Catawba County Board of Health  
Minutes  
August 10, 2020

The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, August 10, 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 Costlin*  
Mr. John H. Dollar*  
Dr. Dana H. Greene*  
Dr. Gale Hamilton-Brandon*  
Ms. Susan Knowles*  
Mr. William Pitts*  
Mr. Brian Potocki*

Members Absent:  
Mr. Dan Hunsucker, County Commissioner

Staff present:  
Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Interim 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  
Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, WIC Director (new employee)*  
Ms. Megen McBride, Environmental Health Administrator*  
Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor*  
Ms. Kim Spaulling, 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*

*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, 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
Dr. David Hamilton, Chair, stated that Board members had received the agenda. Dr. Hamilton noted one modification to the agenda. Due to Commissioner Hunsucker not being able to attend this month’s meeting, agenda item F. Commissioner’s Comments could be removed. Dr. Hamilton asked if there were any other changes to the agenda and with there being none, Dr. Hamilton asked for a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Mr. William Pitts made the motion and Mr.
John Dollar seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted of the Board members currently present (Dollar, Potocki, Knowles, Greene, Davis, Pitts & Hamilton) and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
There being no meeting in July, the minutes for June 08, 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 none, Ms. Gloria Costin made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Mr. William Pitts seconded the motion. The June minutes were unanimously approved via a virtual roll call vote of the members present (Pitts, Dollar, Costin, Potocki, Davis, Knowles, Greene & Hamilton).

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 there is one new employee to introduce to the Board.

Ms. Jennifer Lindsay returned to Catawba County Public Health as the new WIC Director. Ms. Lindsay has been a Registered Nurse for 25 years with 15 years of Public Health experience. She is returning to Catawba County Public Health from Gaston County Department of Health and Human Services where she served as the Family Planning and Teen Wellness Nursing Supervisor. Mr. Lindsay was a part of the School Health program in Catawba County for 13 years prior to moving to Gaston County. She is a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne University where she received a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing as well as a Master’s Degree in Nursing Education.

ANNUAL LEGAL UPDATE
Ms. Debra Bechtel, County Attorney, provided the 2020 Legal Update to the Board of Health members and Catawba County Public Health managers. The update covered public video concerns with a focus on private citizen’s rights, staff education and agency plans. She also presented information regarding the current Coronavirus pandemic and discussed isolation and quarantine authority at the local Public Health level. Lastly, Attorney Bechtel stated that pursuant to G.S. §130A-145 Quarantine and Isolation Authority (a) allows the State Health Director and a local health director to issue an isolation order or quarantine order. While these orders are issued for different reasons, in practice they have the same effect of placing restrictions on a person’s freedom of movement.

There being no questions or further 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.
COVID-19 TESTING UPDATE
Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director, gave an update on the current Coronavirus testing efforts at Public Health. The presentation slides reviewed were included in the Board’s monthly informational packet and are attached to the Minutes.

Mr. Williams gave a snapshot of positive cases in Catawba County stating that as of today, Catawba County has 2,161 positive cases. He continued by reviewing multiple presentation slides showing positive case information that included the trajectory of COVID hospitalizations, the percent positive of total tests performed, demographic data, ethnicity and electronic lab reporting percent positives.

Testing began March 17 and as of July 31, 2020, there have been a total of 6,187 tests completed. This number has increased to 7,071 tests completed as of yesterday, August 10th. The majority of testing has been completed at Catawba County Public Health’s drive-through testing events. Other testing has taken place at long-term care facilities and assisted living centers, local businesses, local first responders, city and county employees, medical facility employees and inmates. The number of inmates and jail staff tested has recently increased from 4 to 279 as CCPH responded to an outbreak in the county jail. At the drive-through events, there have been 4,904 tests completed with 565 positive tests and an average of 11.1% are positive. The nurses that are performing contact tracing and investigation are encouraging those contacted to come to the drive-through events for testing. Public Health continues to assess the drive-through testing needs and will modify the schedule on a monthly basis.

Mr. Williams concluded his presentation by reviewing current COVID-19 funding received:
Enhancing Detection Activities - $257,801 ($123,036 for next FY)
COVID-19 Crisis Response - $111,650
CARES Act - $58,018

The COVID-19 Testing update presentation is attached to the Minutes.

COVID-19 CASE INVESTIGATION AND CONTACT TRACING UPDATE
Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor, provided an update regarding COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing.

Case investigation begins when public health is notified of a positive case. The case investigators log pertinent information into the public health database and then check on any other tests they may have had. There is a template of set questions that are asked to each person contacted. The case investigators assess any symptoms, date the person tested positive, was it community spread/household, etc.

All attempts are made to complete case investigations within 48 hours of being notified. It is optimal to be completed within 24 hours but that can be very difficult. Once the case information is entered, contact tracing begins.

Ms. Rhodes gave some additional information regarding contact tracing and what Catawba County Public Health is doing to help slow the spread:
Contact tracing has been used for decades to help control the spread of infectious diseases such as measles and tuberculosis.

Communicable Disease uses contact tracing on a daily basis – it is essentially detective work.

An infographic was created regarding contact tracing/investigation. This document demonstrated the community spread of Coronavirus that was initiated with a family gathering.

Most of the time the virus is spread unknowingly.

Attempting to complete contact tracing on every case in Catawba County.

A ‘close contact’ is defined as someone who is in close contact with an infected person, within 6 feet, for 15 minutes or longer.

Currently using CCTO software – this helps the person track their symptoms if they are instructed to do so.

COVID Team includes bilingual staff – Spanish and Hmong

People are becoming more trustworthy of contact tracers – Catawba County is also promoting the Answer the Call State campaign – Everyone can be part of the solution by answering the call to help slow the spread. Contact tracing is helping identify people close to you to help them not become sick.

Public Health is currently in the process of hiring 5 contact tracers.

The State is providing some additional contact tracers via CCNC for local health departments. Catawba County Public Health replied with a need for additional contact tracers beginning in August since school nurses would be returning to their schools. Four contact tracers have been hired to date and the State is in the process of hiring a fifth. This partnership has functioned well for Public Health and CCNC has been very responsive to public health’s needs. This contact tracer service is paid for by the State so this is another resource that local public health department’s do not have to pay for or supply.

The COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing update slides are attached to the Minutes.

HEALTH DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Ms. Jennifer F. McCracken, Health Director, stated two program managers had updates for the Board this evening.

Ms. Julie Byrd, Women and Children’s Health Administrator, gave an update on the Farmer’s Market. The Farmer’s Market has partnered with Meals on Wheels over the past several years. This year the seniors were informed that they would not be able to come and visit the market. The senior farmers market vouchers are still available so a plan was put in place to help get to the seniors and provide them with fresh fruits and vegetables. The Farmers Market partnered with Meals on Wheels and Greenway Public Transportation to distribute produce boxes to the seniors. To date, the farmers have distributed 186 senior produce boxes amongst all five sites. Each senior receives a $12.00 box once a month during July and August.

Ms. Honey Estrada, Public Health Strategist, updated the Board regarding a grant that was recently received for Community Health Workers (CHW). The CHW’s will provide support to patients with
COVID related needs. Catawba County Public Health was chosen to receive the grant dollars and is the only health department that was selected for this grant. Five Community Health Workers will work directly alongside contact tracers and COVID-19 team members to help match patients to local resources. The funding for the Community Health Workers will last through December 31, 2020.

Ms. McCracken continued with the Health Director updates:
- Catawba County is still under a State of Emergency — Emergency Management is still housed at Public Health and the two agencies are still under Unified Command.
- Focus for the past several weeks has been on schools and local colleges reopening.
- Two local school districts have received funding from the CARES Act and contacted Public Health to partner with them to hire some part-time PRN school nurses to work specifically on COVID-19 related activities. Funding for these temporary positions is through the end of the year. These part-time school nurses will help cover schools when a current school nurse is at their ‘other’ school. Public Health is currently interviewing for these positions.
- Still continue close connections with local hospitals
- Continue to manage outbreak situations.
- Continue to operate the triage line and the nurse triage line
- Continue with the weekly update to Board of Health members and Public Health staff
- Will provide a presentation regarding schools at the October Board of Health meeting

Ms. McCracken announced that Dr. Matthew Davis and Ms. Susan Knowles were officially reappointed by the Board of Commissioners for their next terms. She thanked them for their continued service.

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

OTHER BUSINESS
None

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, Dr. David Hamilton asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Susan Knowles so moved and Mr. William Pitts seconded the motion. Dr. Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]
Jennifer F. McCracken
Secretary to the Board of Health
Health Director

JFM: day

Approved by Board of Health: September 14, 2020