

GRADY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING MINUTES

March 27, 2020 Emergency Meeting

The Grady County Board of Commissioners met on March 27, 2020 at 9:00 am for an emergency meeting in order to discuss The Joint Declaration of a State of Emergency and Emergency Executive Order to assist the Department of Public Health in the execution of the Governor's Executive Order. Commissioners Keith Moye, Phillip Drew, June Knight, Ray Prince, County Clerk John White, Financial Director Holly Murkerson and executive assistant Mary Griffin were present. County Administrator Buddy Johnson and Commissioner LaFaye Copeland attended by phone. The meeting was broadcast on Facebook Live.

Mr. Moye called the meeting to order.

Mr. Moye asked Rev. Johnny Moore to give the invocation and pledge to the flag.

Motion by Mr. Drew, second by Mr. Prince to approve the agenda. The motion was approved.

Mr. Moye then opened by reading the statement below.

Good morning,

As everyone should be aware, Over the past several weeks our World, Country, State, Home Counties and Cities have been forced to detour our way of life and how we live it in a way that prior to the COVID 19 epidemic we never would have imagined, expected or prepared for. EMA and Law Enforcement have spent years training for disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, terrorist attacks, and mass shootings and while the CDC has prepared for pandemics and even dealt with them in smaller cases, they, like everyone else had no way of knowing exactly how detrimental this impact would be. The Federal and State Governments have tackled this matter as best they can based on the information that has been given them, but what we must all come to realize is that there is no current cure or immediate medical weapon that will stop this virus from continuing to spread. The only clear option is what is being done and will need to continue to be done, which is social distancing, isolation of those confirmed infected, extreme hygiene, halted unnecessary travel, and avoidance of large group gatherings. As representatives of Grady County and its citizens, it falls upon us to make tough but thought-out decisions for the safety of our citizens and people. Decisions that will likely impact the finances of our local businesses and citizens. These decisions force us to weigh personal safety of all against the financial stability of many. We have been patient locally in making this huge step toward declaring a local state of emergency because we are fortunate that Grady County citizens have heeded the warnings and have taken personal voluntary and responsible steps to slow the outbreak into Grady down. These steps have been effective so far, however the inevitable is coming. The COVID19 virus will eventually rear its head here and we must do all we can to keep it at a slow spread until the cure or at the very least the dire medical supply needs are in place to allow us to stay ahead of the cases as they come in. The leadership of the county, the city of Cairo and the city of Whigham along with school leaders, Department of Public Health Officials, EMA, and Law Enforcement have been meeting vigorously and candidly discussing the options available and more importantly the impacts of those options on our citizens. We have heard and read the comments by many in the public and understand the frustration. We understand that many other surrounding counties have enacted different local state of emergency documents that they believe meet their needs. While we certainly do not fault any of our neighboring counties for their fast responses, we have taken a slower and more informed approach before acting. We have looked at several different local state of emergency documents from around the area and specifically from areas with similar demographics and circumstances. Through productive discussion and think tanking we have found an agreement that we believe is in the best interest of our public safety and well-being without completely inhibiting the freedoms we as citizens and business owners have a right to. This local state of emergency is in full support of the Federal and State Guidelines as well as the recommendations from the WHO and CDC. We agree that there are some specific areas of concern that Grady County citizens will need to adhere to, and we have laid those out in the document.

Citizens of Grady County it is important to understand that we are in uncharted waters with no definitive end time frame. Waters that will change our daily routines; How we work, talk, travel, eat, socialize and live. It is not something we asked for and it is not something we wanted but it is something we have to deal with, and we have to deal with together. This may very well be the start of a new chapter in history, where the outcome brings new directions, ideas and ultimately a different perspective on life as we know it. I implore and challenge everyone to drop your personal issues, pride, politics and egos and focus on the ultimate goal! The goal of working together to slow down and eventually stop this deadly and life altering pandemic. We will survive this; we will become stronger from it and we will be better prepared in the future. Accept where we are now and focus on how we

can stay safe as possible not only for our own well-being but for the well- being of everyone we love and come in contact with.

FORMAL ACTIONS

FA022-20 Motion by Mr. Drew, second by Mrs. Knight to approve the Joint Declaration of a State of Emergency and Emergency Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

The motion was approved unanimously. The Order will be uploaded to the City of Cairo website.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Knight and second by Mr. Prince. The motion was approved.

KEITH MOYE, CHAIR

PHILLIP DREW, VICE-CHAIR

RAY PRINCE, COMMISSIONER

JUNE KNIGHT, COMMISSIONER

LAFAYE COPELAND, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

JOHN WHITE, COUNTY CLERK