Catawba County Board of Health
Minutes
October 11, 2021

The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, October 11, 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, Chair*
                  Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner
                  Dr. Bruce Carlton*
                  Dr. Matthew Davis*
                  Dr. Dana H. Greene*
                  Dr. Gale Hamilton-Brandon*
                  Ms. Susan Knowles*
                  Mr. Brian Potocki*

Members Absent:  Ms. Gloria Costin
                Mr. William Pitts, Vice-Chair

Staff present:  Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director
                Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director*
                Ms. Julie Byrd, Women and Children’s Health Administrator*
                Ms. Emily Killian, Community Engagement Specialist/PIO
                Ms. Chantae Lail, Medical Lab Manager/Preparedness Coordinator*
                Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, School Health Nursing Supervisor*
                Ms. Megan McBride, Environmental Health Administrator*
                Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor*
                Mr. Jeremy Stockton, WIC Director*
                Ms. Debra A. Young, Administrative Assistant II

Guests:  Ms. Jodi Stewart, County Attorney*

*Attended via Zoom meeting

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL
Mr. John Dollar, 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.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES
Mr. John Dollar, Chair, stated that Board members had received the current meeting Agenda and the Board Minutes for September 13, 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 Dr. Bruce Carlton 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.

Ms. Jodi Stewart, County Attorney, gave the Board an update on attendance for public comment periods. The purpose of public comments is to allow the public to state a comment to the Board. It is not meant for the Board to interact or act upon the public’s comment. For public comments, the person is usually given around three minutes to state their comment/concern. Ms. Stewart reminded the Board members that she is always available for any needs that may arise.

NEW EMPLOYEES
Mr. Jason Williams, Assistant Health Director, stated that there are no employees to introduce to the Board this month.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS
Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner, stated he had no comments this month.

SCHOOL HEALTH UPDATE
Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, School Health Nursing Supervisor, updated the Board regarding School Health, stating that the PowerPoint slides presented this evening have been updated with the most current information available.

Ms. Lindsay pointed out that school-age children (ages 5-17) are now being affected by COVID. The Delta variant is impacting children more than the original virus and even more than previous variants. She stated that looking at the first week of school compared to now, where all three school districts are mandatory masking, it is rather difficult to decipher the data collected. Hickory Public School District is considered the ‘control group’ as they have required masking since the beginning of the school year. All three of the school districts are seeing a shift in exposure as nearly all exposures are from outside of school. The exposures that are happening in school are almost entirely traced back to lunchtime when students have their masks off to eat and/or drink, or they are during athletics.

Ms. Lindsay continued her update, stating that there have been a total of eight clusters identified within the three school districts. This is now down to seven, and the data will be updated on the State’s next report. She reiterated that a cluster is defined as five or more epidemiologically linked cases in the school setting, and a more plausible reason cannot be found (e.g., sibling or someone in the home, etc.)

On a final note, Ms. Lindsay reported that School Health Assistants have been being hired for all three school districts. There have been 37 school health assistants fully hired as of today. These positions are considered temporary, full-time.

The School Health Update presentation is attached to the Minutes.
FARMER’S MARKET END OF SEASON UPDATE
Mr. Jeremy Stockton, WIC Director, provided the Board with an update on the year-end farmer’s market held at Public Health, stating that this was the 9th year for the Farmers Market. Compared to the prior year, this year’s farmers market served an average of 146 customers per week. There were 17 markets held, and 4,626 WIC vouchers were distributed. The current year redemption rates were not yet available from the State.

Additional highlights:
- LiveWell received a grant that provided ‘double bucks’ to those who used their SNAP/EBT benefits at the Farmers Market. This program matched the amount that the participant received.
- WIC Program paid Catawba County vendors $2.4 million in FY 2020-2021
- There are 33 WIC approved vendors in Catawba County
- The State is continuing automatic issuance of WIC benefits to all active WIC participants
- Catawba County WIC served an average of 3,788 participants per month
- Planning will begin soon for the 10th Market Anniversary in 2022

The Farmer’s Market presentation slides are attached to the Minutes.

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING SCHEDULE – MEMO
Mr. John Dollar, Chair, reviewed the Memorandum regarding annual meeting dates and a proposal for a schedule change to either bi-monthly or quarterly meetings. The reasoning behind the schedule change request, proposed meeting schedule options, and discussions were held. The Board of Health members will be asked to vote on the proposal at the next Board meeting on November 8, 2021.

HEALTH DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, stated she had a few brief updates. She stated that as of October 6th, 24,080 laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Catawba County residents, 411 people have died, and 37 Catawba County residents are hospitalized with the disease. With the Delta variant, as was indicated in the school health presentation, children were affected far more than with the original coronavirus, as were younger adults. Over the past six weeks, children and other younger adults have been hospitalized, with the average age dropping into the 50s.

Additional updates:
- Catawba County’s vaccination rate is lower than the state average for the overall population and 12-17-year-olds.
- Pfizer has recently submitted data to the FDA for ages 5-11. Pfizer is seeking to amend their Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to allow children ages 5-11 to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. They currently have full approval for ages 16+ and an EUA for ages 12-17.
- Pediatric dosage will likely be lower than the adult dosage, and adult doses/vials will not be allowed for pediatric administration for those 5-11-year-old patients.
- Ultra-cold freezers will not be necessary for the pediatric formulation. It will be able to be stored in the refrigerator for up to 10 weeks, and the minimum order quantity will be lower. Both of these changes will make it easier for providers to store and use.
- Locally, all three pediatric practices plan to administer to this younger population (two are already vaccinating 12+).

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

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

**OTHER BUSINESS**
None

**ADJOURNMENT**
There being no further business, Mr. John Dollar asked for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Dana Greene so moved, and Dr. Matthew Davis seconded the motion. Accordingly, Mr. Dollar adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

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

JFM: day

*Approved by Board of Health: November 08, 2021*