

BOH04012020 Emergency Meeting

The Hancock County Board of Health conducted an emergency meeting by conference call on April 1, 2020 at 4:00PM to discuss the issues in the county associated with liquor sales and influx of patrons from out of state PA residence. The other topic was to cancel the April ,2020 meeting.

Administrator Jackie Huff welcomed all to the call and ask all to mute phones until speaking. She then turned it over to Chair John Plesa.

Roll call was taken, John Plesa, Anthony Palavis, Nicole Glass, Sandy Haspel and Sam DeCapio were board members present. Dr Rhody the Hancock County Health officer was present on the call. Commissioner Joe Barnabei attended. Staff members on the call were Jackie Huff, Chelsea Everly, Michelle Berneburg, Becky Weekley and Carolyne Baker. Mike Bolen, Administrator, from Brooke County attended.

The Chair made motion to alter the order of meeting agenda as posted. No objections to the motion, motion carried. The cancellation of the meeting for April was moved and approved by all members.

The chair then explained the purpose of the meeting. The health department, board members and county officials had been receiving numerous calls regarding long lines in an about the liquor stores. This meeting was called to address this subject and this subject only. The time to respond will be limited 10 minutes total and 2 minutes per speaker. The press will present any questions at the end.

Chair asked if the liquor control board was present on call or any representative? No response.

The first person to address the board was Bridget Lambert from the retailer association. Her position was to inform that the retailers are trying to address the surge to the stores. They are asking all retail stores to follow the current governors order for limiting amount in store to 10 persons for social distancing.

Donna Ferguson, question is regarding the Shop n Save and the large amounts of people there and the grocery store has at risk elderly needing to shop and get food. These crowds are putting us and the compromised in harm's way. She understood the need to continue liquor sales for persons but the fact that multiple cases are going out at a time.

John Plesa then informed the group that ABCA had been working with these establishments to get the crowds and groups distanced. Methods are being established by facilities to have some control, but the masses are making it near impossible. Anthony Palavis asked, if anyone from Shop n Save or the liquor stores were on the line? No answer. Then Bridget from retail association said she would try to get someone to call in. Chair Plesa asked Jackie if he had represented the information correctly. Jackie stated, that Carolyne had been to the establishments several times and methods were in place.

Donna Ferguson ask if there is anything to be done to limit the purchases of liquor? Chair Plesa stated that it could be asked from a representative of those establishments. He further stated that the topic was outside the jurisdiction of this board. The board is bound by the statute of state and is limited to a certain extent. Bridget Lambert asked to address the question. The first thought is that if they are purchasing large quantities then that would be somewhat limiting the people coming to the stores.

Donna Ferguson then stated, as an educator she was concerned that they would be trying to sell to minors. Mr. Plesa advised her to contact the ABCA with those concerns.

Chair Plesa stated that speculation on what the Health Board was doing with this meeting was flowing. It was not the intention to shut anyone down. Not in power to restrict sales to WV residents only. The concern is for the safety of the Hancock County residents with the influx of PA residents and the high rate of disease spread in those PA areas. The Pandemic to be controlled needs to have systems in place and people practicing those systems.

Manager supervisor at the Weirton Shop n Save then got on the call. Mr. Plesa ask that he explain the processes they have put into place to address the long lines of out of state residents. He explained that the store has marked space with tape on ground. The have store employees tracking the amount in the store at one time. The line outside was limited to 9 then the rest were sent to their cars to wait. 12-inch placard to inform of social distancing. Mr. Plesa then thank them for the time on this issue. The efforts they were doing to help protect the customers.

Mr. Plesa then discussed the order to be voted on at this meeting. The chair then moves to table the order based on the efforts of the of the establishments. Sam DeCapio seconded the motion. All members of the board voted in the affirmative to table the order for this time or until it needs to be re addressed. The also asked that the public continue to monitor and email the board with photos and comments. The emails are provided on the Hancock County Health Department website.

Mrs. Lambert thanked the board for hearing their comments and for giving time to act on the changes. Stressing that they want to do best practices.

Commissioner Barnabei suggested that the Store owners provide a written plan on the process they are doing to address the social distancing measures. Chair Plesa moved to ask that that the establishment provide a plan on how they are addressing the social distancing in the stores and provide to the health department. He thanked them for the efforts they have already done. All members voted in the affirmative. Chair thanked Commissioner Barnabei for the suggestion.

Jackie Huff suggested that the health department could aid in the plan development with templates if anyone needed. Jackie reminded the group that the point for this action is to protect the Hancock County residence from acquiring the disease through social distancing, hand washing, not touching their face and most important the stay at home order.

Chair reminded all the next meeting date on June 9, 2020 at 4:00 PM providing that the state will permit meetings or that no other discussion is needed before then. Chair moved to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted for Dr Rhody, by Jackie Huff

