

Chris Taggart

From: Archie Thomas <archie5463@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 9:19 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] COVID COMMON SENSE

Chris, Jeff and Greg,

You have been dealt an impossible hand. The reality is we have failed COVID national leadership. Through it's directives pandemic responsibilities without adequate support have been pushed down to the state and by extension to the county level. We are 6 months into present pandemic with no defined end point.

COVID does not give a dam if you are a Trumpublican, Republican, Democrat, independent, business owner, wage worker, retired or unemployed or employed. Solutions start with the commission realigning it's focus. We all need to acknowledge, that we do not know what we don't know.

I read a quote from Jeff Burrows suggesting county employees need to use common sense when working together. Think about this, where does COVID common sense come from? The last pandemic was 100 years ago. It doesn't exist in the public or employees' experience. In it's place we have a information age. No leadership, no wisdom and instant information access presented in a way that reinforces what you already believe, regardless of how unfounded in present reality those beliefs may be.

As an example you know when handling a gun you treat it like it is loaded. This is common sense. You would not point and pull the trigger. There is no law mandating you treat a gun this way. You enter a store or greet a family member with a hug and a hand shake with no mask and everybody is comfortable. You just experienced COVID Russian roulette and everybody was comfortable with their common sense.

As public figures the commissioner's office must supply COVID common sense to the public. COVID common sense is the knowledge the public and the commission does not know that you don't know. COVID common sense is uncommon and it starts with you educating yourself first. The commission needs to get publicly behind the health department in a big way.

Chris Hoffman called this support as explaining state law, asking hard questions and having differences of opinions. This is how you set and implement policy, not how you get positive results from policy. What I am asking for is bold redirected COVID leadership. Normal county business will not get done or be put on the back burner. Get over it, that is the world in which we are all living.

- 1. Acknowledge upfront to the public and businesses that business can't get back to normal without specific COVID procedures in place. Everyone is responsible for their enforcement.**
- 2. Be honest with yourself and the public, county power and resources are limited as are the specific sacrifices required of the public. You will need the public's help.**
- 3. Listen to your professional health advisors.**
- 4. Fund a COVID county wide coordinator with a public health background.**

5. Spend money on professional marketing, media and signage to promote uniform COVID procedures to the public.
6. Focus on all travel in and out of the county, primarily 2 airports and highway 93.
7. Focus on ongoing county wide COVID testing until a vaccine is developed. At the present this is not possible but make the public aware of the need.
8. You don't have the money for any of this but you don't have a choice. You have to find it anyway you can, through reserves, state and/or federal programs, public outreach etc. Ravalli county's economic and physical health depends on your bold leadership from the bottom up as it is not coming from the top nor will it be.

Best Regards,
Archie L Thomas

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