

**DESOTO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**DISTRICT ONE SUPERVISOR JESSIE MEDLIN, PRESIDING**  
**March 22, 2020**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The March 22, 2020 Special Called Emergency Meeting of the DeSoto County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Supervisor Jessie Medlin, Board President.

Sheriff Bill Rasco opened the DeSoto County Board of Supervisors meeting in a regular session to hear all business before the Board of Supervisors. The following officials were present:

Supervisor Jessie Medlin	District 1
Supervisor Mark Gardner	District 2
Supervisor Ray Denison	District 3
Supervisor Lee Caldwell	District 4
Supervisor Michael Lee	District 5
Sheriff Bill Rasco	Sheriff's Department
Misty Heffner	Chancery Clerk
Vanessa Lynchard	County Administrator
Tony Nowak	Board Attorney

**B. INVOCATION**

Supervisor Lee Caldwell offered the invocation.

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**D. SPECIAL CALLED EMERGENCY MEETING**

Supervisor Lee Caldwell made the motion and Supervisor Mark Gardner seconded the motion to make the notice of special called meeting part of the Board minutes

The motion passed by a vote as follows:

Supervisor Jessie Medlin, First District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Mark Gardner, Second District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Ray Denison, Third District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Lee Caldwell, Fourth District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Michael Lee, Fifth District	<u>YES</u>

**See Exhibit D.**

1. Response to Coronavirus

Supervisor Medlin welcomed the staff and public. He stated the Board had discussed the coronavirus pandemic in the regular meeting and the Board wants to take steps to help make people safe. Supervisor Medlin stated the cities of Olive Branch and Southaven met today and made some proclamations. He stated that Mr. Nowak has prepared a proclamation for the County for the board to consider

Supervisor Medlin recognized Dr. Thompson, County Medical Director; EMA Director, Chief Chris Olson; and EMS Director Mark Davis.

Supervisor Caldwell stated we are fortunate to live in an area where communities work together. She stated citizens have asked for guidance and the Board has been listening to doctors, the

government, and health department. She stated the cities and county want to come together as one voice and put out guidelines.

EMS Director Mark Davis stated the following:

- 18 confirmed cases in DeSoto County
- Working with hospitals to try and limit exposure
- Methodist Olive Branch has limited incoming procedures – they are changing drop off and pick up of patients
- EMS is putting masks on patients before loading in ambulance
- Several Fire/EMS personnel have had contact with positive cases and are being monitored closely
- Have plenty of supplies
- Talked to all Volunteer Fire Depts. to be sure they have plenty of supplies
- Baptist DeSoto Is trying to get set up for testing outside the ER
- EMS office will contact all clinics to see who is testing
- Most are only testing people with symptoms

Supervisor Lee asked what the protocol is when someone comes in contact with a positive person. Mr. Davis stated, per CDC guidelines, they are monitoring, taking temperature twice a day and at the 1<sup>st</sup> sign of symptoms they will be quarantined.

Supervisor Gardner asked if the hospitals had adequate test kits. Dr. Thompson said that is a fluid answer. He said they got a lot, but they are quickly being depleted. He said the numbers are about to skyrocket.

Supervisor Caldwell said that is what they are trying to prepare DeSoto County citizens for. She said they need to get the word out that citizens can help by staying home. Dr. Thompson said the management of expectations is to prepare them that we do expect more cases. He stated he wanted to test everyone possible but that is not an available option. Dr. Thompson said the testing is only for the sickest and it makes the fatality percentages inflated. He said the numbers are weighted, not representative. Supervisor Caldwell said the major challenges are getting the tests, and having the personnel to complete the tests. Dr. Thompson agreed that it will be a massive effort.

Supervisor Medlin asked if a positive case was treated like the flu. Dr. Thompson said Tamiflu and Zofluz are not effective against coronavirus. He said he could not recommend any treatments until more studies are done. He said there are medicines that are not FDA approved yet; and that typically a physician should counsel the family of the ill person laying out the risks and benefits and let the family decide.

Supervisor Lee asked what they should tell people that have been diagnosed. He asked if they should just quarantine at home and let it play itself out. Dr. Thompson affirmed. He stated the efforts to socially distance are good, and the medical community needs to minimize the people that go on ventilators. Dr. Thompson stated they can handle a storm surge; but they don't want a tidal wave.

Supervisor Caldwell asked Dr. Thompson to remind citizens the best practices to protect themselves and others. Dr. Thompson stated the best practices are social distancing; washing your hands, don't have direct contact with others outside the family unit. He said the County has taken steps to do that. He stated they just need to slow the pace to not have so many sick people at one time that they cannot be taken care of.

Supervisor Gardner thanked Dr. Thompson and Mr. Davis for taking precautionary measures, and putting screening procedures in place for EMS and the jail. Dr. Thompson stated Commander Wicker and Sheriff Rasco have been very on top of things and said their leadership is key. Dr. Thompson stated everyone needs to know the fluidity of this virus. He stated he and Mr. Davis have talked about some of the arduous efforts to screen for this thing. He stated the CDC changed the guidelines about quarantines. He said this will change every day, and sometimes in the middle of the day. He stated they are doing their best to make the best decisions in the moment with the changing guidelines and that everyone will have to be flexible. He said if people are expecting change, maybe they can be less fearful.

Sheriff Rasco said if they have a misdemeanor case and the person is not feeling well, the deputies are not bringing that person to jail. He stated they have cut out all visitations and anyone coming into the jail is checked. Supervisor Medlin asked if Region IV was taking care of the lunacies. Sheriff Rasco affirmed.

EMA Director, Chief Chris Olson gave a rundown of facts:

- Hospitals & clinics are required to report coronavirus to the State
- CDC give info to State, State lets EMA & EMS know daily, EMA tells elected officials & 1<sup>st</sup> responders
- Presently 18 confirmed cases in DeSoto County, 206 statewide, 1 death in state
- This is a national/global disaster
- Federal government is allowing states to make decisions while giving guidance as best they can
- States making their own decision on interpretation – On the whole, MS is making the best decisions possible
- Hospitals have stopped a lot of elective surgeries
- First responders' protocol has changes to protect them and citizens
- Doing the best they can to keep people stocked with PPE and how to properly use it
- State has a wonderful, working supply chain to get PPE & supplies to counties – Got a shipment yesterday – They are constantly rolling supplies in.
- MS National Guard activated by the State to assist with supply chain and testing facilities
- State will put 6 testing sites throughout the state, they have not released where, will get help from National Guard and MS Highway Patrol
- People with symptoms will be tested first
- EMS will be calling all clinics in DeSoto County tomorrow to see if they are testing and will get that info to the MS Dept. of Health for cataloging
- There is disaster unemployment assistance
- The Small Business Administration has assistance in place

Supervisor Gardner asked Chief Olson if there was anything he needed from the Board. Chief Olson said to just keep doing what they are doing. Supervisor Medlin stated this outbreak has come right on the heels of 2 tornadoes and said that EMA is doing a good job.

Supervisor Medlin asked Mr. Nowak to outline the Board's proclamation for the public. Mr. Nowak pointed out the following:

- Policies consistent with CDC, Governor, neighboring cities and counties
- It's a recommendation/plea to the public, not a mandate but the board has the authority to change the proclamation to a mandate.
- Limit events of 10 people or more
- Special precautions for older adults
- Social distancing
- Proper hygiene
- Restaurants and bars limit to curbside, pick up, or drive through – no public seating areas
- Stay home except for essential activities
- Businesses closed to public – Not closed for business, but only allow those in that are necessary

Supervisor Medlin noted grocery stores, gas stations, health care facilities, etc. are essential. Mr. Nowak stated he put in a level of details identifying essential businesses, but it is not an exhaustive list.

Supervisor Caldwell said this is a time to turn our focus to God, ask for His mercy and help our neighbors, especially senior adults; to get what you need and not hoard; keep your distance and be mindful of others; and be a good citizen.

Chief Olson stated the Board is building on what the State of MS is putting out guidance for. He stated that our local restaurants supported the community during the tornado recovery; and now is the time for the community to support the local restaurants.

Supervisor Lee said a lot of people are looking for guidance on social media. He asked the public to help the Board help them by using common sense and abiding by what the CDC and the MS Dept. of Health is putting out. He said this has become real; and they are asking people to slow down a little and do what is being asked of them. He said we all have to work together to be sure this all works out.

Supervisor Medlin said he thinks that President Trump has gotten peoples' attention. Supervisor Caldwell said this is a heavy burden for the President and he is doing an exemplary job. She stated the Governor had a prayer time this morning.

Supervisor Lee Caldwell made the motion and supervisor Mark Gardner seconded the motion to approve the Proclamation Recommending the Limiting of Gatherings of People, Closing Bars and Restaurants to Public Access and Implementing "Stay at Home" Policies in the County and make it a part of the Board minutes.

The motion passed by a vote as follows:

Supervisor Jessie Medlin, First District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Mark Gardner, Second District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Ray Denison, Third District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Lee Caldwell, Fourth District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Michael Lee, Fifth District	<u>YES</u>

**See Exhibit D.**

**E. OLD BUSINESS**

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

**G. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no executive session today.

Mrs. Lynchard stated she had some additional information of the Federal bill and asked the Board to keep their meeting for tomorrow. She said the Justice Court Judges also have some additional guidelines to present to the Board.

Supervisor Jessie Medlin made the motion and Supervisor Mark Gardner seconded the motion to recess the Board meeting until Monday, March 23, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

The motion passed by a vote as follows:

Supervisor Jessie Medlin, First District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Mark Gardner, Second District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Ray Denison, Third District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Lee Caldwell, Fourth District	<u>YES</u>
Supervisor Michael Lee, Fifth District	<u>YES</u>

THIS the 6th day of April, 2020, these minutes have been read and approved by the DeSoto County Board of Supervisors.

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Jessie Medlin, President  
DeSoto County Board of Supervisors