

THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA
Assembly Committee Of The Whole Work Session Minutes
MINUTES

Monday, March 9, 2020

I. ROLL CALL

Deputy Mayor Maria Gladziszewski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Assembly Chambers.

Assemblymembers Present: Maria Gladziszewski, Loren Jones, Rob Edwardson, Wade Bryson, Carole Triem, Alicia Hughes-Skandijs, Greg Smith, Michelle Bonnet Hale, and Mayor Beth Weldon.

Assemblymembers Absent: None.

Guest presenters: Sarah Hargrave, Public Health Nurse from DHSS; Adam Crum, Commissioner DHSS, Chuck Bill, BRH; Bridget Weiss, JSD; Ralph Samuels, Holland America Princess; Kirby Day, Holland America/Princess Cruise Lines; Mike Tibbles, Cruise Lines International Agencies

Staff present: City Manager Rorie Watt, Deputy City Manager/Incident Commander Mila Cosgrove, City Attorney Robert Palmer, Municipal Clerk Beth McEwen, Emergency Program Manager Tom Mattice, Library Director Robert Barr, Docks & Harbors staff Matt Creswell and Scott Hinton

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

III. AGENDA TOPICS

Ms. Gladziszewski explained process behind the meeting, where to find reliable information on COVID-19. She explained that this issue is changing by the hour but provided the city website which will continue to be updated as this matter unfolds. She noted that the CBJ webpage <https://beta.juneau.org/covid-19> also has links to other websites such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and State of Alaska Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS) amongst others. Ms. Gladziszewski noted that we are broadcasting this meeting via Facebook live for the first time as well as broadcasting it out over the radio and she thanked all those who were in attendance as well as those watching on Facebook and listening on the radio. They scheduled this meeting a week ago and asked the public to provide questions/comments for the Assembly to explore at this meeting. She noted that they received more than 75 emails with questions and each email had many questions so they have hundreds of questions that the public has provided. She said that they were very helpful to the Assembly, staff, and Public Health in addressing this unprecedented situation. She noted that the Deputy City Manager spent an incredible amount of time over the weekend compiling the questions in a topic by topic format so they can be addressed during this meeting. Ms. Gladziszewski and Ms. Cosgrove noted that the Assembly Chambers was full and that there was overflow seating available upstairs in City Hall Conference Room where people can listen in via the radio broadcast. Due to fire codes, people not sitting in a chair in the Chambers were asked to attend in the overflow room.

Ms. Gladziszewski reiterated the official sources to find reliable information and encouraged everyone to follow the public health recommendations regarding washing hands, and not touching faces. She said that the elderly appear to be the most vulnerable so even if an individual is not worried about their own health, she encouraged them to take the necessary precautions to ensure it doesn't spread any further than themselves. She noted that there is a lot of fear and uncertainty surrounding this issue and she asked community members to treat one another with kindness and respect.

She explained the process for this meeting will be to hear from the panelists on four main subject areas:

- 1) Basic facts of the disease and the issues related to that;
- 2) What CBJ's emergency planners and local agencies are doing;
- 3) Discussion about the *Westerdam*; and
- 4) Discussion about the cruise season in general.

Mr. Watt explained that this is an unprecedented topic at the Borough Assembly. He said that staff and the Assembly are not experts and we don't have all the information, but neither do the experts worldwide. However, we are ready to do the best we can to address these issues. He thanked all the members from the community who sent in questions and their diligence and attention to this issue. He said they are all following this in real time and the information flows hour by hour and he acknowledged the stress that is felt in the community. That is real and tangible and we need to work hard together to manage the community stress and we all need to work hard to follow the guidance of the public health experts so that here in Juneau we make the best decisions in concert within the larger system of which we are a part.

A. Basic Facts of COVID 19 (DHSS Public Health Nurse Sarah Hargrave, DHSS Commissioner Adam Crum, and Bartlett Regional Hospital Administrator Chuck Bill)

Sarah Hargrave, DHSS Nurse covered many topics including the following with respect to testing locally:

- They are conducting point in time testing which is to test the right patients at the right point in time.
- Testing is available in Alaska in specific cases.
- Specimens can be collected in Juneau, the hospital is able to do that or at one of their clinics and then sent to one of the two state laboratories in either Anchorage or Fairbanks for analysis.
- The decision to collect and run a test is made based on CDC criteria and includes a conversation with State Epidemiology and a patient's doctor or health care provider.
- They are looking at what the clinical presentation of the patient is.
- Whether they had exposure to a confirmed case or recent travel to an area with sustained or wide transmission occurring and it is often a case by case decision.
- The Department of Health and Social Services is working to increase capacity for testing.
- Several private labs will be coming online to be able to increase that testing capacity.
- The test they have is a good test, very sensitive and specific to the virus.
- What they know is that if a sample is obtained correctly, and it is labeled and handled correctly, that test is likely to be a true indicator of infectiousness.

Questions about quarantine and isolation:

- In the event a confirmed case is found in Juneau, the Section of Epidemiology with the state and the local public nurses will work together to do some contact investigations of that case. They would work with health care providers, the hospital and others to work their way out.
- Regarding the *Westerdam* coming to town, it is not just this or other cruise ships that people will be coming to town on, there are many people who come in and out of Juneau every day.
- Local partners are working with state and federal partners to review plans and modify them based on the situation in light of the cruise ship season.
- DHSS is working closely with CLIA and other local partners.
- Similar to if they had found a COVID-19 case in Juneau, if there was something coming in on a ship, there would be conversations between CDC quarantine station, the Section of Epidemiology, Customs and Boarder Protection, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

In summary, Nurse Hargrave said that in addition to the CDC website, the State of Alaska has some great information to take a look at: www.coronavirus.alaska.gov. She said Juneau is a community that looks after one another, fear and stigma can be as dangerous as the virus. We have an opportunity to take action now and work cooperatively to keep each other safe and healthy. **She reminded people to “Cover you cough, wash your hands, get your flu shot, stay home if you have a fever and symptoms, and call ahead to your provider if you need to be seen.”**

Chuck Bill, CEO at Bartlett Regional Hospital (BRH) said they have a number of items they want to bring the community up to date on what is happening at the hospital.

- They need the community to be their partners in this situation and they need the help and support of the community in not overwhelming the community's ability to respond to these issues.
- That goes back to what was mentioned by DHSS and that is to get your flu shots, call providers and/or ER before you try to come in if you have a condition.
- He said the biggest concern currently is that people worry really well which can lead to tying up a lot of their resources.
- They recently had two cases at the hospital of suspected coronavirus. Both those cases tested negative but both have created issues for BRH. One quarantined two of their nurses for a day until they got the response from the lab that it was negative.
- BRH is prepared to stand up a special tent outside the emergency room to triage the viral concerns with patients that show up. They have that in their processes and have been working on these plans being practiced for years related to swine flu, SARS, MERS, and Ebola.
- He said they have not had that number to justify that so far.
- BRH is prepared to take care of this type of situation to a point.
- The other reality is if the whole world gets it and we have a lot of significantly ill patients, we will be challenged to take care of those patients.
- BRH has the ability to do seven (7) isolation rooms at the hospital. They have the ability to do two (2) ventilators at the hospital.
- He said the real need is to make sure not to overwhelm the system – call your provider first before coming to be seen. That allows them to do triage if they have concerns before you get to the point of being in a waiting room with many other people including three staff members being potentially exposed.
- He said there will be vaccines developed. They are in the midst of developing their testing capabilities which DHSS Commissioner Crum spoke to in more depth.
- When BRH staff is exposed to someone and they don't have a heads up and don't know that a patient is coming who may have the symptoms, that staff member(s) is exposed and has to go into quarantine. If the test doesn't come back positive, they lose one day while the test is happening. If it does come back positive, that puts them in quarantine for at least 14 days.
- Mr. Bill said they have made provisions to bring in additional staffing to come in for the summer.
- They increased their personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies. They have 6300 gloves on hand at the hospital, 10,000 masks and a couple of thousand gowns. They also have 1,000 disposable goggles on order. He said the whole world is looking for PPE so they are in competition with everyone else to get that equipment.
- BRH is being allocated based on what they have had in the past. Right now they have about two month's worth of gear for what they expect to happen. They will continue to receive their regular allocation but they expect that will get tighter over time so the more the public can help in avoiding having to use it, the better.
- Mr. Bill stressed the point that Sarah Hargrave made to say that the general public should not be wearing masks unless they have active symptoms. That will help BRH maintain their supplies. He said they used to have masks at each of the entrances to the hospital and those disappeared in about four hours.

- BRH will be changing their visitor rules. If someone has any symptoms that are similar to those of the virus, they will be asked not to visit.
- He said with respect to the skilled nursing facilities since that is where the many of the most vulnerable patients are and they need the community's help in not spreading the disease there.
- He said that both our skilled nursing facilities here in Juneau have gotten very strict about screening people coming into the facility. Do NOT go there if you have any symptoms. He suggested people contact their loved ones through alternative means such as phone calls, FaceTime, or other distance delivery methods.
- When Mr. Bill was asked at what number of people or level of care would "overload the system" he they have been working with disaster planning for years and there is a lot of response capabilities including a pop-up hospital if that is needed. There are plans for isolation if there is a huge number. They currently have two ventilators and five-up to seven reverse isolation rooms at the hospital. He said their biggest concern is with respect to making sure they have the staff needed to respond, especially if schools close and that requires staff to stay home with their families. They are trying to respond to that by bringing in extra nurses for this season. He said it is highly unlikely we will get there but they are prepared to deal with whatever happens.
- BRH will have the testing capabilities once they become available outside the Anchorage/Fairbanks labs. Mr. Bill said he was given an estimate by their lab manager that it will be 2+ months before those tests will become available at the local lab level. He said that in the meantime, the reference labs have increased their ability to do that as had the state's lab capacity.
- It was clarified that the testing samples can be taken here in Juneau and then sent up to the labs in Anchorage or Fairbanks for testing analysis.

DHSS Commissioner Adam Crum covered some of the previous topics as well as provided the following in more depth:

- Testing kits: "Why can't we test in Juneau right now?" He said it is a very prescriptive test that requires high-level analytics. Right now the tests are all being sent to two state labs in Anchorage and in Fairbanks.
- Last week they had 100 test kits. They now have 150 test kits if they run them individually.
- He said that they found a better way to be more efficient with their testing and that was to do them in batches so they can test for 21 cases at a time rather than just one at a time.
- He said they are working with CDC to continue to get more test kits.
- There are not a lot of hospitals with the capability for doing this, they are working with private labs to see if they can do this. It may take a couple of days for the private labs to run the tests vs. the DHSS turnaround of 1 day once it is in the state lab by doing them in batches. They are hoping that over time, the CDC will develop a quick test similar to influenza.

Following are some comments and a timeline from City Manager Watt regarding the Westerdam's arrival to Juneau as well as comments shared by the following panelists spoke regarding the Westerdam and cruise ships in general: Holland America (HA) Group Vice President Ralph Samuels, HA Group Government and Community Relations Kirby Day, and CLIA Government Affairs Mike Tibbles.

City Manager Watt provided the following timeline with respect to CBJ's knowledge of the Westerdam coming to Juneau:

- Mr. Watt said that similar to our citizens, he tries to follow what is happening in the news and was trying to follow what was happening with cruise ships and the coronavirus. He said he started to spot the Westerdam in the news and know that it is one of the ships that comes to Juneau. He said he was aware of what the national media was reporting on it.

- (Tues.) February 25, 2020 – Mr. Day contacted Mr. Watt to request a chance to talk. They spoke later that day and Mr. Day advised Mr. Watt that the company was looking at bringing the Westerdam to Juneau and that one of their senior Vice-Presidents was going to give him a call the next day.
- (Wed.) February 26, 2020 – Mr. Watt received a call from the vice-president and Mr. Watt said he understood their reasoning. He said that based on his reading of the national media, it appeared that the Westerdam had been cleared by the CDC. The passengers had all flown home on commercial airlines. Mr. Watt said he advised the vice-president that he thought that was something the city would want to communicate to its citizens and he asked that if the decision to bring the Westerdam was confirmed that Mr. Watt be advised as soon as possible so that communication could commence. He said he thinks the company was dealing with lots of issues around other ships.
- (Sun.) March 1, 2020 – Mr. Watt sent the Assembly an email saying what he understood to be happening and he also let senior staff know. To his knowledge at that point that it was still tentative. On the evening of Sunday, March 1, social media caught hold of the potential arrival of the Westerdam.
- (Mon.) March 2, 2020 – Ms. Adalyn Baxter from KTOO called up Mr. Watt asking what he knew and he told her everything he knew and gave her a copy of the communication that he had sent to the Assembly and senior staff and he then sent that to others who requested the same information.
- Mr. Watt said that his view of the Westerdam is solely in context to what the CDC says. If the CDC cleared the Westerdam, his advice is to follow the CDC guidance is.
- Mr. Watt said that is also in context to the concern to what he has about the number of enplanements that we have coming in and out of town. He said that risk is always relative and while we don't know the absolute numbers, there are approximately 700,000 enplanements a year with an average of 1,000 people per day coming here.

Mr. Samuels provided the following information in four categories:

1) History of the Westerdam

- January 28, 2020 – the Westerdam was supposed to be in Shanghai. At that time the CDC issued a Level 3 ruling for health. He said that when a ship has an itinerary change for any reason, they have to find alternative dock space, shore excursions, all the various aspects of running the cruise. The ship was then redeployed to Taipei. It was then scheduled to go to several stops in Japan.
- February 6, 2020 – the Prime Minister of Japan said they don't want that ship here because they said there was a suspected coronavirus case on board. Mr. Samuels said he doesn't know why the prime minister said that as they did not have a case on board. This was a cruise that had been turned away from a port because of the port's problems and there were no issues whatsoever on the Westerdam.
- Once the Japanese government turned them down, the Korean government and then Guam turned them away, then Bangkok, Thailand and they were finally allowed to dock in Cambodia.
- No one was in quarantine or in their cabins during that cruise, it was a normal cruise with every day being a "sea day." There was no problem on the ship and no suspected coronavirus.
- Once they got to Cambodia, they did tests to some people who had a cold or some type of medical issue that did not show symptoms of the coronavirus. They tested those people. They all came out negative. They unloaded 600 people at a hotel at Phnom Penh and some people made it out and flew home all on commercial airlines.
- February 19, 2020 - In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia they took all the Westerdam people and put them in a room for six hours and an 83 year-old woman and her 85 year-old husband felt ill. They tested her and they said that she came out positive and everything

stopped. The people in the hotel, the people still on the ship, the crew, everything stopped.

- Then then tested, not screened, every single person on the ship – every guest and every crew member. Those people left on charter flights, since you can't get 1500 seats out of Phnom Penh, and flew home. Nobody since they left the ship have shown any signs of the virus since they been home, not the crew and not the passengers.
- A couple of days after the woman who tested positive in Kuala Lumpur, tested negative and proceeded to test negative every time. There were 2257 people, they were all tested and there was one positive result for two days. He said that the CDC hasn't come out to actually say this was a false positive but if you look at other ships that have had problems, in his view, it had to be a false positive.

2) Crew Change

- The ship then, with all tested crew, went to Manilla, Philippines. They dropped off crew whose contracts had ended. None of the crew that disembarked had positive tests and they did not disembark anyone into a medical facility.
- The cruise ship industry that last 6-8 or 2 months in length. The contracts for some of the Filipino crew had ended and they disembarked. They did not allow anyone else to disembark the ship. They did not want to take any chances because everyone had been tested.
- The ship is now en-route to Hawaii. There was a story about a crew change being done in Hawaii but they had talks with Holland America earlier in the day and there will not be a crew change in Hawaii. He said that if anything happens differently, he will notify the City Manager as soon as he is made aware.
- He said that by the time the crew gets to Juneau, they will have all been tested and will have been on the ship for one month for the entire crew that is on there. The incubation period is 14 days.

3) Why Juneau

- Mr. Samuels said they looked at things that they need to do for marine operations and they can't get kicked off the dock. They have to have a couple of weeks at the same place.
- One idea was originally, could they take the ship and take a series of small three day cruises somewhere else.
- The decision was made that Alaska is such an important part of their business, they skipped all that, take three weeks off and park it someplace.
- Where could they park it without getting kicked off the dock? They are a minority partner in this dock and they can discharge grey water into the city system as this dock is already permitted for that.
- They are also a minority partner in a dock in Ketchikan but they cannot discharge grey water. They are also a minority partner in a dock in Skagway but they can't discharge grey water and there isn't an airport.
- Those were the main reasons they chose Juneau as the location.

4) Environmental Questions

- Mr. Samuels said that in last year's post-season meetings with CLIA, the City Manager commented that the percentages of the trash were too big and it was discovered that someone was dumping mattresses. He said that the ships are mini cities unto itself. The captain calls up a vendor, the vendor takes the trash and you pay the vendor and they take it to the dump. He said that no one from Carnival had any idea and he isn't even sure who did that. He said they can promise that will not be happening any more.
- As far as the trash on the Westerdam, they will discharge the trash in Honolulu and the ship is stopping in Victoria, BC on the way for fuel and they will discharge the trash

- there. Any trash they will have here will be minimal at best. Occasionally they may have to take a minimal amount of trash off.
- Re: plug in for shore power, they cannot use shore power for two reasons.
 - The plug is on the wrong side of the ship.
 - AEL&P has a contract with Princess and the RCA regulates that. They asked if they could buy the power from Princess and were told that was not legal either.
 - There will be no hazardous waste discharged and the grey water will go into a system that is already permitted into a city system. Mr. Day added that this is the same thing they do all summer long for all their ships, it is permitted with CBJ and is no different than what they do every year.
 - They will be burning MGO rather than using the scrubbers. He said they know that causes a lot of consternation and Carnival did that all of last season.
 - Mr. Samuels said he doesn't know how many crewmembers will be on board exactly but a full contingent would be 700. He said they have heard approximately 450-500 and he is waiting for a firm answer but that may differ depending on crew changes, if any in Hawaii.
 - Regarding the question related to level of compensation to CBJ, they would be paying for their water and wastewater use.
 - They discussed the potential for discharge of black water if that was needed. Mr. Watt said that with respect to worker safety at the treatment plants, those protocols needed for the virus are the protocols already in place. Mr. Day said they didn't anticipate the need to discharge black water but if they did, it would be in low amounts.
 - Assemblymembers had additional questions regarding testing and Mr. Samuels explained that testing is done under CDC and DHSS protocols and not a function of the cruise industry. DHSS Commissioner Crum explained the protocols and noted that since the crew has been on the ship with no cases for the past month, it would not likely rise to the level of requiring additional tests. Additional discussion took place regarding the Alaska Maritime plan, CDC, USCG and other network protocols.

Following Mr. Samuels presentation, the discussion turned to the cruise season in general. HA Group representative Kirby Day and CLIA representative Mike Tibbles provided the following precautions they are taking:

- Mr. Tibbles said a number of questions dealt with port screening and he would defer to local authorities on that. On January 30 when the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a public emergency, cruise lines and the executive CEOs got together immediately and talked about what kind of pre-screening measures they could put in place.
- Within 24 hours, they had their first pre-screening protocol adopted industrywide and that was to deny boarding by any individual who had traveled through mainland China.
- As things evolved around the globe, the policies have kept up with the best advice being provided by the health professionals. They are now into the 6th or 7th version of CLIA health policy that all their members are adhering to.
- As recent as Saturday, March 7, the industry met with Vice-President Pence and discussed a number of enhanced protocols beyond what is already being done and is committed to come back with a plan this week.
- As of today (March 9), the policy in place for all CLIA members globally is to deny boarding to all persons who have traveled from, visited, or transited via airports in South Korea, Iran, China, Hong Kong, Macao, select municipalities in Italy that have been identified by the Italian government.
- CLIA members will conduct illness screenings. This includes symptom history, checks for fever, coughs, difficulty in breathing.
- CLIA members will conduct temperature screenings. People will be separated if they show any temperature above 100.4.

- CLIA members will deny boarding to all persons who, within 14 days prior to embarkation, has had any contact or helped cared for someone who is suspected to have COVID-19.
- These are the policies in place and are on top of the health screenings that have been longstanding in the industry.
- There are a lot of CLIA cruise ships operating all over the world normally under these enhanced securities.
- All CLIA members are required to have medical professionals on board and available 24/7.
- All CLIA members are also required to have well equipped health facility that includes the ability to isolate passengers and care for those passengers.
- They have a medical working group that is advising the industry that is working with CDC, the state, local communities and they are trying to do everything they can.
- Mr. Day brought up the protocols for who should and shouldn't be wearing masks and he said that not everyone gets that same information so he would caution people that as we see visitors walking around downtown with masks on, we should not automatically assume they are infected. They may not have received the same message as us or are being overly cautious.
- Additional discussion took place regarding pre-screening. Mr. Tibbles explained the pre-screening would take place on the initial point of embarkation and unless there was cause, they wouldn't not be doing prescreening in the various ports.

B. CBJ/Community Readiness Emergency preparedness & Local Government Operations

Mr. Watt said this is when emergency planning ceases to be in planning mode and transitions to unified and incident command structure.

CBJ Emergency Program Manager Tom Mattice explained that during emergencies such as this, we operate using a unified command structure falling under both BRH and DHSS. We do a lot of all hazards planning and when we look at this response, we keep working and coordinating with our partners.

Mr. Watt and Mr. Mattice answered questions from Assemblymembers on a variety of issues related to the Incident Command process with respect to this type of emergency.

Juneau School District Superintendent Bridget Weiss spoke to what precautions the schools were taking and explained the four level response plan they have developed in collaboration with Public Health and CDC guidelines. Mr. Watt, Dr. Weiss and Mr. Mattice also addressed the protocols and decision making trees that go into determining closures of schools or public facilities and answered questions from Assemblymembers regarding answering questions from the public, staff, and student families and consistent messaging about cleaning, calling 211, and using Teledoc services.

C & D. Updates to CBJ Code 3.25 (Civil Defense) and 03.35 (Continuity of Government) and Scope and Authority re: Disaster Declarations

City Attorney Robert Palmer explained that there are two code authorities under CBJ 03.25 and 03.35 which were written in an era before CBJ unification. He said there were some awkward provisions that should be amended and he suggested those could worked on either at the Assembly Human Resources Committee or at an Assembly Committee of the Whole.

Additional discussion took place regarding scheduling review of the two code sections and it was decided that they would first go to the March 16 HRC meeting and then to the Assembly COW for additional discussion on March 23.

Discussion then turned to the scope of authority of the various levels of government and if local government has the authority to act unilaterally. Mr. Palmer explained the powers of local government and how that relates to the powers of the CDC, USCG, and how USCG plans provide for various agencies to assist local governments. He explained there are a series of checks and balances and that ship captains have a duty to report if they are entering a port and they have individuals on board who may be symptomatic. He said that we are entering an era now where we may need to begin having ferry passengers screened and that air carriers, and water carriers may have an increased duty for a while to make sure they are not transmitting infected persons across the state.

Assemblymembers and Mr. Palmer then discussed past declarations of emergency and the circumstances under which those were called. Mr. Palmer explained that the Assembly and City Manager have similar but slightly different authorities to declare certain emergencies. When the City Manager declares an emergency, those have to be ratified by the Assembly in a short period of time following the Manager's declaration. He explained that once that is triggered, it begins a series of events, such as funding sources at state and federal levels. Something unique about coronavirus incident is the scale across the nation to have emergency across the nation at the same time.

Additional discussion between Assembly and staff focused on getting as much information to the public as possible about this as it is occurring. Ms. Cosgrove said they are working on getting better information onto the website and the intent is to put some of the FAQs and answers that were at this meeting online for everyone to be able to access.

Members asked if they could receive updates on the status of COVID-19 at each Finance Committee, and Special Assembly and Regular Assemblymembers at the beginning of each meeting. Mayor Weldon and Mr. Jones will work on including that on each of those agendas at the beginning of each meeting.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at: 9:01p.m.

Submitted by,
Beth McEwen, MMC
Municipal Clerk