drastic decrease in demand for vaccines and reviewed challenges in communication and availability of information for planning into the summer and fall. Hart and Saxton expressed agreement that vaccination communication and encouragement remain important and requested input from McClain on future planning for vaccination administration and the impacts of local public health restrictions as related to vaccination rates.

The administrators of the school districts provided updates for their respective districts. Levi Kramer of Wray School District expressed concern over potential future vaccine requirements and the potential impacts on rural school districts and expressed his desire to participate in conversations at the state level to plan and discuss those decisions before they are issued. Myles Johnson of Idalia School District reported no significant updates for his district. Kramer reported on efforts by school district administrators to communicate with CHSSA regarding representation of small school districts and accountability for representatives.


Commissioner Wiley suggested the creation of a Task Force sub-committee to address planning for fall and the return to next year’s school and community functions. Primary functions of the sub-committee would be to design a public education campaign regarding various requirements and the potential impacts on community organizations and events. The group discussed additional possible functions of the sub-committee and challenges faced in relationships with various State of Colorado and state-wide agencies and organizations.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. The next COVID Task Force meeting will be May 7, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.


Trent Bushner, Chairman




Andrea Calhoon, Administrator

ATTEST: 
Beverly Wenger, County Clerk

¹ Minutes prepared by Andrea Calhoon are a summary of discussion for verbatim account.