

**MINUTES OF THE EMERGENCY MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA**

Monday, April 27, 2015

5th Floor Conference Room, Veterans Service Building, 20 West 12th Street, St. Paul

In attendance: Governor Mark Dayton
 Lt. Governor Tina Smith
 Attorney General Lori Swanson
 State Auditor Rebecca Otto
 Secretary of State Steve Simon

The meeting was convened at approximately 3:00 p.m.

The item before the Executive Council is to consider extending for up to 30 days the peacetime emergency declared on April 23, 2015, in the Governor's Executive Order 15-09, which provided emergency relief in response to the presence of H5N2 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Minnesota.

- ◆ **Lt. Governor Smith** motioned to adopt the resolution for the peacetime emergency declared on April 23, 2015, which was seconded by Governor Dayton and unanimously approved.

Following the motion, further discussion from the Executive Council and brief presentations from agency commissioners and other officials ensued:

Governor Dayton recapped his and Lt. Governor Smith's Saturday April 25, 2015 visit to Willmar, where they were briefed on the widespread devastation of the bird flu outbreak by on-site officials. About 20% of the state's turkey population was noted as being affected, with Kandiyohi County having the highest concentration of cases.

Dr. Bill Hartmann, Board of Animal Health, stated that the board's goal is to eradicate the virus nationwide and not just in Minnesota. In Minnesota, over 3 million birds had died and 49 farms depopulated since the first case was identified on March 5, 2015. Newly affected farms were being discovered every day. He added that the emergency declaration would provide better coordination of efforts, a joint information center, and resources such as trucks to haul large volumes of water.

Commissioner David Frederickson, Department of Agriculture, reported that the agency would continue to support the Board of Animal Health and is happy to play a role in the process.

Major General Richard Nash, Department of Military Affairs, reported that 33 soldiers were mobilized on April 27, 2015, in response to the emergency Order. In response to the water transportation shortage, 15 vehicles carrying about 2000 gallons of water per truck were sent to Willmar to handle the foaming operation.

Commissioner Ramona Dohman, Department of Public Safety, acknowledged that the Governor's Order directed their division of HSEM to continue to implement the emergency operations plan. The agency had been operating under a virtual emergency operations center until the Order, then advanced to a level 3 state emergency operations center operating 7 days a week.

Commissioner Tom Landwehr, Department of Natural Resources, reported that 2300 fecal samples were collected from various locations around the state, including locations in proximity to infestation sites, to determine if there were any hot spots. Sick and dead wild birds were also submitted for testing and pending results. The department had provided information to hunters regarding bird handling precautions during the hunting season.

Commissioner Edward Ehlinger, Department of Health, acknowledged the department's continuing efforts to ensure that public health is protected. Workers directly handling the birds would be monitored. The department would also educate the public regarding the low health risk and reiterate that the food supply is safe.

Commissioner Myron Frans, Department of Management and Budget, is working with the USDA federal funding component that is reimbursing some of the costs. Additionally, a request has been made to the legislature for financial assistance in the current biennium and the next biennium to ensure funds are available to cover the activities not covered by the USDA.

Representative Dave Baker highlighted his constituents' gratitude for the state's support in response to the flu outbreak. Time remained a concern, but there is hope that new techniques for water delivery and euthanizing sick birds would contain the outbreak. Representative Baker asked if there is a way to help clean barns stay clean longer and if lab results could be obtained quicker, possibly by deploying a mobile lab to the area via the Nation Guard.

Further discussion ensued regarding the availability of a mobile lab, the source of the virus, further case studies, economic fallout, emphasis on public safety--particularly food safety, and mobilization of additional resources to contain the outbreak.

Governor Dayton mentioned he would follow-up with USDA Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, regarding reimbursement of depopulation costs.

Secretary of State Steve Simon asked about the Council's authority to extend the Order beyond 30 days. Per Minnesota Statute Section 12.31, the majority vote of each house of the legislature had the authority to extend the emergency beyond 30 days.

◆ **On Roll Call**, the result was:

Ayes: Governor Dayton, Lt. Governor Smith, Attorney General Swanson, State Auditor Otto and Secretary of State Simon.

Noes: (0)

The motion prevailed and the resolution was adopted.

Governor Dayton adjourned the meeting.

Approved by the Executive Council on June 3, 2015.