

Introductions: Pat Oman, Michael Virnig, Joe Walsh, Karly Fetters, Beth Crook, Char Kohlgraf, Paul Prokosch, Kay Nastrom, Suzanne Lelwica, Ben Davis, Kevin Schultz, Noelan Lange, Mike Wimmer, Michele McPherson, Reed Pederson, Holly Wilson, Daryl Moeller, Julie Peterson, Susan Shaw, Eric Bartusch, Beth VanderPlaats

- Pat addressed that MLC is planning for the Stay at Home order to end as planned on 5/4, though there has been suggestions that it may be extended. ASO is addressing what reopening will look like for a work/customer interface standpoint. The work plans started with very strict guidelines for staff on-site but the workload and staffing have been adjusted over the weeks as the timelines have been extended and needs have change. Pat said he appreciates the hard work from department heads to analyze their needs and communicate/work with ASO. He is looking at offices that do not currently have barriers to prepare for the time when customer interface will resume, such as the Auditor-Treasurer's Office, Land Services Office, and Administrative Services Office. A-T & LSO occasionally have members of the public going into staff areas for various things (such as passport photos, document lookup, etc.) so that is something he wants to address. The Board meeting yesterday had concerns about how to help local businesses, and a lot of discussion took place about what (if anything) the county can/needs to do to help. Pat advised department heads to start planning for 2021 budgets and what restrictions may need to be made, knowing the public will be hurting from the financial impact of the pandemic. This was also discussed at the Board meeting, along with how the county can help businesses by extending late fees for property taxes etc. (but this may not be a vital option since many property taxes have already been paid through escrow and other payments are continuing to come in). The county will look at reviewing the budget earlier this year to see how we can restrict upcoming costs. He provided a few meeting updates, such as LMC meeting monthly (meeting again next week), Management Team weekly, and the COVID-19 task force meeting twice per week.
- Karly provided a brief overview from a conversation with the county's insurance broker, who says that the costs from COVID-19 may significantly impact insurance premiums. She said this is hopefully an initial reaction that may be mitigated if legislature on a larger level steps in. Pat added that the county is continuing to re-evaluate insurance and explore all options.
- Pat reminded managers to hold their staff to the expectations for shared appliances, and noted ASO will work with public health as more staff return on-site to see when the shared appliances such as microwaves/fridges/etc. may be used again. He wants to continue discussions with department heads to see their needs for staff/workloads/etc., noting that there have already been changes as previously non-essential employees have been deemed essential to continue flow of revenue. There have also been teleworking needs to address department workloads. Pat is please that the bargaining units seem to have appreciation for the models introduced, especially compared to other counties, since MLC has put so much effort into keeping so many staff working. Pat says the county is also moving forward with bargaining unit negotiations, noting that Zoom has some limitations but Technology Services is working to see what would be the best option.
- Holly Wilson updated that she is continuing with hiring processes as needed/possible, conducting phone interviews for 1<sup>st</sup> round interviews and using Zoom for 2<sup>nd</sup> round interviews.

There have also been a few new hires within the last few weeks, with a few more planned for May 4<sup>th</sup> (including the new PSAP Manager). She is moving forward with hiring processes as needed but it is at a slower pace due to concerns with bringing people into the building, having staff/work available to train new hires, organizing interviews, etc.

- Kay Nastrom reviewed that the Stay at Home order is currently in place through 5/4 and the Peacetime Emergency was extended to 5/13, noting that these dates will be addressed in upcoming press releases as necessary. A recent executive order allows for an expansion of certain safe recreation such as golfing, fishing, and hunting, as long as social distancing guidelines etc. are met. There is a new mental health page that was made available to provide more resources. There is a week-long homemade mask drive, and donated masks can be dropped off at local fire stations this Saturday to be delivered to local congregate living facilities (for use by both employees and residents). Both the CDC & MDH have online instructions of how to make and sew these masks. Currently worldwide, there have been over 2.5 million positive cases and over 180,000 deaths. The US has over 820,000 positive confirmed lab cases, and 45,417 deaths. As of yesterday per MDH, 47,697 lab tests were completed that showed an increase from 97 to 2254 positive cases confirmed. There have been another 17 deaths added in Minnesota, bringing the total to 160 deaths in Minnesota. There are currently 629 hospitalizations in Minnesota with 117 in ICU. Mille Lacs County has had 1 confirmed COVID-19 case and 1 confirmed death. The local media sources continue to request additional information, but data privacy requires nothing more to be released. Kay is in contact with MDH several times per day via webinars, conference calls, etc., where MDH & CDC provide updates and status reports.
- Joe Walsh asked if there were any updates on antibody tests. Kay says the current tests are waiting for final confirmation from the MDA; there are advertising for current tests available but they are not FDA-approved to give reliable/evidence-based results. When Kay hears about any antibody tests getting FDA approval she will send this information to the group.
- Pat reminded staff to defer to Kay's guidance for what can be public info regarding the Coronavirus. He said department heads can always provide reports to the media if requested regarding things under their oversight, but anything COVID-related to testing/who is sick/names/etc. are all under Kay's oversight and should be deferred to her regarding what can be released. Beth Crook had a persistent member from Brainerd media asking for more information, but after double-checking with MDH & Kay she confirmed that all we can relay is that we have 1 confirmed case and 1 confirmed death.
- Noelan Lange is making progress on the wellness/sneeze guards for certain offices, and has several contractors working on quotes. He is also working on quotes to line the old block jail showers with stainless steel since they paint is not sticking to the walls, and they can't use oil-based paint that would stick better. One power supply is at end-of-life so he is looking for quotes to replace it, and he is also getting quotes for the tilework in MedMax (in the jail) to be replaced. Technology Services and Facilities Operations are discussing the Wahkon facility; a vendor came to meet regarding the door/automation and cameras for the North facility where law enforcement will be moving. The Probation file room has been completed to be equipped for future testing as needed.
- Pat brought up the annual employee picnic, which will be discussed at the LMC meeting next week. He said the District 5 AMC meeting that was going to be hosted by MLC in June has been

canceled in favor of a virtual meeting; AMC asked if MLC could host the meeting in October but that will need to be re-evaluated closer to that time to see if it can take place.

- Michael Virnig asked Noelan if the sneeze/wellness guards will need to be done prior to reopening the county; Noelan said there will need to be at least something temporary if the final product isn't completed. Noelan said the group will need to discuss the steps that will need to be taken to reopen after the Stay at Home order is lifted. Pat said there will likely need to be Board consensus to reopen County facilities to the public, but not necessarily a Board motion. Mike will connect individually with staff who have been teleworking with older laptops that will need to have them switched out for newer laptops. Pat and Mike will discuss the best way to conduct the next Board meeting.
- Mike Wimmer said the federal government will appropriate more funds this week to the IDLE & PPP program, and that there are a number of MLC businesses that have applied and are currently waiting in the que for funds. He is still encouraging businesses to apply, though there may be some issues since some programs only cover businesses that were part of the 1<sup>st</sup> executive order (and not necessarily businesses such as retail establishments that were shut down as the orders expanded). He is hopeful that new legislature will expand that. The Entrepreneur Fund opened a grant for \$5,000 for small businesses (those with less than 5 FT employees), and he will send this information to Kara for her to post. This information has already gone out to financial institutions, and Mike is hopeful that the stress on businesses will start to subside.
- Kevin Schultz says Public Works is still business-as-usual, with employee out crack-sealing/grading roads/etc.
- Ben Davis says his office is continuing to provide support to probationers, and he is benchmarking with other counties for their protocols for agents monitoring offenders from home. He finds that MLC is consistent with other counties in their operations. He has one agent who is now out on FMLA for 3 months.
- Joe Walsh is thinking about what the future looks like for his office after the Stay at Home order ends; he likely will not have everyone on-site but plans to continue to make smart decisions about who needs to be on-site and who can telework. He is pleased that his department has been able to spend more time providing good services to county departments in a timely manner, and encourages departments who may have had requests for his office in the que to send those his way for him to assign to his staff.
- Pat asked department heads to send any updates and proposals for what their offices expect and may need for when the Stay at Home order ends, so ASO can help work to ease back into operations and follow protocols. Teleworking may continue on for a time, and department heads have leeway to address the needs of the office while following protocols. He acknowledged that teleworking may be part of "the new norm" as time goes on, which he noted may be a good retention tools for employees. He wants managers to think about teleworking for employees who may have a need due to children who won't be going back to school, since these employees will need to juggle being parents/teachers/employees. He asked for updated proposal from department heads for their office when the Stay at Home order is lifted, as well as a continued schedule for next week (even if it's just status quo). When the Stay at Home order is lifted, ASO will defer to guidance from Public Health to work with which employees come back/when/spacing/etc.

- Beth Crook says CVS is fully staffed, with 67 staff teleworking and 16 staff coming on site daily. The department has very minimal face-to-face contact (but this is sometimes necessary when it comes to child/adult protection), and most client contact is completed via phone or a virtual platform. In general, the workload is increasing for their department due to citizens losing work, economic impact, etc. Paul Prokosch reviewed that a large portion of their revenue is based on what MLC spends for staff/pays for service/etc., e.g. when workers go out and see clients MLC gets a fee for the visit. Since these visits are now being conducted virtually, there has actually been a faster turnaround for results to make sure MLC can capture variable revenue on mental health and child protection. Family Home Visiting will also be evaluated. Beth V says SNAP program applications have doubled, which is a federally funded food support program to provide food assistance for individuals based on income. There were 41 applications between April 1 to April 17, vs. February with 14 total applications and 66 in March. The applications for April are expected to continue to increase. Food shelves are currently staying stocked but they are definitely seeing more people come in.
- Michele McPherson says LSO is seeing an increase in permit applications. Nathan is working remotely, Jackie is currently at home (not working) but she will be in Friday and Monday. The document movement is going well; Sandy cleared a significant backlog so Michele is comfortable with the current load meeting statutory requirements. Her office is responding to calls and pushing work out.
- Eric Bartusch says property tax collections have been coming in for a few weeks, and that taxes are being collected at a rate similar to (potentially even greater) than last year. His office is continue to receive tax payments and there seems to be no widespread shortage of cash flow for the payment. He is looking ahead to elections, and expects there to be a likely uptick in absentee voting. Legislators are discussing options of how that may work and potentially extending this period, since the primary elections in August are not far out.
- Susan Shaw says most SWCD staff are working remotely (with one staff on-site). Their mid-term plan if the shut down backs off would be to stay mostly remote and be strategic about who comes back/when. They have been doing field work only for essential agricultural work but would like other field work such as shoreland items to resume. Susan will discuss guidance from Pat regarding sneeze/wellness guards for SWCD.
- Dillon Hayes reported that Warren is working in the office, with Steph and Corky working mostly remotely. Corky has been in and out for field work. He notices that construction is continuing at a high rate—for example, they just issued their 10<sup>th</sup> septic permit whereas last year at this time none were issue.
- Pat reminded the group that it is important for revenue streams to continue. He said again that budgets will be a big item to review and probably early; these discussions will likely start in May (as opposed to their usual guideline of July). He asked departments to begin preparing budget information earlier and noted that Management Team will need to discuss 2021 needs as these discussions begin.

Meeting adjourned at 10:36 a.m.