

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

The Chatham County Board of Health held its monthly meeting on Monday, September 27, 2021 virtual.

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

Staff: Mike Zelek, Vicky Guetgemann, Dorothy Rawleigh, Anne Lowry, Zach Deaton, Zach Horner, Maia Fulton-Black, Julie Wilkerson, Casey Hilliard, Julie Goodwin, Michaela McCuddy

Other: Tara Gregory, Cooperative Extension

Public: None

**Welcome and Call to Order**

Chair Barbee called the meeting to order and greeted everyone.

**Farewell**

Chair Barbee acknowledged Dr. Lewis Lampiris, DDS, MPH for serving two consecutive terms on the Chatham County Board of Health and thanked him for his service, time, and dedication. Board of Health members expressed their gratitude and well wishes to Dr. Lampiris.

**Introductions**

Mr. Zelek introduced Dr. Michaela McCuddy, MD. Dr. McCuddy recently joined Piedmont Health Services (PHS) and the health department is contracting with PHS to have Dr. McCuddy serve as the health department’s Medical Director effective 10-4-21.

Dr. McCuddy is taking the place of the current Medical Director, Dr. Rathika Nimalendran. Mr. Zelek said the health department is fortunate to have her as Medical Director.

**Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest**

None

**Meeting Agenda**

Chair Barbee presented the 09-27-21 Meeting Agenda for consideration. Chair Barbee requested an approval of the Meeting Agenda.

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

**Motion**

Dr. Lampiris motioned to approve the Meeting Agenda; this was seconded by Mr. O’Keefe. The motion carried unanimously.

**Consent Agenda**

Chair Barbee presented the 09-27-21 Consent Agenda for approval and mentioned a couple of additions to the agenda. Letter I) \$1,059 Community Health Grant Funds and letter J) \$107,869.34 Duke Endowment’s Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas Grant (continuation from last fiscal year).

Mr. Zelek added that the Board is now required to re-accept carry-over funds to add them to a new year’s budget. The Duke Endowment funds were already received and these are the remaining funds carried into the current fiscal year.

**Motion**

Dr. Herman-Giddens motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with the additions; this was seconded by Ms. Reitz-Barlow. The motion carried unanimously.

**Public Input**

None.

**Health Director Report**

Mr. Zelek thanked Dr. Lampiris on behalf of the health department for his service over the last six years in multiple roles including Vice-Chair, Clinical Services sub-committee and other initiatives.

Mr. Zelek informed the Board that Dr. Zachary Brian, DMD, MHA has been appointed by the Board of Commissioners to serve in the Board of Health Dentist Seat as recommended by the Board of Health beginning on October 21, 2021.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that Health Campus conversations continue between the health department, Department of Social Services and Piedmont Health Services. These conversations have been delayed over the last year due to Covid-19 and now the agencies are re-engaging in conversations and working toward finalizing a plan for the building in the coming months.

Mr. Zelek said that the health department heard recently from DHHS that the grace period for childhood immunization requirements in schools and childcare were extended due to Covid-19 challenges.

Mr. Zelek acknowledged that several staff participated in trainings the previous week to become certified car seat technicians.

**Chatham County Board of Health**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Finally, Mr. Zelek noted that the consent agenda included carry over Covid funds that the Board had already approved last year. He said that there is a new grant for \$115,000 for school health liaisons to support initiatives in the schools and Covid response efforts.

**Reports**

*Family and Consumer Sciences Program*

Tara Gregory, MPH, RD, LDN, Family & Consumer Sciences with NC Cooperative Extension in Chatham County gave a presentation on the Family and Consumer Sciences program.

Ms. Gregory said that the NC Cooperative Extension is a collaborative effort between the Land Grant University in North Carolina, NC State University and NC A&T University as well as County and Tribal governments in NC.

Ms. Gregory's role at the Cooperative Extension is family consumer sciences agent, which generally focuses on food and nutrition.

She said that the Cooperative Extension is generally involved in agriculture, food, and youth programming. Ms. Gregory's gave an overview of her program, including current and planned initiatives.

Ms. Gregory the following initiatives:

- Food Safety: Emphasizes specifically food safety with food service employees working with Environmental Health to promote the virtual course
- SNAP/EBT: Serving as Chair of the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAT) subcommittee of the Chatham Health Alliance that works with farmers market to accept EBT payment (currently none of the three farmers markets in Chatham County accepts EBT payments)
- Building an Advisory Team to have a team that represents the community that can provide input on the needs that Ms. Gregory's program can meet
- Nutrition & Cooking Skills Education: Ms. Gregory is a registered dietitian, and nutrition education is a big part of what she does, including incorporating cooking skills and education through virtual programs and developing content that can be used in future education.
- Local Food Program: Ms. Gregory is the co-local food coordinator of the Cooperative Extension with Debbie Roos.  
Ms. Gregory's role focuses on the consumer area linking consumers or community members to local food and Ms. Roos is the sustainable agricultural agent focusing on producers and farmers.
- Home Food Preservation: Has become very popular again during the pandemic. Ms. Gregory finds food preservation fascinating and wants to be the "go to" person for canning, freezing, drying and fermentation.

Ms. Gregory mentioned that she has been able to do the collaborative virtual programming with other agents in the state.

**Chatham County Board of Health**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

She mentioned that one of programs she conducts is with the Chatham County Partnership for Children for families who are homeschooling their children or do not have children in formal schools. She has been able to work with the Partnership and connect with those families for nutrition education

Ms. Gregory mentioned that an overarching goal for her is to make sure that she focuses on the practical application of nutrition education and food preparation and build confidence with self-advocacy to help individuals achieve their health and wellness goals and for people to realize that they do have control over their motivation and behaviors to make lasting change.

Ms. Gregory mentioned that other opportunities she is exploring include looking at policy, systems and environmental change initiatives such as working with the school nutrition program to find ways to implement the “Farm to School Program”.

Ms. Gregory mentioned that half of what she does is in partnership with other organizations that are involved in these initiatives and have the same goals and motivation.

Dr. Lampiris suggested connecting with the PACE program for the aging population through Piedmont Health Services.

Dr. Lampiris also suggested reaching out the oral health community and said that many of the dental hygienists are passionate about nutrition.

*Customer Service/Marketing Team Annual Report*

Zach Horner, Communications Specialist, presented Marketing Team information and reported on Customer Service on behalf of Beth Dickens, QA/QI Coordinator.

Mr. Horner stated that FY 20/21 presented perhaps the greatest communications challenge in recent history across the public health landscape, with Covid-19 being uniquely challenging. Along the way, public health departments have had to wrestle with changing mandates, shifting guidance, new science, a vaccine, and vaccine hesitancy. The Chatham County Public Health Department’s Marketing and Customer Service Team has been an important part of the department’s response to these issues by providing feedback and insight from staff across the department.

Mr. Horner presented a summary of the team’s work in the past fiscal year as well as the department’s communication and customer service efforts.

Mr. Horner mentioned that the Marketing Team and the Customer Service Team merged and changed its name and focus in FY20-21 as the “Marketing & Customer Service Team” (MACS), which is composed of ten staff from various departments, including him as Communications Specialist coordinating it.

Mr. Horner mentioned that the team shifted to a primarily an advisory role instead of serving as a primary content creator.

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Mr. Horner mentioned that the Marketing Team had input on the Chatham County Government's new website design that will be implemented soon, and the health department's webpages were rearranged to improve access to information on services.

Mr. Horner reported that he worked on website pandemic information with the input of the team and many across divisions, developed numerous flyers, social media graphics, YouTube videos, Instagram, and Facebook posts to provide information and promote vaccination.

The Marketing Team posted information on other topics such as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) as well.

Mr. Horner mentioned that the team is now charged with selecting customer service annual training for the entire health department.

Mr. Horner shared that he had worked with many people across the county to develop videos about Covid-19 and other topics. He presented one of these videos during the meeting that featured Commissioner Karen Howard, State Representative Robert Reeves, and Reverend Joshua Jones sharing their thoughts about the vaccine and why it is important to get immunized.

Mr. Zelek acknowledged how important it was to add the Communications Specialist position early in the pandemic, aligning with the department's shift to Public Health 3.0. He noted the timing of adding this position and the Population Health Data Scientist was very fortunate given the pandemic.

Mr. Zelek stated that having Zach Horner in the Communication Specialist position has been tremendous and mentioned how he has developed many products in the last year and a half, adding he has done a great job and the department is very fortunate to have him in this role.

Dr. Barbee thanked Mr. Horner for his hard work.

*Chatham Health Alliance*

Julie Wilkerson, Chatham Health Alliance (CHA) Executive Director, provided a brief update on the status of organizational changes within the Alliance.

Ms. Wilkerson mentioned that over the past few years the CHA Leadership Team has been exploring the structure and sustainability, especially as they are coming up on the end of the Duke Endowment Grant that has provided funding during the last six years. She mentioned that through this process the CHA leadership team created a Nonprofit Task Force.

The Nonprofit Task Force has been researching options for the Alliance structure and over the last few months centered on two primary options: becoming a standalone 501(c)(3) or moving under a fiscal sponsor and using their 501(c)(3) status.

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Ms. Wilkerson mentioned that 501(c)(3) opens up the Alliance to more funding opportunities than those they currently have and said that the CHA Leadership decided to recommend fiscal sponsorship to the Alliance membership for the following reasons: it provided a stepping stone from being within the county to becoming a full 501c3, allows for fundraising and grantwriting, and can provide Employee benefits as well as HR, financial management, compliance and risk management support.

Ms. Wilkerson reported that the CHA membership voted to move forward with fiscal sponsorship at its August 2021 meeting. The transition was contingent upon Chatham County providing the funds for the Chatham Health Alliance Executive Director position.

Next steps will be identifying a fiscal sponsor and there are currently two potential fiscal sponsors identified. Once one is identified, the CHA will work with the County on a contract concerning ongoing funding for the Executive Director as well as the Alliance continuing to work on the community assessment and action planning around the health priorities.

Mr. Zelek added that the funds for the Executive Director position have already been approved and budgeted as mentioned, but a budget amendment would be needed to transfer the funds to non-profit fiscal agent, which requires the approval of the Commissioners.

Community Assessment Update

Maia Fulton-Black, Population Health Data Scientist, presented an update on the 2021 Community Assessment process.

She informed the Board that there has been a lot of planning and preparation focusing on the methodology, including gathering input from the Scientific Advisory Committee.

She shared that the survey development which was an exciting process that was led through the equity subcommittee and a community action team, a group of community members that went through the survey and provided edits, suggestions, and updates.

Ms. Fulton-Black mentioned that the process is now moving into data collection in October, including beginning distribution of surveys, collection of secondary data and moving forward with the qualitative process.

The data collection must be completed by the end of the year to allow time for the analysis. Ms. Fulton-Black mentioned that the data collecting process is usually done door-to-door for the cohort survey and it is contingent on Covid-19 transmission numbers.

Ms. Fulton-Black mentioned that the final report will be written in the new year and a final draft completed in June 2022.

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Ms. Fulton-Black gave an overview of Community Assessment components, including the cohort survey protocols, which the Scientific Advisory Committee reviews. CCPHD is working with the NC Institute for Public Health to update protocols on replacing cohort members lost to follow-up and adding new members from selected census blocks to get sufficient representation so data can be broken down by race and ethnicity.

Next Steps include sending out mailers to cohort members, making phone calls, and conducting a shorter supplemental survey with more community members led by the task force to help inform the prioritization process.

Ms. Fulton-Black shared safety measures for door-to-door data collection and said that the Steering Committee recommends Covid-19 vaccination for volunteers and are in the process of working out the logistics.

Currently, she is keeping an eye on the CDC COVID Data Tracker, which must show a stable decreasing trend in positive cases in the four weeks ahead to move forward with door-to-door. She is working with the NC Institute for Public Health to identify a potential plan B instead of conducting a door-to-door survey if Covid trends remain poor.

Ms. Fulton-Black mentioned the two components on the qualitative data collection that they will be conducting will be 1) a photovoice project called “Chatham Snapshots” with prompts to encourage people to send picture and a writing of what they mean to them and 2) “Story Circles” which is similar to the focus groups that have been done in the past. This model reflects community engagement and self-defined themes. They are currently recruiting facilitators and setting up locations and the prompts for these conversations.

*Covid-19 Update Report*

Mr. Zelek mentioned that Covid-19 rates have continued to steadily decline for the past two weeks; the downside is that Chatham continues to experience high levels of community transmission, as is seen across the state.

Mr. Zelek reported that Chatham County has among the lowest case rates in the state, but everywhere across the state and most of the country continues to see high levels of community transmission mainly due to the Delta Variant.

Mr. Zelek stated that it is very important for folks to get vaccinated, continue to a mask when indoors around others in public.

Mr. Zelek reported that the percentage of tests that come back positive has declined from 10% to 7% now and a benchmark for those rates is 5% positive.

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Mr. Zelek informed the Board that several press releases have been sent out with information on free testing sites and options being conducted by Optum at the old Agricultural Building in Pittsboro providing testing from 10am-6pm Monday through Friday and the other site behind Chatham Hospital in the medical office building, Monday through Friday from 5pm-8pm.

He mentioned that StarMed continues to have a testing site on Mondays at the Siler City Community College, Thursdays at the Pittsboro Community College and Wednesday vaccinations and testing at the Goldston Town Hall. Optum conducts vaccinations on Mondays and Thursdays at the Old Agriculture building from 10am-6pm.

Mr. Zelek reported that there has been a steady vaccine demand in recent weeks and currently, and as of 9-27-21 about two-thirds of the Chatham County population that is eligible and 56% overall has been at least partially vaccinated, with 52% overall fully vaccinated.

Mr. Zelek informed the Board that there have been several vaccination events over the last few weeks and mentioned that Anne Lowry, Environmental Health Director, worked closely with Anna Stormzand, Youth Health & Tobacco Initiatives Lead, on school-based vaccination clinics in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and high schools.

Mr. Zelek shared that the County is requiring all county employees to either be vaccinated or to get tested weekly beginning on October 4, 2021, and there was an incentive with this policy for staff getting vaccinated.

He mentioned that the Town of Pittsboro recently enacted a mask mandate in indoor public places.

Mr. Zelek acknowledged the news about boosters and said that Zach Horner alluded to the challenging messaging, including information regarding booster shots. He shared that Mr. Horner did a great job putting messaging together late last week, including a press release, once the CDC made a recommendation. He also created an infographic with all of the Pfizer vaccine providers, who is eligible and who should get the booster.

He mentioned that the health department is working closely with pharmacies providing boosters to assess supply and demand. As a side note, Mr. Zelek reminded everyone that boosters are only currently recommended for those who received first and second doses of Pfizer vaccine.

Dorothy Rawleigh, Division Director, Health Promotion & Policy Division (HPP), provided an outreach and education report. She mentioned that two staff from HPP are working on encouraging residents to get the Covid-19 vaccine.

She mentioned that Mr. Horner has been working with the health department's foreign language interpreters and the Hispanic Liaison to create communication materials for the folks that they serve with flyers and other messaging. Mr. Horner has also been working with Ms. Stormzand to launch five short YouTube videos on frequently asked questions and concerns about the Covid-19 vaccine. The videos were created with community partners and health department employees.



**Chatham County Board of Health**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Ms. Rawleigh reported that the CCPHD's Childcare Health Consultant has been providing in-person and telephone consultation and continues to hold monthly Q&A sessions. Ms. Rawleigh mentioned that CCPHD staff provided outreach and worked at three community resource hubs and participated in a health fair.

Zach Deaton, Division Director, Clinic & Community Health Services Division, reported that the clinic continues to administer the Covid-19 vaccine by appointment and walk-in. He informed the Board that beginning in September the clinic expanded their vaccination schedule by offering the vaccine on Wednesday afternoons from 1:30pm-4:30pm, and all day on Friday 8:30am-4:30am.

Mr. Deaton shared that CCPHD continues to partner with places of business, long-term care facilities, childcare centers, and childcare homes and hosted clinics at the Chatham County Detention Center in August.

Mr. Deaton praised the CCPHD staff for their hard work and said that it has been a complete team effort and thanked the Board for their support through these challenging times.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

**Care Management Programs**

Mr. Zelek mentioned that transition conversations regarding Care Management Programs have been ongoing for the past three years. He presented background information and the proposal for the CCPHD to transition out of care management for high-risk pregnancies (CMHRP) and for at-risk children (CMARC).

Mr. Zelek stated that these programs have existed in some form since the late 80's in the local public health system and have changed through the years.

He mentioned that conversations about the transition began in 2019, when it was first brought to the Board, as they are difficult to sustain as a small county and have been affected by Medicaid Transformation.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that these programs are tied to Medicaid Managed Care and said that the state carved these programs out for three years to remain with local public health departments, during which they have right of first refusal and after which the prepaid health plans will likely be able to decide what to do with them. He mentioned that all of this has created a lot of uncertainty and confusion in the local public health system for these programs.

**Chatham County Board of Health**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Mr. Zelek mentioned that an update on these programs was provided to the Board in September 2019. He added that in January 2020 Mr. Layton Long, former health director, informed the Board that he would work with staff to begin planning to formally transition out of programs and into a broader public health social worker roles, aligning with the health department's shift to core public health services and public health 3.0. However, this transition was delayed due to Covid-19.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that there is a real need for public health social workers, and the challenge with these programs is how they are structured and how they are funded. This is an opportunity to utilize these staff in a different way that is more beneficial way, one that fits the CCPHD vision on what public health is and should be, and where the CCPHD is heading.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that in July 2021 these programs began being funded through the five prepaid health plans, run by private insurance companies, as part of the Medicaid Managed Care. Mr. Zelek added that Management and Clinical Services staff felt the impact of this change in several ways including billing and referrals.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that transitioning out of these programs requires Board of Health approval and ninety (90) days of notice to NC DHHS from the health department to allow time to identify another local health departments to provide these services. He informed the Board that CCPHD has notified the Division of Public Health first in 2019 that this transition was on the table and a few months ago that transition planning was moving forward. He mentioned that other health departments were contacted several times and none were willing to take on these services, leaving the CCPHD with the option to transition programs to the prepaid health plans. Human Resources has approved the transition of these positions to Public Health Social Workers.

Mr. Zelek mentioned vacancies were held to cover these positions without the need for additional funding.

Mr. Zelek mentioned that if the Board approves this transition, plans are in place to notify the Division of Public Health, the prepaid plans, partners and the community, with the clients being the main focus.

Julie Goodwin, RN and Nursing Supervisor, shared that Medicaid funds that are reimbursed to the health department to provide these services do not cover the cost to provide the services to the clients. She mentioned that the health department would like to move the two Social Licensed Clinical Social Workers into a Public Health Social Worker roles to provide local programming and reimbursable services that align with public health 3.0 using existing vacancies.

Ms. Goodwin provided information on each program:

- CMHRP is a Local Health Department Program. Since 1987, it has been a multi-disciplinary care management program to pregnant and postpartum Medicaid enrollees identified as being a high risk of a poor birth outcome. Services include education, support, linkages to community and

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

health-related resources, and management of high-risk conditions that may have an impact on birth outcomes.

- CMARC has been a local health department program since 1989. It is a care management program for young children ages zero to five with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN); experience in the Neonatal intensive Care Unit (NICU); or experience of adverse childhood events. The program provides coordination between health care providers, linkages and referrals to other community programs and supports, and family supports.

Ms. Goodwin provided information on the Impact of Medicaid Managed Care:

- Health departments have the first right of first refusal for the programs and prepaid health plans (PHPs) must contract with local health departments for three years.
- Local Health Departments are responsible for a series of process and quality measures; however, CMARC referrals are too high to meet the measures.
- The PHPs can initiate a Standard Corrective Action Plan for local health departments if the metrics are not met. The local health department has 90 days to implement the corrective action plan and become in compliance with PHPs. Failure to meet this can be cause for termination of the contract with PHPs, giving the PHPs the opportunity to take over the services.
- The prepaid health plan referrals are received from the PHPs, as well as the local Department of Social Services, WIC and local providers.
- The health department has seven days to respond to referrals once assigned.

Ms. Goodwin informed the Board that the care managers have assisted with many initiatives including Covid-19. This will become more important if they transition into these new roles.

She mentioned that current opportunities include the car seat safety and installation program, expanding the tobacco cessation program, opioid overdose response and reduction strategy involving the family courts, EMBRACe, breastfeeding friendly communities, health behavior intervention services and Covid-19 response support.

Ms. Goodwin mentioned that the Social Workers have taken on a role of supporting health department employees with mental health resources as well as exercise classes, in addition to the community programs they already offer.

Ms. Goodwin referred to the timeline presented by Mr. Zelek and many conversation with consultants from NC DHHS and the prepaid health plans, reaching out to all of the health departments in the region and beyond, consulting with community members and partners, working with Human Resources, and drafting job descriptions to transition out of these services by November 15, 2021.

Ms. Goodwin said that they will be making sure that clients are connected with resources and there will be no gaps in services. Once this transition is official, they would formalize the new position with the county, complete certification programs and focus on new initiatives and aligning efforts.

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 27, 2021 – Virtual Meeting**

Mr. Zelek thanked Ms. Goodwin, Ms. Hilliard, Ms. Doran and Mr. Deaton for their work throughout this process.

He mentioned that the care managers are very excited about where this transition is going and that this is not about cutting services but expanding and moving forward with the Public Health 3.0 vision.

Mr. Zelek added that the request to the Board is to consider a vote to approve this transition plan.

**Motion**

Dr. Herman-Giddens motioned to approve the transition out of providing the CMHRP and CMARC services; this was seconded by Ms. Reitz-Barlow. The motion carried unanimously.

**Adjournment**

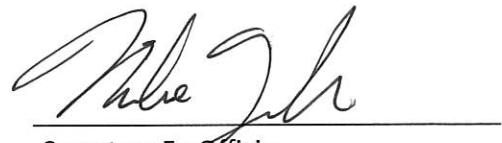
**Motion**

Dr. Lampiris motioned to adjourn the meeting; this was seconded by Ms. Reitz-Barlow. The motion carried unanimously.



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Karen Barbee, EdD – Chair



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Secretary Ex-Officio  
Michael Zelek, MPH, Health Director