

Ramirez, Angelica

Public Comment

From: Linda <lkrop@cox.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 9, 2021 8:22 AM
To: sbcob
Cc: County Executive Office; PHD WEB WebMaster
Subject: COVID-19 (Board Agenda, Item 1)



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Dear Chair Hart and Honorable Supervisors,

First, I want to thank you all for your dedication throughout 2020 to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, despite your efforts, many people have died and unknown numbers of people have become ill, many of whom will suffer long-lasting or even permanent disabilities. Tragically, the situation is only getting worse. As you know, our hospitals no longer have adequate capacity and staffing to care for all of our population, including both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients. I have friends who work at Cottage Hospital facilities who are being asked to start caring for COVID-19 patients even though that is far from their background or training.* However, they are doing so because we are in a crisis. The situation will only become worse as the more infectious strain of the virus spreads.

My request is this: the current approach by the County and Public Health Department is not working. I am amazed how many people are not wearing masks, are traveling, and gathering. I have been trying to think about how to elevate the community's consciousness and response to the pandemic. During the fires and debris flow, the County hosted daily briefings with updates from various departments and an opportunity for the media to ask questions. These briefings emphasized the urgency of the emergencies. I recommend adopting a similar approach to COVID-19. More people have died, and continue dying, from COVID-19 than from any other emergency in our County. The situation is only getting worse.

Please consider daily briefings involving County elected officials, Public Health representatives, and community health representatives (e.g., from the various hospitals and other facilities that are affected by COVID-19). You could share information, including impacts to the health of our entire community and anonymous reporting opportunities. I realize that much of this information is included in your weekly Board briefings but most people do not watch these hearings. Publicized, televised and online daily briefings would demonstrate the urgency of the matter and would reach many more sectors of our community. I also wonder if any of the families who have been affected by losing loved ones would allow the County to disclose the identifies of those who have died. I know how impactful it was to learn about the lost lives during the fires and debris flows. Simply reporting numbers does not have the same effect. Perhaps if people see who we have lost in our community, and how it is affecting their families, it would become more real.

In closing, I know you are doing everything you can in terms of medical response, but I urge you to think creatively about how you can facilitate more effective public compliance and safety. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully,
 Linda Krop

*They are receiving new training to be able to care for COVID-19 patients.