The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, August 9, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom and at Catawba County Public Health, 3070 11th Ave Dr. SE, Hickory, NC 28602.

**Members Present:**
- Mr. John H. Dollar, Vice-Chair*
- Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner
- Dr. Bruce Carlton
- 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, School Health Nursing Supervisor*
- Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor*
- Ms. Rhonda Stikeleather, Children’s Services Nurse Supervisor*
- Mr. Jeremy Stockton, WIC Director [New Employee]*
- Ms. Debra A. Young, Administrative Assistant II

**Guests:**
- Honorable Clifton H. Smith, District Court Judge
- Lisette Grisailes, bilingual Breastfeeding Peer Counselor / WIC*
- Keshia Parris, Administrative Assistant I, Environmental Health*
- Alicia Stine, Registered EH Specialist – FLU / Environmental Health*

*Attended via Zoom meeting

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**
Mr. John Dollar, Vice-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. Mr. Dollar 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.
OATH OF OFFICE
The Honorable Judge Clifton H. Smith administered the Oath of Office for Catawba County Board of Health Member, Dr. Bruce Carlton.

Dr. Carton signed an Oath of Office, which is also part of the official minutes.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES
Mr. John Dollar, Vice-Chair, stated that Board members had received the current meeting Agenda and the Board Minutes for June 14, 2021. Mr. Dollar 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 Dr. Dana Greene. The Agenda and minutes were unanimously approved via an in-person and virtual roll call vote of the board members present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Mr. Dollar 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 are four new employees to introduce to the Board this month.

Ms. Lisette Grisales joined Catawba County Public Health (CCPH) as a bilingual Breastfeeding Peer Counselor in the WIC program. Ms. Grisales previously worked at Peak Eye Care, where she was an Insurance Verification Specialist.

Mr. Jeremy Stockton joined Catawba County Public Health in June as the WIC Director. Mr. Stockton comes to CCPH from Lincoln County Health Department, where he worked in the WIC program, most recently as WIC Director, for 18 years. Mr. Stockton has his Bachelor’s Degree from East Carolina University in Nutrition and Dietetics/Business Administration.

Ms. Keshia Parris joins the Environmental Health team as the Administrative Assistant I. Ms. Parris comes to CCPH from Lincoln County Department of Social Services, where she was an Income Maintenance Caseworker. Ms. Parris has her Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration/Marketing from Appalachian State University.

Ms. Alicia Stine is CCPH’s newest Registered Environmental Health Specialist specializing in food, lodging, and institutions. Ms Stine is also from Lincoln County, where she spent almost 14 years working in the Environmental Health program. She has her Bachelor’s Degree in Environmental Health from Bowling Green State University.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS
Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner, was happy to announce that the Board of Commissioners approved the County Budget, including the Board of Health’s budget item requests.
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH YEAR-END REPORT

On behalf of Ms. Megen McBride, Environmental Health Administrator, Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director, provided the Environmental Health Year-end Report. Mr. Williams stated that Environmental Health’s response to COVID-19 has been focused on uninterrupted service delivery, providing a socially distanced application process, having modified restaurant inspections as needed, and a continuous connection with the EPI Team.

Mr. Williams stated that the following Environmental Health Outcomes were achieved:
- 75% of FLI field/file reviews will meet the state standard of 'acceptable' \( \Rightarrow \frac{60}{60} = 100\% \)
- 85% of reviewed well/septic permits will require no revisions \( \Rightarrow \frac{378}{446} = 85\% \)

Mr. Williams provided some other key highlights:
- Septic and well permits have skyrocketed. The monthly average for FY 20-21 was 94 applications, and in FY 19-20, it was an average of 75 per month. This shows incredible growth but also adds additional pressure on all of the staff.
- Foodservice inspections were 1,698, while visits were 279
- Foodservice and septic complaints were in the typical range of 71 and 78, respectively
- Swimming pool inspections - 158; Child Care Center inspections - 165 and Tattoo Artist/parlor inspections - 68. There were also three lead investigations and 12 lead consultations.

The Environmental Health Year-End Report is attached to the Minutes.

HEPATITIS A UPDATE

Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor, provided the Board with an update on the Hepatitis A outbreak stating that there has been an increase in cases across NC and the Nation.

Some key highlights regarding Hepatitis:
- Catawba County is one of the top counties in the State – one of the top 5 of acute Hepatitis
- The highest people at risk are those who use drugs and share needles. People experiencing homelessness are also at a higher risk.
- Providing clean syringes to drug users is vital, as is the assistance in finding treatment programs/alternative treatment programs for them.
- Some clusters have been found – group dynamics with the at-risk groups
- Hepatitis A is transmitted via fecal/oral route
- The highest group affected are male – Caucasian – mainly drug users
- It has been found that if there are several drug users in a home, usually the hygiene is not conducive to preventing a Hepatitis A outbreak
- Public Health is continuing to work with state leaders and the infectious disease branch
- The Adult Health Clinic at Public Health is screening all patients. If the patient screens in, the first dose of the Hepatitis A vaccine is given before they leave.

Ms. Rhodes reviewed the Hepatitis A outbreak-associated cases from 2018 to June 2021 and what efforts are being taken to reduce the impact in the community.
It was also noted that Ms. Rhodes and her team have been invited to speak at a national conference in Washington DC. The State asked Catawba County Public Health to apply, and the abstract submitted was accepted. Ms. Rhodes and Ms. Emily Kilian will be presenting.

The presentation slides are attached to the Minutes.

**NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE – FY2021-2022 OFFICERS**
Dr. Matthew Davis, Chair of the Nominations and Operating Procedures Subcommittee, stated that the committee met on August 2, 2021, and made the motion to accept the following slate of officers for the fiscal year 2021-2022:

- For Board of Health Chair — **Mr. John Dollar**
- For Board of Health Vice-Chair — **Mr. William "Bill" Pitts**

Dr. Davis thanked the subcommittee for its work and asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. Hearing none, Dr. Davis motioned to close the nominations and accept the nominations as presented by the committee. Ms. Susan Knowles seconded the motion. Dr. Davis asked for a vote via a roll call vote, and the Board unanimously voted to accept Mr. John Dollar as Chair and Mr. William (Bill) Pitts as Vice-Chair of the Catawba County Board of Health for the fiscal year 2021-2022.

**SUBCOMMITTEES – FY 2021-2022**
Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, brought forth the current subcommittee member listing. Mr. Dollar stated that all three subcommittees for the fiscal year 2021-2022 are fully staffed, all questions were answered, and with no further discussions, Mr. Dollar asked for a motion to approve the Subcommittees for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Mr. William Pitts made a motion to approve, and the Board voted unanimously, via a roll call vote, to accept the slate of subcommittee members as presented.

**HEALTH DIRECTOR’S REPORT**
Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, stated she had a few brief updates.

Medicaid managed care kicked off July 1, 2021, in North Carolina. The key features are that it establishes a pay structure, integrates physical and mental health, and includes the overall health of the beneficiary, i.e., asthma patients with very old dirty carpet in the home can request the carpet be replaced. All contracts have been reviewed and signed by CCPH and the Managed Care companies.

Ms. Debra Bechtel, County Attorney, had reported on June 28, 2021, that a settlement had been reached against the e-cigarette company Juul. North Carolina will use the settlement funds for e-cigarette prevention. The settlement requires Juul to not market to people under age 21, not use social media or outdoor advertising for any of their products, not sponsor any sporting events, and not add any new flavors or increase the nicotine content without FDA approval. The settlement also stated that if any other lawsuits raise the bar on payouts, then NC will automatically be pushed into that higher classification.
Where we are with COVID-19 response:

- COVID-19 cases continue to increase in Catawba County and NC
- 314 deaths thus far – we know it is a lagging indicator
- 13 people in hospital – this is watched on a daily basis
- 11% positivity rate in Catawba County (roughly) – we are well above the state indicator
- Slight increase in those being vaccinated – clinic is still being held in CCPH front classrooms. Most are walk-ins, but appointments are still being scheduled.
- Catawba County Public Health is considered a vaccine hub. The State reached out to several counties and asked if their Public Health Department would be a hub. We support getting vaccines to other counties and areas in our region. CCPH still manages our vaccine but is also helping push it out to others who need it.
- As of today, approximately 45% of Catawba County residents have had one dose, and approximately 42% are fully vaccinated.
- StarMed, a contractor based out of Charlotte, still runs the testing program in the back parking lot at CCPH on Tuesdays and Fridays. StarMed also goes out into the community to give vaccines at various events.

Ms. McCracken stated that CCPH was one of ten agencies that received a Federal Credit Union award. This was from the case study published last fall. The case study caught a lot of traction locally and nationally.

Catawba County Public Health has reached out to all three school system superintendents, offering to bring vaccines to any back-to-school or public events they may be hosting. There have not been any takers on the offer as of yet. The school districts are pushing out vaccine info to parents, and CCPH is starting to see more 12-17-year-olds come to the walk-in clinic. School nurses have been working through summer school and have also pushed out updated info to the school districts.

Ms. McCracken further stated that all COVID-19 positives are to be reported to CCPH per General Statute. Once received, a team looks at the reports to determine whether the people are vaccinated or not, as that has to be entered into the State system. Data shows that around 95% of positive tests are for those that are not vaccinated.

Ms. McCracken reminded the Board that the monthly infographics were included in the Board packet.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. John Dollar asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Allran so moved, and Dr. Davis seconded the motion. Accordingly, Mr. Dollar adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

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

JFM: day

Approved by Board of Health: September 13, 2021