

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, June 27, 2022  
Dunlap Building – 80 East Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312**

The Chatham County Board of Health held its monthly meeting on Monday, June 27, 2022, in the Board Room of the Dunlap Building in Pittsboro, North Carolina.

**Attendees**

**Board Members:** Stephanie Freese, DVM, Vice Chair; Alan Rimer, PE, PhD; Ashley Pappas, PharmD, MHA; Franklin Gomez Flores, Commissioner; Tammy Lynn Morris Lloyd, MD; Zachary Brian, DMD; Judith Malone, RN; William Roscoe, OD

**Staff:** Michael Zelek, Maia Fulton-Black, Alicia Reynolds, Anne Lowry, Dorothy Rawleigh, Danielle White, Miguel Lopez, Victoria Triana, Zachary Horner

**Others:** Lara Kehle, Chair, Chatham Health Alliance; Jennie Kristiansen, Director, Chatham County Department of Social Services; Brenda Clegg

**Welcome and Call to Order**

Dr. Freese began the meeting at 6:04 p.m. Dr. Barbee was unable to attend.

**Introductions**

Several new staff members were introduced:

- Michael Zelek, Public Health Director, introduced Brenda Clegg as the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Officer. She will start on Tuesday, July 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Dorothy Rawleigh, Health Promotion & Policy Division Director, introduced Alicia Reynolds, the new Youth Health Specialist.
- Anne Lowry, Environmental Health Director, introduced Miguel Lopez, Environmental Health Specialist, and Victoria Triana, EH intern in the Lead Program.

**Conflict of Interest**

No conflict disclosed.

**Approve Agenda**

Dr. Freese mentioned items to add under New Business.

- B: Board of Health Meeting Schedule FY 2022/2023
- C: Board of Health Discuss Forming a Committee related to the recent Supreme Court ruling
- D: Closed Session pursuant (NCGS 143-318.11(A)(6))

***Dr. Rimer motioned to approve the agenda as amended, Dr. Pappas seconded. Agenda was approved unanimously.***

**Consent Agenda**

***Commissioner Gomez Flores motioned to approve the consent agenda, Dr. Pappas seconded. Consent agenda was approved unanimously.***

### **Public Input Session**

Dr. Jennifer Platt said she has been a Chatham resident for 16 years and is an adjunct professor at the UNC Gillings School of Public Health. She said the last time the US saw an infectious disease as a top three cause of death was 1937. She said that what is now our new normal is not normal. She said she has been watching Portugal, which is a highly-vaccinated country but variant BA.5 is going through the country where vaccines are not enough. She said we need to not just think about vaccines only but other strategies as well. She referenced masks, ventilations, and other means as protection. She said that one of the biggest challenges right now lies in indoor air quality. She referenced a quote from a Stanford scientist saying that public health interventions will end the pandemic, not clinical interventions. She suggested possibly shifting to a focus on air quality as a means of ending the pandemic. She ended referencing the scientist who emphasized the importance of hand washing and that his research was not accepted in his time but maybe 50 years later.

### **Public Hearing related to proposed changes to the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Rule**

No comments were given related to the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Board of Health Rule.

### **REPORTS**

The Annual School Health Position Report will be delayed to August, as Rob Schooley was unable to attend tonight.

### **Annual Community Child Protection & Fatality Prevention Team Report**

Mr. Zelek and Jennie Kristiansen, Director of the Chatham County Department of Social Services, presented the annual Community Child Protection and Fatality Prevention Team report.

Ms. Kristiansen said this report is given once a year. The team reviews active child welfare cases to determine gaps in community resources for child wellbeing, all child fatalities, and policies and procedures from the state. Ms. Kristiansen said the goal of the reviews is to understand the complexities and challenges that families are facing, find the gaps in services, and make recommendations. Through the end of May for FY 22, 285 reports related to child welfare were made to DSS, with more than half related to an injurious environment or substance use. Ms. Kristiansen said the committee makes selections for review based on the complicated nature of the problem. At the end of the year, she said, the committee found that children's behavioral health needs, substance use, and domestic violence were among the leading reasons for placing a child outside the family.

Ms. Kristiansen continued by saying that the team concludes the year by making specific local recommendations. The three this year were:

- Additional supports for parents of adolescents who are exhibiting challenging behaviors, particularly those served by the child welfare and/or juvenile justice system
- Develop a sustainability plan for Family Treatment Court. This is a grant-funded program that works with families where children have been separated due to substance use by parents. One parent has recently completed the program and was reunited with their children.
- Collaborate with Vaya Health to better serve children and youth with behavioral health needs. The county recently transitioned from Cardinal Innovations to Vaya.

The state recommendations were:

- Address the problem of children and youth with high level behavioral health needs who are staying in DSS offices and hotels due to lack of appropriate care
- Identify solutions for children who are dually diagnosed with mental health and intellectual/developmental disabilities
- Make programs available statewide that have shown to be successful in regional implementation

Mr. Zelek discussed child fatalities, deaths of children under age 18. This fiscal year, the team has reviewed 8 child fatalities. He said it typically takes a year for the information to come to the task force. Three were determined to be unpreventable. He said some of the things the team has seen in recent years include safe sleep and youth mental health. An intensive review will be done in late June that looks at a more complex child fatality.

He said safe sleep has continued to be a concern and has been seen in case reviews over the past several years. Youth mental health is also a growing concern locally. The CCPHD team has been working on a youth mental health toolkit developed with youth as part of the process. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact families and organizations.

Regarding 2021 successes, Mr. Zelek mentioned a SIDS Awareness Month campaign in October, resources around youth mental health, additional funding being given to support the EMBRACe initiative, and COVID-19 vaccination and response efforts. Ms. Kristiansen referenced a trauma-informed communities grant, district permanency collaboratives, and foster parent recruitment. She said the number of children in foster care has been decreasing in the last few years, and the opportunities for foster parents to receive training virtually have increased, both good things.

Dr. Roscoe referenced potential shootings in school in relation to child safety and fatality. Ms. Kristiansen and Mr. Zelek said that the schools are in charge of school safety and active shooter drills, but the team has been discussing safe gun storage.

### **Chatham Health Alliance Presentation**

Lara Kehle, Chair of the Chatham Health Alliance (CHA), presented an update on the Chatham Health Alliance. She gave an overview of the CHA's history and its mission and vision. She then spoke about the CHA recently becoming its own nonprofit under a fiscal sponsorship through

the Social Good Fund. The CHA continues to partner with CCPHD and continues active participation in the Community Assessment, health priorities, and strategic planning.

The CHA will have two staff members, along with interns and students. Ms. Kehle said the main part of the CHA is the membership, which includes community members. The membership is broken into four subcommittees, which include Access to Comprehensive Health Services, Equity, Healthy Eating and Active Living, and Resilience (formerly known as Poverty).

Ms. Kehle said that each subcommittee has had successes. The CHA has been supporting the CCPHD through COVID vaccination, while also:

- Access Subcommittee: NCCARE360 Pilot Project. It connects resources to people who need resources, particularly related to the social determinants of health. Ms. Kehle said there are not enough people right now using this program. This pilot program is designed to encourage agencies to participate and break down barriers. She added that the CHA is looking at Resource Hubs as a way to be a referral source for NCCARE360.
- HEAL: SNAP/EBT to farmers markets. This initiative would make SNAP/EBT eligible for local farmers markets, including making farmer's markets nonprofits.
- Resilience: Chatham Resource Hub. These began early in COVID and have become opportunities to bring connection to partner agencies and free food to people where they are.
- Equity: Ms. Kehle said the CHA wanted to make sure the membership is reflective of the Chatham County community. The Equity Subcommittee created a survey to find out who was part of the Alliance and who the group was missing.

Next is the health prioritization process. The CHA had a prioritization task force and created opportunities for the community to share their voice. The CHA uses those priorities to create strategic plans, which then go toward creating the County Health Improvement Plan. The CHA decided to keep the subcommittees in place, with the potential to create a new subcommittee as needed. The prioritization process has determined three new priority areas: mental health and substance use; employment; and transportation. Ms. Kehle said these priorities will be addressed within the existing subcommittees. The subcommittees will meet to determine strategic plans around these priorities using Results Based Accountability.

## **HEALTH DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Zelek offered the following comments:

- Blue-green Algae: This weekend, there was a report of suspected blue-green algae, or cyanobacteria, in Jordan Lake near Farrington Point after a dog was reported to have died and another very sick after swimming in that area. CCPHD has been in contact with NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) about this. Today, DEQ performed testing on the water from this area to determine if the toxin microcystin was present. Preliminary results found that while potential toxin-producing cyanobacteria was present, it was not in bloom quantities and was typical for a North Carolina lake in the summer. The toxin (microcystin) was not detected in any of the samples. DEQ's lab will run additional

testing later this week. We shared an announcement on social media over the weekend to make sure the public was aware of this investigation and informed on the potential dangers of cyanobacteria, especially in the summer. The post has been shared over 7,600 times, far beyond Chatham. We will continue to coordinate with NC DHHS and NC DEQ on this, and DEQ released additional information this evening to update the public. And remember, swimmers and waders should always keep children and pets away from waters that appear discolored or scummy and recommends “when in doubt, stay out.”

- **Maternal Health Transition:** Since our last meeting when the Board of Health approved the transition out of maternal health services, we have made some important progress. We finalized and signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Piedmont Health Services to assure access to these services, including the referral and reimbursement process. We have received draft contracts from nearly all Medicaid prepaid health plans and are working with County legal to review those contracts. We have also shared updates, including a news release, with the Chatham community on the transition and shared notifications with community partners. Our maternal health coordinator, Nicole Hanner, has been moving forward with newborn/post-partum home visits. She has also just completed a doula training focused on birth equity and can teach or facilitate childbirth education classes. He said he would continue to keep the Board informed in the months ahead.
- **COVID-19 Vaccine:** Our clinic in Siler City now offers the COVID vaccine for children under 5 years old. Call the clinic to make an appointment.
- **COVID-19 Community Testing Sites:** We recently heard from NC DHHS that they are looking to wind down the community testing sites that they contract across the state, including two in Chatham. Because of this, the Siler City site will end operations on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Pittsboro site will continue through at least July 8<sup>th</sup> and we are looking to extend this into the fall but have not yet confirmed with NC DHHS. Of note, there is now better access to at-home rapid tests than earlier in the pandemic, and we have them at no cost in our front lobbies. We have also work with community organizations to connect them with access to the tests.
- **Opioid Settlement:** The Sheriff’s Prevention Partnership for Controlled Substances continues to meet to discuss the Opioid Settlement funds coming to the county. We expect to use some of the funding to hire a coordinator, housed at the Public Health Department, to oversee the partnership, support Chatham Drug Free, plan and coordinate interventions, and seek additional grant funding. The funds will also be used to support prevention and response efforts.
- **Death Certificates:** There is a bill in the state senate to extend the acceptance of paper death certificates until the end of the year. The state recently transitioned to only accepting electronic records, so this would change operations back to where they were, at least through this year. The bill has passed the House and is under consideration with the Senate.
- **County Budget:** The Chatham County Board of Commissioners approved the fiscal year 2022-23 budget last week. This includes three new positions with Environmental Health.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Community Assessment Report**

Maia Fulton-Black, Population Health Data Scientist, reported that the final draft of the report was given to the board. She said the board of Chatham Hospital has approved, so once the Board of Health approves, the report will be able to be given to the state for accreditation purposes. The Assessment will then be used to work on strategic plans and priorities. The board is required to take a final vote to approve the report.

***Dr. Pappas motioned to approve the report, Dr. Morris Lloyd seconded. The board unanimously voted to approve the report.***

Ms. Fulton-Black said the department will work on dissemination of the report through multiple avenues, including printed copies, social media, targeted topical reports, and more.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention BOH Rule**

Anne Lowry, Environmental Health Director, asked if there were any questions related to the proposed changes to the Board of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Rule. She mentioned that the proposed changes were presented to the Board at the last previous meeting.

***Dr. Morris Lloyd motioned to approve the new rule, Dr. Pappas seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve the new rule.***

#### **Board of Health Meeting Schedule FY 2022-23**

The proposed Board of Health meeting schedule for fiscal year 2022-23 was presented.

***Dr. Roscoe motioned to approve the meeting schedule, Dr. Brian seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve the schedule.***

#### **Discuss Forming a Committee to Make a Statement on New Dobbs U.S. Supreme Court Decision**

Dr. Freese referenced previous statements the board has made related to sensitive topics, related to COVID-19 and systemic racism specifically. Dr. Freese suggested the idea of forming a committee to put out a statement related to the new decision from the Supreme Court. She said the statement would not be related to the politics, but what sort of health parameters may or may not be changing related to women in Chatham County and anything the Board feels the community may need to know.

Dr. Pappas said that some degree of communication would be helpful, related to what may be impacted right now. She said that waiting until August may miss out on the timing.

Mr. Zelek said the CCPHD was included in a response to the News + Record related to the department's family planning services. He said there is no expectation that these services will change. He said it would make sense to share what services the department offers.

Dr. Brian said it might make sense for the Board of Health to sign on to whatever the Public Health Department releases.

Dr. Rimer said it is important to say something. He asked if there was any value in supporting what the staff says or is it just reporting what the staff says. Dr. Freese said that if there was a public statement like the systemic racism statement, that would probably be a longer wait to ensure it was done right.

Commissioner Gomez Flores asked if the statement could be made broader to include women's health. Mr. Zelek said that it is a good point to highlight services that the department has and the community offers related to a broader focus.

Dr. Freese asked for a vote on whether the committee should be formed and then who will be a part of the committee.

***Ms. Malone motioned to establish a committee to develop a statement related to women's health in Chatham County. Dr. Morris Lloyd seconded the motion.***

***Approve: Malone, Morris Lloyd, Freese, Rimer, Gomez Flores, Brian, Pappas***

***Oppose: Dr. Roscoe***

***The motion passed 7-1.***

Dr. Pappas and Dr. Brian volunteered for the committee. The statement will provide information about what the CCPHD provides and other resources in the community. Dr. Morris Lloyd said the statement could be supporting the services the department has and avoiding controversy. Dr. Brian said it was important that the board show some level of engagement and support.

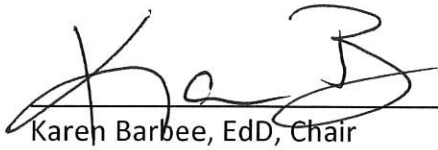
***Closed Session pursuant (NCGS 143-318.11(A)(6)) Dr. Rimer motioned to move the board into closed session and Commissioner Gomez Flores seconded. The board approved the motion unanimously.***

### **Return from Closed Session**

Dr. Rimer shared that he has been on the BOH for a short period, and he was impressed with Mr. Zelek has been doing. He added the Health Director Evaluation Committee needs more time to complete a thorough performance evaluation using a new 360-evaluation tool. The committee agreed to move forward with the County pay increase effective in July along with other staff. The committee will complete the evaluation before the August BOH meeting and bring the findings back to that meeting.

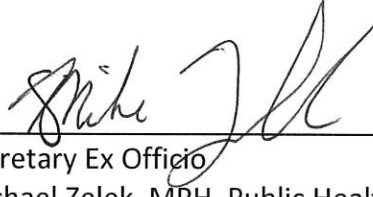
### **ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Roscoe motioned to adjourn the meeting, Dr. Morris Lloyd seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.



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Karen Barbee, EdD, Chair



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Secretary Ex Officio  
Michael Zelek, MPH, Public Health Director