

Atchison Co retains mask mandate

(KAIR)--A second attempt by an Atchison County Commissioner to override Kansas Governor Laura Kelly's executive order requiring masks to be worn statewide received no support.

2nd District Commissioner Eric Noll, during Tuesday's regular meeting of the Commission, made a motion to excuse the County from the mandate. "Upon consultation with our local Health Officer this morning in work session, I find that the burden of proof has not been met that the mask order imposed on us by the State of Kansas by Executive Order 20-52 is warranted, so I'll make a motion [that this] Executive Order does not meet local health requirements."

Noll found no support for the motion, and it died due to a lack of a second.

Tuesday's motion by Noll was his second attempt to remove the County from the requirement, having moved during the Commission's June 30 meeting to do the same.

That motion also died due to a second, meaning the County remains under the mask mandate.

However, as of July 7, observations by MSC News at several businesses in the City of Atchison show that the mandate is being followed sporadically, with enforcement expected to remain lax.

Prior to Noll's motion, the Commission approved a resolution to accept funds to be used "to begin the process of safely, strategically, and proactively providing communities within Atchison County the resources they need to both mitigating the spread of COVID-19 and invest in long-term economic recovery."

Unanimous approval was granted for receipt of the first round of funding, which will provide nearly \$3.3 million dollars for distribution to city's and school district's in the County.

The County is expected to receive the funds July 15, and they must be expended by December 30.

The Commission also addressed extension of the County's virus pandemic-related emergency order that County Counselor Patrick Henderson explained was necessary for eligibility to receive separate federal funds. "This relates to FEMA, and it is a different source of funding than the CARES Act funding," Henderson explained. "We must have the resolution in order to be eligible to apply, but there isn't the guaranteed pool of money from which we're drawing."

The 60 day extension of the emergency order was approved unanimously.

Many Signals Communications