

**STATE OF COLORADO
COUNTY OF ROUTT**

**OFFICE OF THE CLERK
December 31, 2021**

Commissioner Timothy V. Corrigan, Chair, called the meeting of the Routt County Board of County Commissioners to order. Commissioner Tim Redmond, Commissioner Beth Melton, County Manager Jay Harrington, Public Health Director Roberta Smith, Epidemiologist Dr. Fritha Morrison, Emergency Management Director David DeMorat, Dr. Brian Harrington, County Attorney Erick Knaus, and County Commissioners' and Manager's Office Manager Jennifer Parent were also present. Samantha Pearce prepared the minutes.

EN RE: ROUTT COUNTY BOARD PUBLIC HEALTH

Board of County Commissioners meeting as the Routt County Board of Health to discuss recent COVID-19 data and possible public health orders.

This meeting was called to look at current COVID-19 trends happening in the community and surrounding Colorado Counties with a surge of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. Ms. Smith and Dr. Morrison updated the Commissioners with current information.

Commissioner Corrigan asked Ms. Smith to elaborate on how the hospitals are dealing with staffing to treat patients during this new surge. Ms. Smith stated that some hospitals are struggling with staffing issues due to staff being infected with COVID-19.

The Commissioners asked clarifying questions about the new variant of COVID-19, the stage of the pandemic, professional opinions on when to expect a peak spike in the Omicron variant, course of illness, and next steps for the community to lessen the impact on the new spike with the Omicron variant.

Ms. Smith's professional opinion was to keep encouraging the use of masks especially in larger groups and smaller spaces, and look at gathering sizes and encourage businesses to update mitigation plans.

Commissioner Melton stated that she would like a Public Health Order drafted to continue the conversation to the following week. Commissioner Melton noted that the use of masks is not what will end the pandemic, but is a small step to help protect the community during the busiest travel season, also noting that other counties who have implemented a required mask use order have not seen trends reversed. Commissioner Melton questioned how the Board should weigh the probabilities with what is best, and what they Board's responsibility is.

Commissioner Redmond stated that his biggest concern is the schools and the vulnerable youth population in the community. Commissioner Redmond stated he is also in favor of drafting a Public Health Order putting thought in to how to protect the schools and the youth in the community.

Dr. Harrington stated that current principal is to keep children in school and businesses open. Dr. Harrington question on how to crack the code of living with the virus, but keeping Public Health themes throughout the community. Dr. Harrington stated that this is the first time it has been looked at as living with the virus and not implementing health orders, or reducing capacity in businesses. Dr. Harrington recommended still following the guidance of the CDPHE.

County Attorney, Erick Knaus stated that his team will be able to have a draft order ready by the following Tuesday for the Board's consideration.

Commissioner Corrigan stated that he would like the weekend to think about the right thing for the community and would like another chance to look again the following week.

No further business coming before the Board, same adjourned sine die.

Kim Bonner, Clerk and Recorder

M. Elizabeth Melton, Chair

Date