

Due to public health issues arising from the coronavirus situation, the Sussex County Board of Chosen Freeholders will conduct this meeting remotely via a conference call. Callers are invited to listen and will have an opportunity to make comments by calling: 973-310-7191.

**SPECIAL SUSSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES
August 20, 2020 AT 9:00AM
VIA CONFERENCE CALL**

1. CALL TO ORDER BY DIRECTOR Petillo

2. ROLL CALL Freeholder Fasano, Freeholder Hertzberg, Freeholder Petillo, Freeholder Yardley

Absent: Freeholder Fantasia

Also Present: County Administrator Greg Poff, County Counsel Kevin Kelly, Clerk Pro Tem, Suzie Givone

3. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

4. PUBLIC STATEMENT

"Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 Adequate Notice as defined by Section 3D of Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, has been made by regular mail, such notice being submitted on August 18, 2020 from the Administrative Center of the County of Sussex, located at One Spring Street, Newton, New Jersey to the following:

New Jersey Herald	WSUS Radio
New Jersey Sunday Herald	WNNJ Radio
Star Ledger	

and is also posted on the bulletin board maintained in the Administrative Center for public announcements and has been submitted to the Sussex County Clerk in compliance with said Act."

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the Agenda: made by Freeholder Hertzberg

Second: Freeholder Yardley

Voice Vote: All voted in the Affirmative

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

7. PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES/PRESENTATIONS – None

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS- None

Freeholder Petillo asked Mr. Poff to explain the reason for this Special Meeting.

Mr. Poff thanked the Board for their willingness to accommodate this Special Meeting. He said the County is in receipt of Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) from the State of New Jersey to provide resources to continue and expand upon the testing that the County has been engaged in during the Pandemic. There was a first MOA that was received last week and supplemented with a revised MOA that the County received on Monday. After receiving that Mr. Poff prepared a brief summary and distributed to the Freeholder Board what the reviewed MOA entailed and requested the Board hold a special meeting in order to comply with the State's request to have the MOA considered no later this morning. He said this allocation will allow the County to resume and build upon its testing capacities for its residents.

9. PUBLIC SESSION FROM THE FLOOR

This Public Session is for questions or comments pertaining to Agenda Items only. Before we open this Session we ask Callers wanting to make a comment to first state your name and municipality. The Clerk will create a Roster and call each in the order received. Comments are limited to 3 minutes or less.

Motion to Open Public Session made by Freeholder Hertzberg

Second: Freeholder Yardley

Voice Vote: All voted in the Affirmative

No callers were on the line.

Motion to Close Public Session made by Freeholder Hertzberg

Second: Freeholder Yardley

Voice Vote: All voted in the Affirmative

10. FREEHOLDERS' COMMENTS

Freeholder Director Petillo gave a timeline for MOA.

In April, Sussex County was informed that they would not receive any money from the first round of stimulus funding that was allocated through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Immediately the Freeholder began to question why a traditional formula was even used for eligibility a formula that everyone knew made it impossible for Sussex County to qualify. The Freeholder Board raised their voices and began advocating for fairness in this process.

On August 9th the State provided Sussex County Corona Virus Relief Funds (CRF) MOA I that provided money to support the County's continued testing efforts. The first MOA offer by the state was \$969,969.

On August 12th a meeting was held with the County's Emergency Preparedness Team and Office of Emergency Management to review and to comment on the MOA I.

On August 17th, that state issued CRF MOA II. This MOA replaced the first MOA and provided an additional \$839,032 through a population adjusted grant. The total amount offered in the MOA II is \$1,809,001. She gave a listing of some of the terms the MOA II would require of the County.

On August 17th, the NJ Association of Counties hosted two video conferences with the 12 Counties to answer questions about MOA I and MOA II. Mr. Poff sent MOA II to the Freeholders for their review.

As time went on we were not sure the County would any receive any funding. Our pleas went unheard and unanswered for no long. Therefore we were pleasantly surprised the first offer was made and very grateful for our Representative that stood with us and for the NJ Association of Counties that advocated for the 12 counties that the State provides the additional population adjustment grant. This funding will tremendously help the residents of Sussex County.

Comments from Freeholder Fasano

Freeholder Fasano spoke on the details of the MOA and how these funds will go to reimburse Sussex County for COVID related expenses as well as provide funds for future expenses. This agreement is important to Sussex County for two reasons. It gives the County the ability to prepare for whatever this Pandemic holds for the cooler months ahead and it helps offset the costs of the County's efforts which is crucial for the County's tax payers. This agreement is a step in the right direction; however there are many other needs such as our business economy. There are some counties in New Jersey that are flushed with federal aid that they are able to offer their own county business assistance programs with that funding. Sussex County meanwhile is fighting to be reimbursed for funding it has already incurred. Something just isn't right and we will continue to protect our residents.

Comments from Freeholder Yardley

This is a great opportunity for reimbursement to County. Freeholder Yardley then followed up to Freeholder Fasano's remarks regarding how other counties received so much money they can help their local businesses yet Sussex County does not have that ability. This is so disappointing, but believes this Agreement is the first step in making Sussex County whole.

Comments from Freeholder Hertzberg

Freeholder Hertzberg said he finds himself asking the question of how much of this is calculated and how much of this is incompetence. It is frustrating when those decisions are affecting the people that we are sworn into protect and wants to know why it was such a fight to get the funds that were earmarked for us to provide services for our residents. Glad that we are going to finally receive the funding that Sussex County deserves and agrees it is necessary for us to take this money and not put the burden on our tax payers.

Comments from Freeholder Petillo

Freeholder Petillo said as time went on she was not certain we would receive any funding at all. It really seemed like the Freeholders were fighting one battle after the next and our pleas went unheard. Today we are grateful and pleasantly surprised. This funding will greatly help us to test our residents and more information about the County's testing plan that will be forthcoming.

Freeholder Hertzberg said the one point he wants to make is that our job as Freeholders is to make a lot of noise advocating for our residents. You see a lot of politicians who raise their hands and say I did this, I got this. He said don't believe any of that. The only reason why we got this money was because the voters found out what was happening. The Voters Your voices were heard and they know your voices will be heard in November. It is our job to make sure your voices are heard and make these things happen.

Freeholder Petillo said that is a correct statement. We had a lot of support from the Chamber of Commerce and our business groups.

11. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA - None**

12. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES- None**

13. **APPOINTMENTS AND/OR RESIGNATIONS- None**

14. **RESOLUTIONS**

A. **RESOLUTION RE: 333-2020**

AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUSSEX COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COUNTY OF SUSSEX FOR FUNDING COVID-19 TESTING AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXISTING COVID 19 EXPENSES

Motion to adopt Resolution made by Freeholder Fasano

Second: Freeholder Hertzberg

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote: Freeholder Fasano Yes, Freeholder Hertzberg Yes, Freeholder Petillo, Yes, Freeholder Yardley, Yes

15. **AWARDS OF CONTRACT/CHANGE ORDERS/BID- None**

16. **FINANCIAL- None**

17. **PERSONNEL-None**

18. **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

19. **COUNTY COUNSEL REPORT**

20. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

21. **NEW BUSINESS**

Freeholder Response to JCP&L regarding Tropical Storm Isaias

Freeholder Petillo read the Board's letter to NJ Board of Public Utilities President Joseph Fiordaliso into the record. This letter is expressing frustration on the delay of restoring power in Sussex County and is asking JCP&L, and the entire Board of Public Utilities to take swift action to require utility companies in the state to create emergency response plans to ensure fast and effective responses to storm related outages.

Freeholder Yardley stated that on Saturday, Stillwater Township was still without power. There needs to be some accountability on this situation and he supports this letter.

22. **PUBLIC SESSION FROM THE FLOOR**

This Public Session is for general questions or comments. Before we open this Session we ask Callers wanting to make a comment to first state your name and municipality. The Clerk will create a Roster and call each in the order received. Comments are limited to 3 minutes or less.

Motion to Open Public Session made by Freeholder Hertzberg

Second: Freeholder Yardley

Voice Vote: All voted in the Affirmative

No callers on the line.

Motion to Close Public Session made by Freeholder Hertzberg

Second: Freeholder Yardley

Voice Vote: All voted in the Affirmative

23. **REMINDERS-None**

24. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Freeholder Hertzberg

Second: Freeholder Yardley

Voice Vote: All voted in the Affirmative

Time is 9:25AM.

Respectively submitted,

**Suzie Givone,
Clerk Pro Tem**