

**Catawba County Board of Health
Minutes
December 09, 2024**

The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, December 09, 2024, at 7:00 pm at Catawba County Public Health, 3070 11th Ave Dr. SE, Hickory, NC 28602.

Members Present: Mr. William Pitts, Chair
Dr. Bruce Carlton, Vice-Chair
Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner
Dr. Hannah Glenn
Ms. Susan Knowles
Ms. Rebecca McLeod
Dr. Eugene Modlin
Dr. Steven Sanderson
Mr. Vidal Sipe
Ms. Janice Walker
Mr. Shad Walters

Members Absent: None

Staff present: Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director
Ms. Julie Byrd, Assistant Health Director
Ms. Jami Bentley, Billing and Systems Administrator
Ms. Tammy Fickling, Program Manager CMHRP/CMARC
Ms. Emily Killian, Community Engagement Specialist/PIO
Ms. Melissa Kirkpatrick, Operations Administrator
Ms. Chantae Lail, Medical Lab Manager/Preparedness Coordinator*
Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, Health Services Manager
Ms. Megen McBride, Environmental Health Administrator*
Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor
Mr. Jeremy Stockton, WIC Director
Ms. Marianne Vogel, School Health Nursing Supervisor
Ms. Debra A. Young, Administrative Assistant II

Guests: Mr. Zack King, Managing Director, DellaRe Consulting
Ms. Rejohnda Tucker, School Nurse
Ms. Kristen Killian, School Nurse

*Attended via Zoom meeting

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mr. William Pitts, Chair, called the Catawba County Public Health Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed Board members, Public Health managers, staff, and guests.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES

Mr. William Pitts, Chair, stated that Board members received the meeting agenda and the Board minutes for October 14, 2024, in the Board packet that the Board members receive via email. Mr. Pitts asked if there were any changes to the Agenda or corrections to the prior meeting Minutes. There being none, Mr. Pitts motioned to accept the agenda and previous meeting minutes as presented, and Mr. Vidal Sipe seconded the motion. The agenda and minutes were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Pitts asked if anyone presented to speak before the Board. Ms. Debra Young, Administrative Assistant II, stated that no one had presented to speak to the board this evening.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner, stated that the Board of Commissioners recently met and continues to support the recovery efforts in WNC and various upcoming local projects in the area.

WIC/FARMERS MARKET END OF SEASON UPDATE

Mr. Jeremy Stockton, WIC Director, updated the Board on *50 years of WIC*. WIC stands for Women, Infants & Children and is a special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children. It aims to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age five who are at nutrition risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

WIC began in Catawba County on February 1, 1977, and was named the Women's, Infants, and Children Project. At that time, only Catawba County residents could qualify for nutritional aid. Now, you can live outside Catawba County and qualify for WIC.

Mr. Stockton continued with the update, stating that the state-assigned caseload for Catawba County for fiscal year 2024-25 is 3,513 participants per month. WIC currently serves an average of 3,674 participants monthly, which equals 111.23% of the state-assigned caseload.

Currently, there are 31 vendors in Catawba County, including corporate and non-corporate stores. The WIC program paid vendors in Catawba County \$3,354,394 in fiscal year 2023-2024.

WIC continues to offer the monthly Cash Value Benefit. These options are for fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables and include organic items should the participant choose.

Mr. Stockton further provided an update on the 2024 farmer's market season. This was the twelfth season of the farmers' market being held at Catawba County Public Health, with approximately 2,500 customers attending the market this season. The market was held on Thursdays from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm from June through September. Based on data from the State, Catawba County finished 2nd overall in the State for market voucher redemption.

The total volume of sales for the 2024 season, including WIC vouchers, Bonus Bucks and Double Bucks, SNAP/EBT, and personal debit cards, was \$18,152.

The presentation slides are attached to the minutes.

NCCARE360

Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, Health Services Manager, gave an update to the Board of Health Members on *NCCARE360*, stating that Community Healthcare Workers (CHWs) utilize NCCARE360, which is the first statewide network that unites healthcare and human services organizations with a shared technology that enables a coordinated, community-oriented, person-centered approach to delivering care in North Carolina. NCCARE360 is available in all 100 counties across NC.

The NCCARE360 platform has a statewide resource directory that includes a call center with dedicated navigators, a data team verifying resources, and text and chat capabilities. It is a shared technology platform that enables health care and human services to send/receive secure electronic referrals, seamlessly communicate in real-time, securely share client information and track outcomes. This provides a no-wrong-door approach and closes the loop on every referral made. NCCARE 360 is a result of a public-private partnership between the NCDHHS and the Foundation for Health Leadership and Innovation (FHLI supports innovative partnerships and healthy communities). The NCCARE360 implementation partners are United Way of NC/211, Expound Decision Systems, and Unite Us.

Catawba County Public Health had 1,800 referrals from 2023 to date, and the Community Health Workers have managed 2,922 internal cases.

Ms. Lindsay continued with the plans for outreach efforts, including ten one-on-one meetings with various community partners to demonstrate the platform. She also welcomed the Board Members to attend any event that interests them.

The PowerPoint presentation is attached to the minutes.

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CHIP)

Mr. Zack King, Managing Director of DellaRe Consulting, presented the Board of Health Members with an update on the 2023-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), stating that this has been a collaborative process that involves many different community members and partners.

Mr. King explained what the CHIP is and why it must be completed. He further stated that the three 2024-2027 health priorities that were identified are (1) access to healthy food, (2) brain health, and (3) safe, engaging, and active spaces. Mr. King reviewed a variety of data graphs for each of the health priorities and informed the board of the strategy priorities for each health priority as well.

The PowerPoint presentation is attached to Minutes.

SCHOOL HEALTH UPDATE

Ms. Marianne Vogel, School Health Supervisor, provided the Board with the annual School Health update.

Ms. Vogel stated that there is school nurse coverage for at least a few days each week in every school in all three school districts in Catawba County and that two vacancies are actively being recruited.

Public Health continues to advocate for additional school nurse positions to be added each budget year. Last school year, the nurse-to-student ratio was 1:770.

In the 2023-24 school year, 312 Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) members were trained, the school nurses held 345 Health Education sessions, and case management of 286 students.

Student immunizations that are required to be up to date by the 30th day of school were all above 94% for the 2024-25 school year.

Ms. Vogel finished the presentation with various school nurse recognitions, including National Board-Certified nurses, life-saving epinephrine given, and school nurses deployed to assist in shelters after Hurricane Helene.

The PowerPoint presentation is attached to the minutes.

ANNUAL BOARD OF HEALTH NOTEBOOK UPDATES

Ms. Debra Young, Administrative Assistant II, informed the Board members of an updated Board of Health Member packet located at their seats for their Board notebooks. Mr. Pitts thanked Ms. Young for keeping their members' notebooks current.

HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, stated she had a few updates to report for the Health Director's report.

- October is considered the “official” start of “respiratory disease season,” as flu, COVID, and RSV typically begin circulating in higher numbers in the fall.
- A student at Arndt Middle School was diagnosed with pertussis, more commonly known as whooping cough.
- A new rule in NC makes all Carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPOs) reportable to Public Health.
- The Association of North Carolina Boards of Health awarded Catawba County Public Health’s Environmental Health Lead Investigation Team the prestigious Carl Durham Award in recognition of the team’s contribution to a child lead exposure investigation that resulted in a dangerous food product being removed from grocery shelves nationwide.

- Safety Coordinator Chantae Lail and Safety Team Member Debra Young completed the Manager of Environmental Safety and Health (MESH) Certificate Program requirements.
- Public Health's model of safety practices was recognized at the second annual Catawba County Safety Awards Luncheon.
- Public Health's newest group of supervisors and one new Safety Committee member completed the 10-hour General Industry OSHA Hazard Awareness Training.
- Rejohnda Tucker, a School Nurse assigned to Catawba County Schools, initiated lifesaving measures and used an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), a medical device that is designed to shock the person's heart and bring it back into a normal rhythm.
- Kristen Killian, a School Nurse also assigned to Catawba County Schools, successfully performed the Heimlich Maneuver on a child at her school. Using this maneuver, she was able to expel the bottle cap from the child's windpipe, allowing them to breathe normally again.

The Health Director's presentation slides are attached to the Minutes.

OTHER BUSINESS

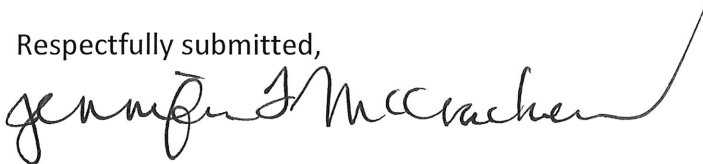
None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. William Pitts motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Dr. Steven Sanderson so moved. Mr. Pitts adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

The next Board of Health meeting will be on February 10, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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

JFM: day

Approved by Board of Health: February 10, 2025