

An order of the Special Session Commissioners Court approving the filing of the May 29, 2020 minutes.

On Monday, May 29, 2020 the Commissioners Court of Collin County, Texas, met in Special Session in the Commissioners Courtroom, Jack Hatchell Collin County Administration Building, 4th Floor, 2300 Bloomdale Road, City of McKinney, Texas, with the following members present, and participating, to wit:

- Judge Chris Hill
- Commissioner Susan Fletcher, Precinct 1
- Commissioner Cheryl Williams, Precinct 2
- Commissioner Darrell Hale, Precinct 3
- Commissioner Duncan Webb, Precinct 4

Commissioner Hale led the invocation  
Commissioner Fletcher led the Pledge of Allegiance  
Commissioner Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag

1. Judge Hill called to order the meeting of the **Special Session Collin County Commissioners Court** at 1:30 p.m. and adjourned the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

**2. Public Comments**

Cindy Meyer, City of Parker Councilmember, said she appreciates Judge Hill and the Commissioners for their wisdom. Ms. Meyer is not willing to give up her constitutional rights for surveillance of people and said Option One is the only way to go for Collin County.

Stephanie Casson, City of Parker, thanked Judge Hill for his leadership and daily updates. Tracking and tracing is scary, and she never thought this would happen in this country. The tracing should stay in Collin County and not in the hands of the people outside of the County. The Court should go with Option One.

Jim Westerheid, McKinney, said the Judge and the Court have not disappointed and have stuck with the facts. This is no longer about disease control but about control. Mr. Westerheid supports Option One.

Cecil Redd, Plano, said he is speaking in support of Option One. The Collin County dashboard is honest and easy to understand. The State’s website is hard to use. The County Health Department should decide what is best for Collin County and keep the control here.

Nancy Brobston, Allen, thanked the Court and said she is for Option One.

Neal Polan, Lucas, thanked the Court for all their work and said there are a lot of scared people because of the media coverage on COVID-19.

Hearing no further comments, Judge Hill closed the public comments session at 1:47 p.m.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

### 3. AI-48514 Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas Trace Initiative, Commissioners Court.

Judge Hill said the Court would discuss three options for continuing to track the progress of the response of COVID-19. The DSHS (Department of State Health Services) representatives attended remotely.

Bill Bilyeu, County Administrator, said the State has updated their reporting system. All of the information the County reports is received directly from the State. The State has a contract with Deloitte, and there are three options for the Court to consider. Option One A would have the County finish their IT program. The County staff would continue the data entry and contact tracing. With Option One B, the County employees would use the State's system and continue investigations and contact tracing. Option Two would have the County continue the investigation contacts and enter the information into the Texas Trace system. The State would then call the contacts who have been in close proximity to a positive case. Option Three would have the State do the investigation contact and follow up contacts. All three options include data going into the system of record for the State. The Texas Trace system is currently in place in approximately 180 counties.

Commissioner Williams said there is no mandate on which option must be chosen, but the County is mandated to report all data back to the State. Mr. Bilyeu said Texas Trace is the system of record for all communicable diseases. Commissioner Hale said, even if the Court chooses Option One A or One B, the State will continue to be the repository of the data. So, if the Court decides to keep it in house, there would be money spent twice since there is already a cost for the State. Mr. Bilyeu said they have estimated the County would need 70 full-time employees to support the COVID-19 contact tracing and reporting. This would include having them on our network, training, and computers. There was a discussion about the costs for each option.

Commissioner Fletcher asked if the privacy concerns presented today could be alleviated by having the County doing the investigation. Mr. Bilyeu said the healthcare community was the first group worried about privacy, and that is when HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) laws came about. There are protections built into the systems, and there is privacy training employees must take. The State will be able to monitor calls and do performance measures for staff. Any data that is currently on the County website will continue to be

provided by the State. The State will also provide emergency systems with addresses of people who are positive COVID-19 cases to ensure they respond properly.

Judge Hill said the Associate Commissioner, Dr. Manda Hall, is online for today's meeting. The Judge said he appreciates their time. Commissioner Hale asked what kind of software applications are going to be used on portable devices for tracking and tracing. Dr. Hall said the State is not doing any type of tracking or tracing. The system they are implementing is only for data entry. Commissioner Webb asked if the State anticipates the tracking and tracing will go beyond the end of the year. Dr. Hall said yes, and case investigation and contact tracing is a core function of public health. Commissioner Webb said he was told that the County will be able to pull any data from Texas Trace in order to update the county site. Dr. Hall said that was correct.

Dr. Hall said their goal is to support the County, and they recognize this is the Court's decision. The Judge said he appreciates their support. Commissioner Hale asked if the Court could change its options in the future, and Dr. Hall said it could. The Court discussed each option.

Candy Blair, Health Department, said this is a wonderful opportunity for the Collin County Health Care Department. Currently, all fifty states use electronic tracking for diseases, and this is how we get all of the data. It is important that all of us use the same system because it allows experts to look at hotspots, outbreaks, and change policies. This is about knowing the increase in numbers and the other 5,000 diseases the health department takes care of. There are approximately 26,000 other phone calls the Health Care Department normally gets outside of COVID-19. The workload is always large, and with COVID-19, it is exponentially larger. This will continue to go throughout this year and next. Unfortunately, there is no vaccine on the horizon. The only tool we have to fight this type of disease is good investigation and good contact investigation. The fact that the State stepped up and is willing to help is a health care workers dream. The NEDS (National Electronic Disease Surveillance) system is used to track communicable diseases nationwide. When one system is in place for all of the reporting, it's like having one electronic health record. This would not create a duplication of any work and, if a person moves, the information can be easily moved from one county to another.

Judge Hill said he confirmed with the State that County staff would not have to do double data entry. There would be some kind of API (Application Programming Interface) that would take the information from the County's system and upload it onto the State's system. Commissioner Webb asked who would do the software development work in order to build the data interface between microfiche and Texas Trace. Dr. Hall said they have a development team with Texas Trace working on that now.

Commissioner Webb said he is concerned because, after the first of the year, it would all be paid by the County. Commissioner Williams said there is flexibility in that the County can change their option anytime. Judge Hill said the County has re-tasked dozens of employees and trained them to work with the Health Department. The number of epidemiologists was almost doubled allowing them to be the supervisors of the employees working in the Health

Department. But as we reopen, all these employees are going back to their home departments. We need to decide how to replace this work force. Hospitals across the state have been hit financially, and many employees have been furloughed or laid off. As the County is now looking for employees to help with this workforce, we have hospitals looking for work. Several hospital presidents have been asked if they would be interested in contracting with the County to provide this workforce. We would give them the training on our software and any other training needed. Every hospital president was interested in this concept, and they are now working on determining if they have a suitable workforce. This is an opportunity we would only explore if we go with Option One.

Commissioner Fletcher said she is struggling with why the County would spend money when the State has already contracted to have the work done. The data has to be turned over to the State regardless, and the privacy issue cannot be addressed because it is all going to the Texas Trace System. The County has CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act money that can be used for the community. Why would we pay for something the State has already paid for. Commissioner Webb said he is concerned as well and worried about what would happen at the end of the year. Commissioner Williams said there are still many loose ends, and all of the issues that may come up have not been addressed. Ultimately, the County will end up with Option Three because that will be the new system for the State for everything. But, we don't need to go with Option Three immediately because we need to ensure we can get access to the same data we currently have. Commissioner Williams said she is not sure she would want Collin County to be one of the first large counties to jump into Option Three.

Commissioner Hale said he doesn't want to look back and think about the millions of dollars spent on something already being developed by the State. We would also be growing our own government with more staff and management. The cost for new employees is a minimum of \$50,000 per person per year, and the data will still go to the Texas Trace program. The State has offered to spend this money on our behalf. Commissioner Hale said he agrees with Ms. Blair about going with Option Three.

Judge Hill moved to adopt Option One A. Commissioner Hale asked what would be gained with going with Option One A today. There is no real gain other than spending additional tax payer's dollars. Judge Hill said there is funding from the CARES Act that will be used to fund Option One A. Commissioner Hale said he is hesitant to spend the money twice. Commissioner Fletcher said it will cost millions of dollars to fund this. Commissioner Hale asked if the Court has to act today, and Mr. Bilyeu said staff needs to go back to their jobs. The hardware needs to be purchased, and there is a 30-day waiting period. If the County needs to supplement the hospital staff, we need to purchase the system soon. Our system is great, but if the Court decides to go with Option One A, resources will need to be reallocated to build the system. Judge Hill asked if there were any other questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion was made to approve Option One A. (Time 3:00 p.m.)

Motion by: Judge Chris Hill

Second by: Commissioner Cheryl Williams

Vote: 2 – 3 Failed

Commissioner Fletcher made a motion to adopt Option Three. (Time 3:01 p.m.)

Motion by: Commissioner Susan Fletcher

Second by: Commissioner Duncan Webb

Vote: 3 – 2 Passed

COURT ORDER NO. 2020-435-05-29

There being no further business of the Court, Judge Hill adjourned the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

Not Present

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Hill, County Judge

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Fletcher, Commissioner, Pct 1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Williams, Commissioner, Pct 2



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Darrell Hale, Commissioner, Pct 3

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Duncan Webb, Commissioner, Pct 4

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTEST: Stacey Kemp, County Clerk