Catawba County Board of Health
Minutes
February 8, 2021

The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, February 8, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom and at Catawba County Public Health, 3070 11th Ave Dr. SE, Hickory, NC 28602.

Members Present:  Dr. David C. Hamilton, Jr, Chair*
                   Mr. John H. Dollar, Vice-Chair*
                   Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner
                   Ms. Gloria Costin*
                   Dr. Matthew Davis*
                   Dr. Dana H. Greene*
                   Dr. Gale Hamilton-Brandon*
                   Ms. Susan Knowles*
                   Mr. William Pitts*
                   Mr. Brian Potocki*

Members Absent:    None

Staff present:     Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director*
                   Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director*
                   Ms. Julie Byrd, Women and Children's Health Administrator*
                   Ms. Honey Estrada, Public Health Strategist*
                   Ms. Emily Killian, Community Engagement Specialist/PIO
                   Ms. Chantae Lail, Medical Lab Manager/Preparedness Coordinator*
                   Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, WIC Director*
                   Ms. Megan McBride, Environmental Health Administrator*
                   Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor*
                   Ms. Kim Spaulding, School Health Nurse Supervisor*
                   Ms. Rhonda Stikeleather, Children's Services Nurse Supervisor*
                   Ms. Debra A. Young, Administrative Assistant II

Guests:            Judge Nathaniel J. Poovey
                   Ms. LaTrenda Saddler, Public Health Nurse*
                   Ms. Elaine Yancey, Public Health Nurse*
                   Mr. Gerardo Zayas, Program Assistant*

*Attended via Zoom meeting

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL
Dr. David Hamilton, Jr., Chair, called the meeting of the Catawba County Public Health Board to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed Board members, Public Health managers, staff and guests. Dr. Hamilton instructed the Board Members on the virtual meeting roll call and voting process. There were no questions regarding roll call or the voting process instructions.
APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES
Dr. David Hamilton, Chair, stated that Board members had received the current meeting Agenda and the Board Minutes for December 14, 2020. Dr. Hamilton asked if there were any changes to the Agenda or corrections to the prior meeting Minutes. There being none, a motion was made to accept the Agenda and previous meeting Minutes by Mr. William Pitts and seconded by Ms. Gloria Costin. The Agenda and minutes were unanimously approved via a virtual roll call vote of the board members present.

OATH OF OFFICE
The Honorable Judge Nathaniel J. Poovey administered the Oath of Office for Catawba County Board of Health Member, Commissioner Austin Allran.

The Honorable Judge Nathaniel J. Poovey administered the Oath of Office for Health Director to Ms. Jennifer McCracken.

Mr. Allran and Ms. McCracken each signed an Oath of Office which is also part of the official minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Dr. Hamilton asked if anyone presented to speak before the Board. Ms. Debra Young, Administrative Assistant II, stated that no one had presented to speak.

NEW EMPLOYEES
Ms. LaTrenda Saddler previously worked for Catawba County Public Health for 13 years as a Public Health Nurse in the Adult Health Clinic. She has returned to work as a Public Health Nurse that will be trained to serve in all clinic capacities (Adult Health, Communicable Disease, and Immunizations). Ms. Saddler has her BSN from Lenoir-Rhyne University. She was most recently a Registered Nurse with Frye Regional Medical Center.

Mr. Gerardo Zayas is a bilingual Program Assistant working in the Adult Health clinic. Mr. Zayas has an Associate’s Degree from Greenville Technical College in Graphic Design and work background in information technology. He has done an excellent job over the past month learning new concepts at Public Health.

Ms. Elaine Yancey is a Public Health Nurse currently serving in the Immunizations and Communicable Disease clinics. Ms. Yancey received her BSN from UNC-Wilmington in December, 2019. She comes to Public Health from Atrium Health where she was a Clinical Registered Nurse on the Medical Surgical Unit and also cared for COVID positive patients.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS
Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner, stated he did not have anything to report this month. Mr. Allran stated that he is honored to be on the Board and appreciates the kind welcoming.
**STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**

Ms. Honey Estrada, Public Health Strategist, presented the annual update on the Public Health Strategic Plan. Ms. Estrada began the presentation by stating that the strategic plan is an ever-changing plan, one that is considered to be a continued journey.

Catawba County Public Health’s Strategic Plan Foundation uses the CLEAR Model:
- Center – value affirmation
- Leverage – asset inventory
- Evaluate – needs identification
- Aspire – solution creation
- Resolve – action planning

The Strategic Plan helps set a foundation for Public health, it helps show that we are who we say we are and sets longer, more meaningful goals. The Plan has four priority areas: investment, community engagement, retooling and decision-making, which all of these priorities help identify Public Health’s strengths and weaknesses and plan for the future with a clearer vision.

- **Investment** – improving grant-seeking processes. Optimize billable, fee-based and participation-based service provision. Leverage public-private partnerships to extend resources. Received COVID funding to support various operations. School nurses – investment from school districts. Community Health Workers project. Credentialled with BCBS to offer immunizations.
- **Retooling** – enhancing communication and collaboration within Public Health. Training employees for flexible, overlapping roles. Developing a system for coaching and mentoring. In Environmental Health, the staff are trained to support each other in lead and tattoo’s. WIC trains nutritionists to work in the program assistant roles. The School Nurses are communicable disease experts within their schools.
- **Decision Making** – improve data systems. Expanding Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). Broaden decision-making opportunities.

Ms. Estrada asked if there were any questions regarding the Strategic Plan update. There being no further discussion, Dr. Hamilton asked for a motion to accept the Strategic Plan update as presented this evening. Mr. William Pitts made the motion, Ms. Gloria Costin seconded and the Board unanimously approved the Strategic Plan update via a virtual roll call vote of the board members present.

The Public Health Strategic Plan PowerPoint slides are attached to the Minutes.

**MID-YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director, provided the Board with a mid-year Financial Report stating that with a revised budget of $10,506,388, at the second quarter mark expenses and
revenues should be at or around 50 percent or $5,253,194. Both are tracking at 42.3 percent or $4,442,324 - currently under budget.

**Notable revenue points**
COVID-19 response has affected several expenditure line which in turn also affects revenue. Staff time in many program areas has been dramatically reduced as efforts have turned to COVID-19 response.

County Share, which is the balancing fund between all outside sources of revenue and expenses is currently tracking at 28.9 percent. County Share at the mid-year point for 2019-2020 was 26.7 percent and in 2018-2019 was at 41.1 percent. County Share is always the last funding source that is utilized after all other sources are exhausted.

Environmental Health - fees are tracking at 59 percent. Revenue collected is up 10.33 percent from the second quarter of 2019-2020.

**Expenses**
In a typical year, expenses should would be tracking at or around 50 percent but are currently tracking at 42.3 percent.

Mid-Year: $4,442,324 ($810,870 under budget for mid-year)
- Personnel is tracking at 46 percent
- Operational expenses are tracking at 29.7 percent

**Expense Highlights**
- COVID-19 has truly affected nearly all operation expenses in some way.
- Unbudgeted expenses related to COVID-19 response (personnel expenses and supplies such as Sharps containers, gloves, bandages, masks and IT equipment for computers and telephones)

**ELIGIBILITY, FEE, AND BILLING POLICY ANNUAL REVIEW**
Mr. Jason Williams, continued with the annual review of the Eligibility, Fee and Billing Policy. This policy is a guidance document for fiscal processes within all of Public Health’s clinical operations. It is reviewed annually based upon payor updates and changes are approved annually by the Board of Health. The policy covers client identification (types of identification accepted by Public Health clients), determining gross income (sliding fee scales – acceptable sources to meet states requirements), eligibility, collection and billing of fees, program specific requirements (policy update), bad debt, NC debt set-off and denied claims amongst other things. Currently, client debt expires after 10 years however, Public health has the opportunity to extend that time and will consider that as the debts come closer to expiration.

No changes were identified this year but as stated previously, this Policy is required to be reviewed and approved by the Board on an annual basis.
There being no further discussions, Mr. William Pitts made a motion to accept the Eligibility, Fee, and Billing Policy as presented and Ms. Gloria Costin seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously via a virtual roll call vote of the board members present.

**FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE - PROPOSED FY 2021-2022 BUDGET AND OUTCOMES**

Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director, provided a summary of the proposed FY 2021-2022 budget. Based on prior history and funding information from grants, County, State and Federal sources the FY 2021-2022 budget is projected and, after Board of Health approval, will go to the County Manager’s Office and then the Board of Commissioners for approval and final adoption. A full copy of the summary, FY 2021-2022 proposed budget and presentation slides were previously emailed to the Board of Health in their monthly packet.

Mr. Williams noted that the FY 2021-2022 budget request does not include potential pay increases or final information for health and dental insurance at this time and that State and Federal funding provided via Agreement Addenda is not finalized.

**Overall Summary of Budget**

- Total FY 2021-2022 budget request is $10,049,796.
- The revenue contributors to this budget are as follows:
  - County: $4,659,370 - 47.6%
  - State/Federal: $1,760,943 - 17.5%
  - Fees/Medicaid: $1,689,757 – 16.8%
  - Other Revenue: $1,814,041 – 18.1%
- FY 2021-2022 budget request represents an increase of $462,895 over FY 2020-2021 budget or 4.83%.
- Reasons for this increase are:
  - Request for two new School Nurse positions - $144,057
  - Increases in salary/benefits for two School Nurse positions added in FY2021 - $133,064
  - Request for one Administrative Assistant II position (Communicable Disease) – $57,380
  - Facility Renovations - $120,000
  - Various other increases in operating costs throughout Public Health’s budget.
- Increased County Share above FY 2020-2021 appropriation - $644,230. If approved by the County, this number may be reduced by utilizing funds from the sale of our Home Health Agency.

Mr. Williams stated that Catawba County has systems in place to evaluate and change policy, salaries, and benefits to remain competitive with other employers. Mr. Williams further noted that the overall budget also represents Catawba County Public Health’s commitment to workforce development, staff training and education for all employees. All Board of Health and Subcommittee members receive training opportunities throughout the year as well. Allocations like these presented in the proposed budget, reflect the commitment of Catawba County and Public Health to recruit and retain the best workforce possible and give our employees the knowledge and tools to provide the best services to our residents.
Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, along with Mr. Williams reviewed the Major Budget Points including staffing, partnerships, resources, and Environmental Health fees, which are all included in the attached FY 2020-2021 Annual Budget (Proposed) summary dated January 27, 2021.

Ms. McCracken continued with a review of the Program Specific Information. Each program area is highlighted on the attached FY 2021-2022 Annual Budget (Proposed) summary as well.

Mr. Williams ended the budget presentation with an overview of the proposed outcomes for Public Health for FY 2021-2022. Mr. Williams stated that the outcomes have been submitted to the County Manager’s Office and will mostly remain unchanged from the current fiscal year. There is one change that will take place regarding the removal of a Preparedness Outcome which is no longer relevant based on COVID-19 response. This will decrease Public Health’s Outcomes to 12 for next fiscal year.

There being no further discussion, the Finance Subcommittee Chair, Mr. William Pitts, stated that the subcommittee met on January 27, 2021 and reviewed the proposed Catawba County Public Health budget for fiscal year 2021-2022, based on the same information that was presented this evening. Mr. Pitts asked if there were any additional questions before calling for a vote. Hearing no additional questions or comments, Mr. Pitts made the recommendation for approval of the proposed budget and outcomes for fiscal year 2021-2022 as presented. Dr. David Hamilton proceeded with a virtual roll call vote of the board members present. The recommendation was unanimously approved.

Mr. Pitts commended Catawba County Public Health staff for their presentations and information provided at the subcommittee meeting and at the Board meeting this evening.

A full copy of the summary, FY 2021-2022 budget request, and presentation slides are attached to the minutes.

HEALTH DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, stated that she had a few additional brief comments:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Catawba County Positive Cases</th>
<th>Currently Hospitalized Positives</th>
<th>Catawba County Deaths</th>
<th>Catawba County Total Tests Completed*</th>
<th>Catawba County Negative Results*</th>
<th>Catawba County Recovered*</th>
<th>CMS County Positivity Rate*</th>
<th>Vaccine 1st Dose*</th>
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<tr>
<td>16,173</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>77,616</td>
<td>61,561</td>
<td>14,704</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>13,481</td>
</tr>
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<td>NC Cases (per NCDHHS website)</td>
<td>NC Deaths (per NCDHHS website)</td>
<td>NC Tests Completed (per NCDHHS website)</td>
<td>NC Currently Hospitalized (per NCDHHS website)</td>
<td>US Cases (per CDC website)</td>
<td>US Deaths (per CDC website)</td>
<td>NC DHHS County Positivity Rate**</td>
<td>Vaccine 2nd Dose*</td>
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<tr>
<td>799,279</td>
<td>9,991</td>
<td>9,311,180</td>
<td>2,339</td>
<td>26,761,047</td>
<td>460,582</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>3,418</td>
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*Numbers updated weekly on Wednesdays **Numbers updated biweekly on Wednesdays
Where we are with COVID-19 response:
The State is contracting with StarMed along with several other companies, to assist with testing sites. Last Tuesday, February 2, StarMed took over Tuesday drive-thru testing for Catawba County Public Health. Public Health will continue to test on Friday’s and will frequently review handing over Friday testing to StarMed as well.

- 79 new positive cases reported today
- Data is trending in the right direction -- downward
- Testing numbers have decreased. Not just in Catawba County but in other counties as well.
- Catawba County Public health began vaccinations on December 27, 2020.
- Continue to operate vaccine clinic at the Hickory Metro Convention Center 4 days a week, 12 hours a day.
- Six nurse’s stations set up – vaccinating 6 people every 5 minutes.
- Partnering with LRU -- nursing students are assisting with vaccinating and directing citizens.
- Currently vaccinating Group 1 and Group 2 – Healthcare providers and those 65 and older.
- Planning for Group 3 - not sure when the State will move into Group 3.

Other notable items:
- Public Health continues to receive brief COVID vaccine updates each week from the State.
- Currently holding weekly partner meetings with the team at public Health and with local hospitals.
- COVID-19 fatigue continues with staff.
- Public Health continues to work with all 3 local school districts, CVCC and LRU.
- A reminder that the monthly infographics were included in the Board packet.

OTHER BUSINESS
None

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, Dr. David Hamilton asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. John Dollar so moved, and Dr. Dana Greene seconded the motion. Dr. Hamilton adjoined the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Jennifer F. McCracken
Secretary to the Board of Health
Health Director

JFM: day

Approved by Board of Health: March 8, 2021