Catawba County Board of Health
Minutes
May 10, 2021

The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, May 10, 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
Mr. William Pitts
Mr. Brian Potocki*

Members Absent: Ms. Susan Knowles

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. Megen 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: Ms. Debra Bechtel, County Attorney*
Ms. Ellen Minch, PH School Nurse*

*Attended via Zoom meeting

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL
Dr. David Hamilton, Jr., 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. 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 April 12, 2021. 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. Bill 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.

**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**
Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director, stated that there is one new employee to introduce to the Board this month.

Ms. Ellen Minch has joined Public Health as a Public Health Nurse for the CMHRP (Care Management for High-Risk Pregnancies) program. In this role, Ms. Minch also serves as the liaison with the Prenatal Clinic ran by CVMC – Maternity Services. Ms. Minch comes to Public Health from Catawba Women’s Center, where she served as the Clinical Educator to OB patients for nine years. Ms. Minch has her Doctor of Nursing from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

**COUNTY COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS**
Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner, was pleased to announce that Catawba Valley Health System held a groundbreaking ceremony for an Emergency Department expansion and to create a centralized heart center to meet the growing demand for these services. He stated that construction will begin this month.

Mr. Allran also stated that the Board of Commissioners received an informal presentation of the FY 2021-2022 budget at their last meeting. The County Manager will give a formal presentation on June 1st.

**ANNUAL LEGAL UPDATE**
Ms. Debra Bechtel, County Attorney, provided the 2021 Legal Update to the Board of Health members and Catawba County Public Health managers. The presentation included Legislation updates, COVID-19 employee/employer updates, and an Opioid litigation update.

After the presentation, there were no further questions or additional discussion. Attorney Bechtel closed her presentation by reiterating that the Catawba County Legal Department staff are available to the Board of Health and Public Health staff for questions related to any legal matter that may arise in the scope of their Public Health duties.

Attorney Bechtel informed the Board that she would be retiring on June 1st. However, she is looking forward to continuing her work on a part-time basis with Catawba County in the months ahead.

The PowerPoint slides are attached to the minutes.
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 $10,556,309, expenses and revenues should be at or around 75 percent at the end of the third quarter. Both are tracking at 64.1 percent. The County share, the balancing revenue each month, is tracking at 50.3 percent. It was noted that the 2019-2020 County Share at the end of the third quarter was 43.8 percent.

Notable revenue points
The COVID-19 response is still affecting both revenues and expenses.

Medicaid – paid Per Member Per Month (PMPM) is tracking at 84.6 percent. Catawba County Public Health has transitioned from twelve consecutive months of reductions to eleven consecutive months of increase from the State. This results in an $8,784 monthly increase.

Environmental Health - fees are tracking at 94.7 percent. Revenue collected is up 19.31 percent from the third quarter of 2019-2020 and 24.33 percent from the third quarter of 2018-2019, amounting to more than a $55,000 increase.

Expenses
- Tracking at 64.1 percent for the third quarter.
- Personnel expenses are tracking at 69.9 percent.
- Operational expenses are tracking at 44.3 percent.

Expense Highlights
- Part-time wages have been adjusted throughout the year to reflect the COVID-19 response.
- The County has approved overtime wages to assist with controlling comp time accrual related to COVID-19 response.
- Many expenses have been affected by the COVID-19 response.
- Facility renovations

COVID-19 Response Revenue Highlights
Has covered personnel (full time and hourly), overtime payments, testing and vaccination supplies, PPE, vaccination site expenses, IT expenses, printing, internet connections, postage, advertisements, response equipment, etc.
- Five allocations of State & Federal funding to date
- Revenue: $2,499,047
- Spent/obligated: $719,093
- Remaining: $1,779,964

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 that are received through fee for service billing. It determines the federal share of the 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).


The PowerPoint presentation and Financial Update are attached to the minutes.

**HEALTH DIRECTOR’S REPORT**
Ms. McCracken stated that Ms. Emily Killian, Community Engagement Specialist, and Ms. Honey Estrada, Public Health Strategist, had a brief update on Vaccine Equity.

Ms. Emily Killian stated that the Vaccination Equity Infographic would be emailed to the Board after this evening’s meeting. She noted that all information on page 1 is based on Census population estimates for 2019 and that this data includes only the first doses administered to people who were at least 18 years of age. We are currently vaccinating people age 16 and up, but that is not reflected in this data. Ms. Honey Estrada stated that page 2 of the Infographic shows the trends in our County.

Ms. Killian ended the presentation by stating that Catawba County still has a long way to go in the marathon to get our residents vaccinated.

The Infographic is attached to the minutes.

Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, stated that she had a few additional brief comments:
Where we are with COVID-19 response:

- As of today, the FDA has approved Pfizer for 12-15 years of age.
- Public Health has been working with Unifour Pediatrics and Catawba Pediatrics to provide Pfizer vaccines. These pediatric practices have been vaccinating their 16+ year-old patients. Newton Family Physicians has also been giving vaccines (Moderna). More providers are coming on board, and Public Health has assisted them in giving vaccines to their patients.
- Vaccines will now be packaged in smaller lots (about 400 doses). This will be helpful for Pfizer distribution. Manufacturers are trying to lengthen the time allowed out of ultra-cold storage to assist in vaccine distribution.
- The State is working on a system to assign case managers to practices to become a vaccine provider. Catawba County Public Health has been assisting practices with this thus far in Catawba County.
- It is still not clear if there will be a booster required for the COVID-19 vaccine. This is why it is important to get other sites on board for that booster capacity, should it be needed later.
- Catawba County has given almost 53,000 doses of vaccine - 28.6% have received their first dose, and currently, there are 25.4% that are fully vaccinated.
- Change effective this week → Public Health will continue to operate the vaccine clinic at the Hickory Metro Convention Center 3 days a week, 9 hours a day, in addition to other special event clinics. This schedule will be adjusted if needed by demand.
- Public Health is working with StarMed to be more present in the community. StarMed recently went to Hickory Motor Speedway, and they will be at the Hickory Crawdads game at LP Frans Stadium this coming Sunday to give vaccines. The Crawdads is offering incentives if you bring your vaccination card or get your vaccine that night.
- Continue to hold weekly partner meetings with the team at Public Health and other partner meetings as needed.

Ms. McCracken reminded the Board 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. Bill Pitts so moved, and Mr. John Dollar seconded the motion. Accordingly, Dr. Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

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

JFM: day

Approved by Board of Health: June 14, 2021