

The Cleveland County Public Health Board met on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., via teleconference call.

Board members present: Sara Karner, Ronnie Whetstine, Robert Miller, Kale Meade, Patti Alexander, Tom Spurling, Randy Sweeting, Deanna Moseley Lawrence and Street Hamrick.

Health Department staff present: Tiffany Hansen, DeShay Oliver, Leslie McSwain, Alisa Leonard, and Nathan McNeilly.

Tim Moore, County Attorney and Martha Thompson County Staff Attorney were present.

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:**

Mrs. Tiffany Hansen called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm and welcomed everyone. Mrs. Hansen welcomed Martha Thompson, the County's new In-House General Counsel. She will be the new liaison to the board.

Mr. Miller gave the invocation.

**CITIZEN RECOGNITION:**

No citizens requested to appear before the Board.

**OATH OF OFFICE TO PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING APPOINTMENTS:**

DeShay stated we have two board members who have reached their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of their 3<sup>rd</sup> term expired on 12-31-2020. However, because of the transition from a Governing Board to an Advisory Board, all Board members had the opportunity to serve up to 3 more 3 year terms. Mrs. Oliver spoke to the two members, they have agreed to serve another year. Those members are Randy Sweeting and Tom Spurling. Tonight we would like to do their reappointments to the Health Board. This will be a virtual oath of office. Mrs. Oliver shared her screen so Board members can read oaths. Randy Sweeting and Tom Spurling both read the oath to accept reappointment to the board. Mrs. Oliver advised that at the next in person meeting that Randy Sweeting and Tom Spurling will both sign a copy of the oath.

**ELECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD (CHAIR):**

**Chair Nomination:** Robert Miller moved to nominate Tom Spurling as the (chair) to the 2021 Public Health Board.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Robert Miller with a second by Patti Alexander to nominate Tom Spurling as the chair to the 2021 Public Health Board. The voting and motion was carried unanimously.

**ELECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD (VICE CHAIR):**

**Vice-Chair Nomination:** Robert Miller moved to nominate Sara Karner as the Vice-Chair to the 2021 Public Health Board.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Robert Miller with a second by Street Hamrick to nominate Sara Karner as the vice-chair to the 2021 Public Health Board. The voting and motion was carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR JANUARY 12, 2021 PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING:**

Chair Spurling presented the proposed agenda for the January 12, 2021 Public Health Board meeting for consideration of adoption.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Sara Karner with a second by Robert Miller to adopt the agenda for the January 12, 2021 Public Health Board meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 10, 2020 PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING MINUTES:**

Chair Spurling presented the November 10, 2020 Public Health Board meeting minutes for consideration of approval.

**Motion:** Robert Miller moved that the minutes of the November 10, 2020 Public Health Board meeting be approved as presented. Sara Karner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**Board of Health/Health Director Responsibilities under N.C. General Statutes**

Mrs. Hansen advised everyone they should have received a copy of the General Statutes that outline both the Health Director's responsibilities along with the Board of Health responsibilities. There have been no changes. These are the same that everyone has seen over the past couple of years and wanted to make sure everyone had an updated copy of what their responsibilities are for Accreditation purposes.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE:**

Mrs. Oliver provided a COVID-19 update to the Public Health Board. All of the data is available on the NC DHHS COVID19 dashboard. As of today, January 12, 2021 we have a total of 8,047 confirmed cases in Cleveland County. We have had a total of 1,581 cases within the last 14 days which averages to 113 cases/day. In the last 7 days, we have had a total of 833 cases which averages to 119 cases/days. We have 52 residents currently hospitalized which is up from 42 yesterday and 164 deaths as of today in Cleveland County.

As of January 12, 2021, 56% of confirmed cases were female and 44% were male. Percentages by age group were as follows; 11% ages 0-17, 11% ages 18-24, 34% ages 25-49, 23% ages 50-64, 11% ages 65-74 and 10% were 75 and older.

Ages 25-49 contain 1% of deaths, ages 50-64 contain 10% of deaths, ages 65-74 contain 23% of deaths and 62% of deaths fall into the age of 75 and older; 38% male and 58% of deaths were female.

Of the confirmed cases, 1.9% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 0.3% Asian, 16.8% Black or African American, 62.5% were White, 9.7 % were Other and 8.8% Unknown. The deaths broken down by race are as follows; 0% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 0% Asian, 23.7.4% Black or African American, 69.1% were White, 5.9% Other and 1.3% were Unknown. These numbers indicate a slight disparity in the number of deaths seen in our Black or African American populations.

Mrs. Oliver also shared the percentage of positive tests as compared to the total test in the County. As of today, 18.6% for Cleveland County, 13.9% for NC. During December and January there were between 3,000- 4,000 COVID tests administered weekly in Cleveland County. Mrs. Oliver advised the members of the board that the percentage of positive tests are numbers for the whole County not just numbers representing the Health Department.

Mrs. Oliver shared the COVID Response Activities. We continue to conduct case investigations and contact tracing for all cases. There are 8 case investigators and contact tracers from Community Care of NC. We are receiving assistance from other county departments. The health department continues to conduct molecular PCR and rapid tests daily.

Mrs. Oliver shared that we are staffing a COVID-19 help line that is now fielding just under 2,000 calls weekly. Those help line workers assist with scheduling tests and providing testing options, providing isolation and quarantine guidance, generating letters for release from isolation and quarantine, providing general COVID guidance to local business and individuals, providing vaccine information and framework interpretation. The helpline is staffed by employees from multiple departments throughout County organizations.

### **COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN UPDATE**

Mrs. Hansen gave an update on the *WHAT, WHO, WHEN, and WHERE* of COVID-19 vaccine planning via a PowerPoint that was shared on screen to all Board members.

*WHAT*- There are two approved vaccines for FDA emergency authorization use that is the Pfizer and the Moderna. They are both two dose series. Pfizer is 21 days apart and Moderna is 28 days apart. Based upon trials, Pfizer is 95% effective and Moderna is 94.5% effective at preventing COVID-19. The storage needs regarding both vaccines are Pfizer requires a -70 degrees Celsius and Moderna requires only a -20 degrees Celsius which is a parameter that the health department is very comfortable with. The estimated minimum allocations you can expect for Pfizer is 975 doses and for Moderna is 100 doses. The ages the vaccinations have been approved for are 16 years and older with Pfizer and 18 years and older with Moderna. The health department is vaccinating using the Moderna because of the refrigeration and the minimum dosage allocation. Alisa Leonard advised the board regarding the Moderna temperature durability that an unopened vial can sit outside of the refrigerator for 12 hours and once the vial has been punctured or in the syringe it can sit for 6 hours. Mrs. Leonard advised that the vaccine can last for 30 days under refrigeration and frozen until the vaccine expires which is many years.

*WHO*- Mrs. Hansen explained the “*WHO*” based on this framework and the information is the updated guidance as of 12-22-2020. Group 1a -Healthcare workers fighting COVID-19 & Long Term Care staff and residents, Group 1b- Adults 75 years or older and frontline essential workers, Group 2 -Adults at high risk for exposure and at increased risk of severe illness, Group 3- Students, Group 4- Everyone who wants a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination. Mrs. Hansen stated including today's allocation we have received 1300 doses of vaccines over 4 weeks. We have worked our way through Group 1a and will be moving through Group 1b group 1. By the end of the week all of those doses will be allocated out.

*WHEN*: Mrs. Hansen stated that in December 2020 presented Plans to Board of Commissioners for distribution of COVID19 Vaccinations, January 2021 prepare to vaccinate Phase 1a and 1b populations within our Community (dependent on vaccine allocated), March 2021 prepare to vaccinate Phase 2 and 3 within our Community (dependent on vaccine allocated) and April 2021 prepare to vaccinate Phase 4 within our Community. Mrs. Oliver advised that NCDHHS sets the timeline in terms of when we are able to move from one phase to the next phase in the prioritization framework.

Mrs. Hansen stated to determine a county's week to week allocation there is an algorithm that the state uses to determine dose allocations based on county population, hospital capacity, highest doses administered daily, and inventory on hand.

*WHERE*: Mrs. Hansen stated that the health department has set up a point of dispensing model that has been utilized by the CDC since post 9/11. Our Points of Distribution (POD) sites are Burns Middle School, Crest High School, Kings Mountain Intermediate, and the LeGrand Center. We will be utilizing those sites as our POD's as they are intended. We are in Phase 1B- Group 1 which is adults 75 and older. Based on a variety of data sets that we have pulled, that is approximately 8,200 residents. Mrs. Hansen stated that a postal letter will be sent to each of

those addresses about a week ahead of their scheduled date and will give them their location and time of their scheduled vaccination. Our goal is for them to receive the letters approximately 5 days out. We are hoping to be in the phase about 2-3 weeks depending on our dose allotment and then we will be able to move to Phase 2. If someone is 75 years or older and have not received a letter by mid-February, they will be encouraged to call the COVID helpline 980-484-5316 and they will take their name and address where they will be worked into a pool to be vaccinated as well. Mrs. Hansen stated that the vaccine is for any resident in North Carolina, however, since health department allocations are determined by county population, we do encourage those non-Cleveland County residents to contact their county health departments about vaccines first and utilize us as a secondary option for the vaccine.

### **BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

Leslie McSwain presented several budget amendments.

#### **ITEM NUMBER ONE**

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has allocated \$325.00 for our Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program. This will help us assist our clients to receive patient navigation services while they are applying for assistance with the Breast and Cervical Screening Program. We request permission to budget this amount in the Adult Health Department (533) for this purpose.

#### **ITEM NUMBER TWO**

Wingate University, has allocated \$1,000 for our pharmacy participation in their student internships. These funds will be utilized towards the new Pioneer Pharmacy software that is being used now. We request permission to budget this amount in the General Administration Department for the purpose of covering the fees associated with the new Pioneer Pharmacy software.

#### **ITEM NUMBER THREE**

The American Academy of Pediatrics, has granted our Child Health Department \$5000.00. This grant will be used to expand telehealth services within the clinic and increase access to care. We request permission to budget this amount in the Child Health Department.

**A motion to accept the budget amendments was made by Robert Miller with a second by Patti Alexander. The motion carried unanimously.**

Martha Thompson stated that as an Advisory Board, voting on things such as budget amendments is not necessary or required because it goes back to the Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners are the ones to make that decision.

### **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:**

Martha asked if there has been an effective resignation from a statutorily required member.

DeShay Oliver stated that we are statutorily required to have a Pharmacist representative on our board. Stan Pitts who is a retired Pharmacist from the hospital has been serving in that capacity. However, he has not attended a meeting in quite some time possibly closer to a year. DeShay stated that she and Brittney Smith (prior Administrative Support to the board) has tried multiple times to reach out to him. Tom has also tried to reach out to Mr. Pitts. Mr. Pitts indicated that he no longer served on the Public Health Board and has not in years. Mr. Spurling stated that he spoke with Mr. Pitts twice last year and Mr. Pitts stated to Tom that he was no longer a member on the Board. DeShay asked Martha if we would need to ask Mr. Pitts for a written resignation or can we accept the verbal. Martha stated that we do not need a written resignation. You can except the verbal or conclude as a board that his failure to participate for the length of time he has is considered a resignation. Mr. Whetstine stated that with other boards he is on there are sites online where people can asked to be appointed to those boards and he feels that the Public Health Board could use this same criteria. Ronnie stated that he has a breakfast meeting with the County Manger in the morning and will address this with him and see how we need to go about moving forward and expediting this as soon as possible since we have been going quite some time without a Pharmacist representative. Martha stated that technically there has been someone appointed and this is the first meeting regarding Mr. Pitts' resignation. The question was asked if there is a timeframe of absences in the Bylaws. DeShay stated that currently the Bylaws do address anything in terms of how many meetings a member can miss before they are removed from the board. DeShay asked the board if this is something they would like our Bylaws to address. Tom stated that there should be some type of mention of that in the Bylaws. Mr. Miller asked to explain what a statutorily required member of the board means. Martha stated that the Board of Health Advisory Board must have a number of appointees on the board that are required by NC General Statute. DeShay stated the statutorily required members of the board are an optometrist member, a registered nurse member, a County Commissioner member, a physician, a dentist, a pharmacist, two public citizen representatives, a professional engineer, and a veterinarian. Ronnie recommended if a person misses 2-3 meetings in a row or 50% in 12 months they should be removed. Mr. Miller stated the board needs to think about if a person is sick or going out of town and has an excuse for not being able to appear at a meeting. The board needs something in regards to Excused Absences. Ms. Oliver asked Ms. Hansen if she can potentially reach out to other Health Directors in NC to see if their bylaws address this so we can use as a guiding example. Ms. Hansen stated that she will reach out to other Health Directors to see if they have any recommendations on language for attendance.

Tom stated that he has someone in mind regarding a replacement for the Pharmacist representative who works as a pharmacist at the hospital. Ronnie stated he will speak to Tom in the morning after he speaks with the County Manager.

**ADJOURN: 7:23pm**

There being no further business, Chair Spurling called for a motion to adjourn.

**Motion: Ronnie Whetstine moved, with a second by Robert Miller that the Cleveland County Public Health Board meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Tiffany Hansen, Secretary  
Cleveland County Public Health Board  
/jl