

**Meeting Discussion Information Items
Chatham County Public Health Department
Monday, May 24, 2021
Virtual Meeting**

The Chatham County Board of Health held its monthly meeting on Monday, May 24, 2021, by GoToMeeting.

Present

Carol Reitz-Barlow, MSN, RN, CCRN, Chair
Lewis N. Lampiris, DDS, MPH, Vice Chair
Tammy Lynn Morris Lloyd, MD
Franklin Gomez Flores, Commissioner
John Kessler, PharmD
William Roscoe, OD
Marcia Herman-Giddens, PA, MPH, DrPH
James O’Keefe, P.E.
Karen Barbee, EdD
Stephanie Freese, DVM
Judith Malone, RN

Staff

Mike Zelek
Vicky Guetgemann
Casey Hilliard
Anne Lowry
Zach Deaton
Beth Dickens
Zachary Horner
Rathika Nimalendran
Julie Goodwin
Jill Oldham

Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Reitz-Barlow called the meeting to order and greeted everyone.

Introductions

None.

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest

None were noted.

Meeting Agenda

Chair Reitz-Barlow presented the 05-24-21 Meeting Agenda for consideration.
Chair Reitz-Barlow requested an approval of the Meeting Agenda.

Motion

Dr. Barbee motioned to approve the Meeting Agenda; this was seconded by Dr. Herman-Giddens. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Chair Reitz-Barlow presented the 05-24-21 Consent Agenda for approval with the removal of “B. Board of Health Meeting Procedures,” which were presented at the previous meeting.

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Motion

Dr. Herman-Giddens motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of letter b. Board of Health Meeting Procedures; this was seconded by Mr. O’Keefe. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Input

None.

Recognition

Peer Education Program Siler City (PEPSC)

Anna Stormzand, Youth Health & Tobacco Initiatives Lead, presented information to honor four senior students that participated in the PEPSC program this year.

Ms. Stormzand mentioned that PEPSC is a 10-plus-year long collaboration between Jordan Matthews High School and the Chatham County Public Health Department (CCPHD). The program has been made possible by Mr. Tripp Crayton, former principal, and Ms. Donna Barger, Assistant Principal, and the collaboration of many others in the school system.

Every year in the fall PEPSC recruits approximately 15 students who work on their own project. This year there were 10 active students who attended almost all of the 38 meetings and activities virtually throughout the pandemic, and Ms. Stormzand commented it was the most active PEPSC group they ever had.

The group focused on mental health in the fall and racial equity in the spring. On Thursday, May 27th, PEPSC hosted a virtual concert on racial injustice on the Jordan-Matthews Twitter account. Additionally, Ms. Stormzand mentioned that students were helpful in designing and promoting an art challenge around youth mental health during the pandemic and producing a youth mental health website to communicate with the students about mindfulness and remote learning.

Ms. Stormzand stated that this was a great year to have this peer group because they shared many resources with peers and family members while supporting each other.

Ms. Stormzand recognized four students: Jamia Walden, Lilly Zajda, Jaqueline Ortega and Josselyn Gonzalez. She recognized Jamia and Jaqueline as present at the board meeting.

She mentioned that it was very exciting to have such an active group this year and thanked them for their work.

Chair Reitz-Barlow thanked Ms. Stormzand for her leadership and praised the students for supporting the community and for their achievements.

Health Director Report

Mr. Zelek thanked Ms. Stormzand and congratulated all of the PEPC students on their graduation.

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Mr. Zelek mentioned that following guidance from the County Manager, staff is to resume providing some in-person services. This most affects the developmental side, specifically Environmental Health and Planning and Permitting departments. He mentioned that the clinic continued to offer in-person services throughout the pandemic.

Mr. Zelek said that Child Care Health Consultant interviews are ongoing. There are great candidates and he is optimistic that a great fit will be identified.

Mr. Zelek reported that the community assessment has been delayed due to COVID-19 vaccination efforts. Since Chatham Hospital is due to submit their assessment in June 2022, the CCPHD will follow that timeline and shift to a three-year plan to meet that requirement. The North Carolina Institute for Public Health will once again work with the CCPHD on this project.

Mr. Zelek reported that legislation at the NC General Assembly coming up has caused some concern in the public health community. Proposed legislation would prohibit the Governor from enacting an executive order requiring COVID-19 vaccines. There is concern other parts of the legislation may be worded vaguely enough to apply to other required vaccinations, like those required for schoolchildren. Mr. Zelek said state-level individuals are keeping an eye on the legislation, labeled as House Bill 572. He hopes that the public health department's strong work recently will help increase community vaccination rates, specifically among the younger population.

Reports

Covid Update

Mr. Zelek provided updated CDC recommendations for those fully vaccinated. He said it is now safe for them to gather with loved ones without wearing a mask indoors or outdoors. He said that Zachary Horner, Communications Specialist, has created some graphics around the recommendations and shared them with the community. He added that these are new recommendations from the last two weeks, and Gov. Cooper's Executive Order was updated to reflect the guidance soon thereafter. He said the basis of the recommendation was vaccinations, which have been shown to be effective in reducing illness and viral spread.

The CCPHD continues to work to get the community vaccinated against COVID-19. At the time of the meeting, 48.3% of Chatham County residents were partially vaccinated and 43% were fully vaccinated. The department is continuing to work to reach 50%. For the state, 42% of the population is partially vaccinated and 38% is fully vaccinated.

Mr. Zelek reported that those age 12 and older are now eligible to be vaccinated and that the CCPHD has been creating and sharing promotional material around the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, the only one authorized so far for individuals that age, so that children and their parents know where to find the vaccine. He said that vaccination options can be found at myspot.nc.gov. Additionally, the CCPHD

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website has an easy way to see the options available in Chatham County. So far, around 3% of Chatham's vaccinated population is under 18, Mr. Zelek said. He said the department, led by Environmental Health Director Anne Lowry, recently worked with Chatham County Schools and StarMed Healthcare to host vaccination clinics in the high schools.

Ms. Lowry said the school system has been a tremendous partner throughout COVID-19. She said conversations started a few weeks back to see if the district would be interested in the CCPHD coordinating with StarMed to come to the schools and offer vaccines for 16 and 17-year olds. Thirty-nine high school students received their first doses through those efforts, and first doses may again be offered when those students receive their second doses. Logistics are being worked on for the location for that second dose if appropriate, since schools will be out for summer at that time.

Ms. Lowry added that she and Dorothy Rawleigh, Director of the Health Promotion & Policy Division, have been supporting Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church in north Chatham to conduct a vaccination clinic with Better Care, a provider out of Greensboro, on May 23rd. She said that 9 individuals received the vaccine that day. She added that the church wanted to continue those efforts working with the Hispanic Liaison.

Mr. Zelek praised Ms. Lowry's work, saying she has captured public health's role in vaccination quite well.

Mr. Zelek added that the health department is responsible for outreach and sharing information about the vaccine along with working with other providers – transferring vaccines to get them started and creating partnerships like the one with StarMed to take over mass vaccination clinics and vaccines in the schools. Additionally, as mentioned the CCPHD has been consulted on the vaccine clinic with Better Care of Greensboro at Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church with the support of The Hispanic Liaison.

Mr. Zelek said StarMed was continuing to offer Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine clinics from 2-6 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center and from 2-7 p.m. on Wednesdays at Goldston Town Hall. Additionally, the CCPHD has resumed vaccinations at its clinic on Fridays in Siler City. He said community partners have expressed interest in having a stable vaccination location where people could make appointments or know in advance where it was.

Zach Deaton, Clinical & Community Health Services Director, stated that the clinic is offering recurring vaccine clinics from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays starting on May 7th. He said the clinics have been going well, with 26 first or second doses administered the previous Friday. He added that two mobile efforts were also conducted recently: 13 first doses at Chatham Recovery and 9 first and second doses at the Chatham County Detention Center. Additionally, 24 second doses and 1 first dose were given at St. Julia Catholic Church on Saturday, May 22.

Mr. Zelek said the clinical team has been doing a lot of great work in partnership with the National Guard and others, along with outreach to spread the word about vaccines and where to get them. He said the Health Promotion & Policy Division has led the charge for outreach and have worked with

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community partners to organize resource hubs through the Chatham Health Alliance and placing signs and banners throughout the county to let folks know what number to call or where to get vaccinated.

Dorothy Rawleigh, Health Promotion & Policy Division Director, said the Chatham Health Alliance and community partners organized a community resource hub at Washington Park in Siler City on May 18th, 2021, with approximately 200 people in attendance. She said there were no pre-registrations, but planners and volunteers canvassed the neighborhood, and 10 vaccinations were given by a UNC mobile clinic. Additionally, the Interfaith Food Shuttle was present giving out free meals. Ms. Rawleigh said there is more outreach to be done and strategy change that needs to happen to increase vaccinations.

She added that Anna Stormzand, Youth Health and Tobacco Initiatives Lead, is doing an excellent job coordinating information with the Infoline team, who are answering questions and calling Chatham residents to let them know where to get vaccinated and offering to mail window clings, buttons and bracelets to them to help normalize vaccinations. She said that Zachary Horner, Communications Specialist, has made flyers and banners to promote the StarMed and CCPHD clinics and did an excellent job producing an informational video with CCPHD staff.

Mr. Zelek said the CCPHD has done a lot of great work and it has been a true team effort. He said that many board members and CCPHD staff have been a part of the process, and he is grateful to the board for spreading the word and sharing their experiences getting vaccinated against COVID-19. Mr. Zelek said he is grateful to CCPHD staff, including Ms. Stormzand with the Infoline; Casey Hilliard, Strategic Planning and Development Officer, and Maia Fulton-Black, Population Health Data Scientist, for working with data to assess the CCPHD's efforts, particularly toward marginalized communities to get the vaccine out; and Mr. Horner for communications efforts, ranging from online, social media, press releases, banners and flyers.

The Board discussed possible strategies for reaching different populations. Dr. Kessler said the CDC revised guidance of coadministration of COVID-19 vaccines with other immunizations. There is no longer a two-week wait waiting period after getting another vaccine and the vaccine can be given with other vaccines. He asked if the CCPHD has embraced that change and is giving more than one vaccine at once. Mr. Zelek said the CCPHD can do more to ensure everyone is aware of that update. Bonnie Dukeman, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, said the clinic has been offering the COVID-19 vaccine along with other immunizations, along with STD and Family Planning visits. Mr. Zelek thanked the Board for its insight and ideas and that the CCPHD relies on them not only as experts but community members.

Mr. Zelek reported that case counts around the country have declined in recent weeks. He said that Chatham County saw 42 COVID-19 cases per 100,000 residents over the last seven days, meaning about 4.5 cases confirmed per day. He mentioned that it is certainly better than it was at the peak of the pandemic; however, cases are still trickling in and thankfully numbers continue to slow down, plateauing at 88 a week during the pandemic. He said these numbers highlight the effectiveness of the vaccine.

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Old Business

FY 21/22 BOH Officer Slate Recommended Chair/Vice Chair

Dr. Herman-Giddens reported on the Board of Health Officer Slate recommendation for the Chair and Vice-Chair for FY 21/22, which she worked on with Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores and Dr. Kessler. She said that the Board of Health Officer Slate Committee is very pleased to announce that Dr. Karen Barbee agreed to serve as the Board of Health Chair and Dr. Stephanie Freese agreed to serve as the Board of Health Vice-Chair.

Dr. Herman-Giddens thanked Dr. Barbee and Dr. Freese for agreeing to serve as the Board's Chair and Vice-Chair.

Dr. Kessler mentioned that Dr. Barbee and Dr. Freese will bring great things to the leadership of the Board.

Dr. Barbee accepted the Board of Health Chair nominations and Dr. Freese accepted the nomination as the Board of Health Vice-Chair.

Motion

Dr. Kessler motioned to accept Dr. Barbee as the Board's Chair and Dr. Freese as the Board's Vice-Chair for FY21/22; this was seconded by Dr. Lampiris. The motion carried unanimously.

Board of Health Pharmacy Seat Recommendation

Chair Reitz-Barlow opened the discussion regarding the upcoming vacancy for the Board of Health Pharmacy Seat and the application process.

The Board discussed the qualifications of the applicants and make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for appointment of the Pharmacy Seat.

Dr. Kessler recused himself to participate on the discussion due to his knowledge to at least one of the candidates.

The Board discussed all of the applicants and their expertise and made a recommendation to submit to the Board of Commissioners.

Motion

Dr. Morris Lloyd motioned to recommend Dr. Ashley Pappas, PharmD, MHA to the Board of Commissioners to fill the upcoming Pharmacy Seat vacancy; this was seconded by Commissioner Gomez Flores. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Child Health Primary Care Transition

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Chair Reitz-Barlow mentioned that the Board of Health Clinical Subcommittee composed of herself, Dr. Kessler, Dr. Lampiris, and Dr. Morris Lloyd met with Mr. Zelek and the Clinic Team to talk about the future of Child Health Services within the Chatham County Public Health Department.

Mr. Zelek presented the Proposed CCPHD Child Health Primary Care Transition information.

He mentioned that Dr. Rathika Nimalendran, Medical Director, and key Clinical Services staff come as a team to talk about these services and are open to any questions that the Board may have.

Mr. Zelek said that this proposal was mentioned at April's Board meeting and has been under consideration for a few years as part of the broader conversation around a coordinated healthcare system. The CCPHD has been looking at the agency as a public health department, fleshing out the health department's partnerships with the other providers, and finding where the health department's services are most needed, aligning its services instead of duplicating them.

Mr. Zelek said that the health department is proposing transitioning out of Child Primary Care Services effective July 1, 2021.

He said that when referring to Child Primary Care Services, it is specifically referring well-child visits, sick visits, physicals, sport and school physicals and annual exams; the visits relate more to being the clients' medical home.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that these services would be shifting from the health department's provision of services to an assurance of care model -- working with other partners in the Chatham community who provide Child Health Primary Care Services and serve as a medical home. He said there are many providers that are strong options for children and have capacity to accept both the current health department's Child Health clients and future clients. Mr. Zelek said this recommendation is more about the health department and its partnerships, working within the system to provide and expand preventive services for children to augment primary care services at other community practices and address the gaps.

Mr. Zelek stated that the proposed transition requires the Board of Health's approval. He said that the Board's Clinical Services Subcommittee met and voted to recommend the transition to the full Board.

Mr. Zelek provided background information regarding what the health department has been hearing from other partners as this change is considered.

He said that the health department has been growing a strong partnership with Piedmont Health Services, which is core to this proposed transition, and both agencies have been meeting as well with other providers such as Kidzcare in Siler City, Chatham Primary Care and UNC Family Medicine to assess the landscape of services.

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Mr. Zelek said that the health department has three letters of support from providers representing facilities that have said that they can offer care to the children the health department serves and others whether they are on Medicaid, private insurance or are uninsured.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that this a conversation that it is not new to public health, and many local health departments including the CCPHD have been looking to shift from a role as a primary care provider to public health community-based services to complement those services elsewhere. Around four years ago, the CCPHD transitioned out of primary care adult health services in partnership with Piedmont.

Mr. Deaton said that the health department has been having conversations with community partners for quite some time and the health department divested from Adult Health Services in July 2017. He said that although Child Health is a smaller program, there were certainly lessons learned from transitioning out of the Adult Health Services Program, including assuring that there were multiple landing spots for the health department's clients and making sure that there are clear messages of what services will continue.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that this is part of a broader vision of who the health department is and what it has been pursuing over the last few years, recognizing that there are now primary care services in Chatham County that meet the need of the Chatham community, but the services that the health department offers as a public health department need to continue and expand.

Mr. Zelek informed the Board that in April 2020 the CCPHD stopped accepting primary care clients under the previous health director's tenure.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that, through conversations in previous years and as part of this process with other providers, the health department sees the need to focus on public population health and community-based services to complement primary care services offered from other providers.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that the health department would not cease offering primary care services for children if there were not other options. It has become clear, and the support letters show, that these providers are eager to take on additional clients.

Mr. Zelek said that the CCPHD's Child Health Care Consultant position is vacant, along with a couple others, and that transitions in staffing provide an apt time to consider transitions in services.

Mr. Zelek informed the Board that Medicaid Managed Care will go into effect on July 1, 2021, transforming the system to a Managed Care system where beneficiaries select from multiple plans instead of just going through Medicaid directly. He said that it places additional requirements on medical homes and is another reason why the timing is important. Mr. Zelek said the health department is looking at transitioning out of those services right at the time as Medicaid Managed Care takes effect.

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He said that the health department has seen diminished demand for child health primary care services recently, which is expected as other options have expanded in recent years and that the desire is to see the health department grow around public health and community-based services.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that the expenditures for child health primary care exceed the health department's revenues by a little over a \$100,000 each year, providing a financial reason for this discussion.

Mr. Deaton reported that the CCPHD has approximately 140 active clients since January 2020; approximately 60% of those clients have Medicaid, and less than one-third are uninsured or self-pay clients.

He added that it is important to know that the CCPHD is not a medical home for some of these clients; some come to the health department for immunization visits, medical nutritional therapy or another service that falls under the Child Health Program.

Mr. Deaton reported that approximately 80% of these clients live in Siler City and 90% live in the western part of Chatham.

He said that these clients have already been notified by mail and telephone of a potential transition and that about 15-20 clients have already transferred care to another provider who has the capacity to accept additional patients. He said that the transition has been smooth so far.

Mr. Zelek said that pre-notifications were conducted via phone calls or in-person visits. It was not official but the CCPHD wanted to give the clients time to adjust to the news, and for those with Medicaid it aligned with open enrollment as part of the new Medicaid Managed Care Program.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that the official notice will be sent out through multiple channels, and the initial verbal pre-notification was made to inform clients that this transition was being considered.

Mr. Deaton presented information regarding requirements of local health departments around Child Health Primary Care.

Mr. Deaton mentioned that the Agreement Addendum, Activity 351, Child Health, states that "a local health department shall provide contract for the provision of or certify the availability of child health services for all individuals within the jurisdiction of the local department."

He mentioned that what the health department is looking to do is to expand the current agreement it has with Piedmont Health Services (PHS). The agreement currently focuses more on family-planning services for clients 21 years of age and older who do not have a primary care home. The idea is for the health department to refer Child Primary Care services to PHS and for PHS to refer their clients to the health department for family-planning services.

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Mr. Deaton said multiple practices have informed the health department that they have the capacity to accept clients; many of them day-of to offer sick care visits.

Dr. Nimalendran, CCPHD Medical Director and a provider at PHS, presented information of the services PHS can provide in general and where they are looking to expand in the coming month.

Dr. Nimalendran mentioned that PHS currently has 15 providers, including one Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. She said that the practices in Siler City and Moncure will have availability for 1,000 new patient appointments over the course of the next year and they are working to increase availability.

Dr. Nimalendran informed the Board that PHS has a 340B pharmacy, dental services, WIC services, lactation services, and behavioral health on-site. Almost all the staff is bilingual. PHS can provide extra resources and has a relationship with UNC, which makes referrals and coordinating much easier.

Dr. Nimalendran said the PHS clinics in Siler City and Moncure are the two PHS practices that are looking to take some of the health department's child health services clients.

Mr. Deaton listed the five sites for Child Health provider services: Moncure Community Health Center (PHS) in Moncure, Siler City Community Health Center (PHS), Kidzcare Pediatrics and UNC Primary Care at Chatham, both based in Siler City, and UNC Family Medicine in Pittsboro.

He mentioned that all sites have bilingual staff, have contracts with all five Prepaid Health Plans (PHPs) in terms of Medicaid Managed Care and offer income-based sliding fee scales or provide the UNC Financial Assistance Program for uninsured clients, as well as accept other insurance plans.

Mr. Zelek clarified that the health department is not completely ending care for children and there are many services that will continue to be offered.

Mr. Deaton presented the Child Health Services that the health department is planning to continue offering as the clinic works through the coordinated health care transition in Chatham County. He said that some of the services that will continue include Immunizations, Immunization data tracking, individual and group nutrition services, Newborn Postpartum home visits and other core public health clinical services that might fall under communicable disease or family planning, including, STI services, TB Skin Tests, Healthy Home (Asthma/Lead) and Focus on Fathers (SmartStart-funded program).

Mr. Deaton stated that the health department certainly envisions continuing to work with the child population.

Ms. Dukeman mentioned that the idea is to expand these services and be a better access point to serve the community, particularly those who have difficulty with transportation or childcare, and being able to provide services more out in the community instead of being based in the clinic.

Mr. Deaton mentioned that the health department seeks to complement what the other providers are doing and move away from overlap of services with a focus of utilizing agency strengths to better meet the community needs.

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Mr. Zelek went over the timeline up to now and what it will look like in the months ahead. He mentioned that the clinic stopped accepting new Child Health Primary Care clients in April 2020 in anticipation of this transition; however, the transition was slowed down due to COVID-19. He mentioned that the CCPHD has been looking deeper into this transition to make sure it is still timely and ensuring that there is a landing spot for the clients.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that conversations with providers have been fruitful, focusing on what services they can utilize and what would benefit their clients.

Mr. Zelek reported that a lot of work over the last few months has been focused on ensuring that if this move is approved by the Board that this will be a smooth transition for the clients.

He mentioned that in early May 2021 the CCPHD did a pre-notification to clients informing them that this transition is being considered.

He said that many conversations have taken place with the Division of Public Health and Medicaid at the state level, with CCPN (Clinically Integrated Network for Medicaid Managed Care), and that the department has been working with them to ensure that the CCPHD has all the requirements met and that it navigates the process as best as possible following best practices and recommendations, both for transitioning out of a service and in the landscape of Medicaid Managed Care.

Mr. Zelek reported that he and key clinical staff met the previous week with the Board of Health Clinical Services subcommittee to consider the transition proposal more in-depth and said that the subcommittee's Board members voted unanimously to recommend the transition to the Board.

Mr. Zelek stated that if the Board approves, the notification letters are ready to be mailed out to clients in English and Spanish with information about the services that will remain at the health department as well as resources from the other providers. Additionally, there is a draft press release, and flyers in the clinic will continue to inform clients throughout this month in anticipation of this move.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that CCNC will be notified for Medicaid clients and the CCPHD will no longer be a medical home for these services.

Mr. Zelek said that the agreement addendum will be updated with the state as well as the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Piedmont Health Services to assure these services for Chatham residents and will continue to work internally and externally to flesh out plans for community-based and population health services.

Mr. Zelek stated that this is a request to the Board of Health to consider approving transitioning Child Health Primary Care Services out of the Public Health Department. This is following the vote from the Board of Health Clinical Services Subcommittee, which voted at its May 18th meeting to recommend this transition to the full Board.

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Chair Reitz-Barlow mentioned that the Board of Health Clinical Subcommittee did agree that it makes most sense to move Primary Child Health Services out of the health department. She mentioned that Mr. Zelek and his team have proven to the Board that there are enough options within range of clients and these practices can handle the 140 children that were mentioned.

Motion

Dr. Barbee motioned to approve transition of the Child Health Primary Care Services out of the Chatham County Public Health Department; this was seconded by Dr. Roscoe. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion

Dr. Herman-Giddens motioned to adjourn the meeting; this was seconded by Dr. Kessler. The motion carried unanimously.



Carol Reitz-Barlow, MSN, RN, CCRN – Chair



Secretary Ex-Officio
Michael Zelek, MPH, Health Director