Catawba County Board of Health
Minutes
May 11, 2020

The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, May 11, 2020 at 7:00 pm via a Zoom meeting and at Catawba County Public Health, 3070 11th Ave Dr. SE, Hickory, NC 28602.

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

Members Absent: None

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

*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 7:00pm. He welcomed Board members, Public Health managers and staff. 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
Dr. David Hamilton, Chair, stated that Board members had received the agenda. Dr. Hamilton asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There being none, Dr. Hamilton asked for a motion to accept the agenda as submitted, Mr. William Pitts, made the motion and Mr. Dan Hunsucker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously via a virtual vote.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The minutes for March 09, 2020, were included in the Board packet that the Board members received via email. Dr. David Hamilton, Chair, asked if there were any corrections. There being no corrections, Ms. Gloria Costin made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Mr. John Dollar seconded the motion. The March minutes were unanimously approved via a virtual vote.

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.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS
Mr. Dan Hunsucker, County Commissioner, gave a brief update from the County Commissioners meeting as follows:
- The Mountain Creek Park is planned to open in the Fall of 2021.
- The budget process for fiscal year 2020-2021 is well under way and departmental budget hearings will take place later this month.
  - Due to COVID-19 and loss of sales tax revenue, some capital improvements will be postponed. There will also be a delay in hiring some vacant positions and some newly requested positions.

CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION TEAM (CFPT) ANNUAL UPDATE
Ms. Rhonda Stikeleather, Children’s Services Nurse Supervisor, shared an infographic covering the Child Fatality Prevention Team (CFPT) annual report, which included what the CFPT is responsible for and how it is a State mandated team. The CFPT is a multidisciplinary team from all around the county and this team works with the State Child Fatality Task Force to help improve system issues. Ms. Stikeleather mentioned that the CFPT has a stronger partnership with the Safe Kids Coalition of Catawba County since they joined in 2018.

Ms. Stikeleather noted that Catawba County had one less death in 2018 (16) than in 2017 (17) and almost half (7) of the deaths reviewed involved children under the age of one. Safe sleep is an ongoing topic and it is sometimes difficult making sure infants have a safe sleep environment and has the appropriate sleeping arrangement. The CFPT continues to find that some infants sleep in an adult’s bed, on a couch or in a crib or bassinet but with a lot of blankets and other items that may cause suffocation or entanglement and unfortunately, it is becoming more difficult to have these cases categorized as such by the State Medical Examiner’s Office.

As a multidisciplinary team, the CFPT will continue to support the education of parents and pediatric offices regarding safe sleep and the importance of early prenatal care along with unintentional poisoning (medication storage) and human trafficking. The Child Fatality Prevention Team also continues to encourage and educate practices and agencies to discuss drug dependency with their mothers. Ms. Stikeleather also stated that the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program continues to see success in the number of days’ babies spend in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).
Last year, there were 100 Pack-n-Plays purchased by Catawba County Public Health to distribute to parents that are in need of a safe sleeping option in their home.

The CFPT infographic is attached to these minutes and additional information on the NC Child Fatality Prevention Team is available at [https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/nccfpp/](https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/nccfpp/)

**THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL UPDATE AND MEDICAID COST SETTLEMENT UPDATE**

Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director, provided the Board with a Third Quarter Financial Report stating that with a revised annual budget of $9,636,778, at the third quarter mark expenses and revenues should be at or around 75 percent or $7,227,583. Both are tracking at 63.6 percent or $6,127,807 - currently under budget. The County share, the balancing revenue each month, is tracking at 43.8 percent. It was noted that the 2018-2019 County Share at the end of the third quarter was 62.3 percent.

*Notable revenue points*

The COVID-19 response is affecting both revenues and expenses.

Medicaid – paid Per Member Per Month (PMPM) - Catawba County Public Health has seen twelve consecutive months of reductions from the State. The proposed 2020-2021 budget has been adjusted to reflect the reductions.

Environmental Health - fees are tracking at 82.1 percent. Revenue collected is up 4.21 percent from the third quarter of 2018-2019.

**Expenses**

**Personnel**
- Tracking at 66.2 percent for the third quarter.
- Operational expenses are tracking at 53.7 percent.

**Expense Highlights**
- Community Linkages for Care (CLC) Grant – expenses related to overdose prevention (solely State funds)
- Expense timing varies (maintenance of equipment, other contractual services, implementation of Health Promotion & Strategy, etc.)
- Clinical supplies utilization down based on staff vacancies and limited appointments during COVID-19 response.

Mr. Williams continued with an update on the Medicaid Cost Settlement for Catawba County Public Health.

Cost settlement reports are submitted annually, in conjunction with the NC Alliance of Public Health Agencies. The report is a detailed look at the actual costs of all clinical areas, including adult health, Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD), laboratory, child health, maternity services and the immunization clinic.
The report compares the actual cost incurred by local health departments to the Medicaid interim reimbursement payments. It determines the federal share of difference between the cost to provide Medicaid services and Medicaid reimbursement. The report also ensures that local health departments are reimbursed for actual costs (settlement) and that Medicaid is not overpaying for services (payback).

Catawba County Public Health still has outstanding settlement payments for the audit and payback scenarios (10% payback) for 2016/17 through 2018/19.

The presentation slides, budget documents and Medicaid Cost Settlement memo are attached to the Minutes.

**FLU – END OF SEASON REPORT AND COVID-19 UPDATE**

Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Nursing Supervisor, presented the End of Season Flu Report. Ms. Rhodes stated that this year’s flu season affected more people; however, it was less deadly than 2018-19. It was also unique in that there were three spikes, one at the end of 2019, one in February 2020, which is when the flu typically peaks, and one in late March amid COVID-19 testing.

As of April 28, 2020, there were 177 influenza-associated deaths reported in North Carolina for the 2019-2020 season, with 2 of those deaths being in Catawba County.

Catawba County Public Health Immunizations Clinic ordered 490 influenza vaccines, and as of March 28th, 424 have been given compared to 476 vaccinations given last flu season. The flu vaccine is still available for those who request it and it is still being recommended for pregnant patients.

It was noted that the influenza spikes may have been due to COVID-19 testing as it was originally required to have a negative influenza test to be tested for COVID-19. That requirement no longer exists.

Ms. Rhodes also stated that since the symptoms of COVID-19 and influenza are very similar, the percent of influenza-like illness (ILI) data is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Flu Infographic is attached to the Minutes.

**HEALTH DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Ms. Jennifer F. McCracken, Health Director, stated she had a few additional items to report on regarding COVID-19 response:

- COVID-19 update – Ms. McCracken applauded the Public Health staff for all of their hard work and all of the tireless hours spent in fighting and tracking the virus. Public Health has done a phenomenal job and it goes without saying, this is a cornerstone of what Public Health does!
  - Public Health is very appreciative of the support that has been received from the Board of Health as well.
- Public Health is in unified command alongside Catawba County Emergency Management
• Public Health is the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for response – Emergency Management is temporarily housed at Public Health. The EOC operates 7 days a week – 12 hours a day.
• The Public Health Nurse triage line is being staffed 7 days a week. The nurses answer questions, give test results and help clarify information for the public.
• Communication efforts – there is an ongoing crisis of communication. COVID-19 is a health crisis but it has also been a major communication crisis. It has been difficult to get the correct information out to the public. Public Health is constantly working on content that is on target, including what Public Health is planning for, how situations are being handled, etc. The Catawba County Communications Director has been working alongside Public Health as well.
• COVID-19 testing events will be held this Tuesday, May 12 and Friday, May 15, in partnership with Kintegra. Kintegra held a drive-up testing event in Gaston County and Catawba County Public Health contacted them for assistance. Kintegra is bringing their mobile dental unit to Public Health to assist with testing.
• Active surveillance with nursing homes and congregate care facilities has been ongoing for the past 2 months. The facilities report every day regarding sick residents and employees. Communication has been instrumental to head off anything that may become a hot spot.
• Weekly updates will continue to be emailed to the Board of Health. Week ending situational updates are emailed to the Board and Public Health staff every week. The Board will be notified if something happens outside of that weekly update.

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget – Public Health’s budget hearing with the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for May 22nd. Public Health has asked for two additional school nurse positions but it is unclear if those positions will be granted at this time. The School Nurses have been instrumental in the COVID-19 response.

Ms. McCracken stated she had one additional update regarding staffing changes. She congratulated Mr. Jason Williams for being named Assistant Health Director and Ms. Julie Byrd for being named Women and Children’s Health Administrator. The WIC Director position, that Ms. Byrd currently holds, will be posted soon and Public Health will be permitted to recruit for that position.

Dr. Dana Greene congratulated Mr. Williams and Ms. Byrd and thanked all Public Health staff for the guidance given to the Board and the citizens of Catawba County.

Ms. McCracken gave a reminder that the monthly infographics were included in Board packet.

OTHER BUSINESS
None

ADJOURNMENT
Dr. Hamilton thanked the Public Health staff again for the work being performed in the COVID-19 response amongst other things. Dr. Hamilton then reminded the Board of the next meeting on
Monday, June 08, 2020, at 7:00 pm and asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. William Pitts so moved and Ms. Gloria Costin seconded the motion. Dr. Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.

OTHER ITEMS OF RECORD
Ms. Jennifer McCracken was appointed as the Catawba County Health Director by the Catawba County Board of Health effective March 21, 2020. Dr. Hamilton hand delivered the letter of appointment from the Board of Health to Ms. McCracken on March 19, 2020.

The Public Health Month Proclamation, which is held annually in the month of April, was sent via email to the Board of Health members for review and approval. There being no discussion from the Board Members, the Public Health Month Proclamation was approved by the majority.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Approved by Board of Health: June 08, 2020