

**Chatham County Board of Health
Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 23, 2023
Dunlap Building – 80 East Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312**

The Chatham County Board of Health held a regular meeting on Monday, January 23, 2023, in the Board Room of the Dunlap Building in Pittsboro.

Attendees

Board Members: Stephanie Freese, DVM, Vice Chair; Judith Malone, RN; Ashley Pappas, PharmD, MHA; Franklin Gomez Flores, Commissioner; Marcia Herman-Giddens, PA, MPH, Dr PH; Alan Rimer, PE, PhD; William Roscoe, OD; Zachary Brian, DMD, MHA; Carol Reitz-Barlow, MSN, RN, CCRN; Tammy Lloyd, MD

Staff: Michael Zelek, Danielle White, Brenda Clegg, Zach Deaton, Julie Goodwin, Alesia Hunt, Zachary Horner, Sherry Montiel-Garcia, Anne Lowry, Casey Hilliard

Guests: Natalie Thompson

Welcome and Call to Order

Dr. Freese called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Dr. Barbee, Board Chair, was unable to attend the meeting tonight.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

None were stated.

Introductions

Julie Goodwin, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, introduced Alesia Hurt, the new Community Alternatives Program (CAP) Social Worker.

Zach Deaton, Director of the Clinical and Community Health Services Division, introduced Sherry Montiel-Garcia, new Receptionist at the Siler City clinic.

Approval of Agenda

One item was added to the Consent Agenda -- Vote on a request to approve \$9,025 NEHA-FDA RFFM Grant Funds. Dr. Freese noted she would abstain from a vote on the Consent Agenda because it included a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to appoint her to a new term on the Board.

Dr. Herman-Giddens motioned to approve the agenda as amended, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Rimer. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Dr. Herman-Giddens motioned to approve the consent agenda as amended, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Rimer. The motion passed unanimously, with Dr. Freese abstaining.

Public Input Session

None.

New Business

Tobacco 21 Resolution

Zachary Horner, Communications Specialist/Public Information Officer, introduced the resolution and Natalie Thompson, Region 5 Tobacco Prevention Manager covering eight (8) counties in central North Carolina, including Chatham County.

Ms. Thompson said the resolution has already been considered and signed by multiple boards across the state. She said the resolution is designed to let the state legislature to know this is a priority during this upcoming session, with three focuses:

- Raising the minimum age of tobacco sales to age 21
- Creating a retailer licensing system for North Carolina. NC is one of the few states that does not have one.
- Removing local preemption from state law. Current law does not allow locality to make its own rules that are stricter than the state legislation.

Raising the age would provide a stronger enforcement mechanism and make it easier for retailers related to selling both alcohol and tobacco.

Dr. Brian asked three questions related to other states and boards and who will sponsor the legislation in the General Assembly. Ms. Thompson said there are 40 states with retailer licensing systems and 41 states have raised the minimum age of tobacco sales to 21. She said she is not aware of a Board of Health that would not support the resolution. She added that there is not sure of a legislative sponsor at this time.

Dr. Freese asked about the two main points, changing the sales age and creating the retailer licensing system. She asked if one was going to take precedence if the whole push would fail as is. Ms. Thompson said some states have passed Tobacco 21 but not focused on retailer accountability. She said there is a desire to see them together.

Dr. Rimer asked about the chance of this passing the legislature. Ms. Thompson said there is a good chance of some version of a Tobacco 21 bill passing. The focus is making sure it is a bill that protects public health and not one drafted by the industry.

Dr. Herman-Giddens asked what year the federal government put the legislation in place. Ms. Thompson said it was 2019. Dr. Herman-Giddens remarked that North Carolina is very behind.

Dr. Brian asked clarification about if having one piece go through and others not. He remarked that getting the age increased may be likely but the regulation would be a sticking point. Ms. Thompson said that regulation may not get the support, but there is also a concern about youth

vaping. She said that last point may be where traction can be gained on the regulation front and working to minimize the burden on retailers.

Dr. Herman-Giddens asked about the ABC Board and if they could take this on. Ms. Thompson said they seem to be on board. She added that money from the federal government could be used to make this happen.

Dr. Herman-Giddens motioned to approve the tobacco 21 resolution as presented, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Brian. The motion passed 9-1, with Dr. Roscoe opposing.

Dr. Roscoe said that we need to let people have some rights, that if a kid can be drafted and have a machine gun, he should be able to smoke a cigarette.

Reports

Community Engagement and Outreach Team

Casey Hilliard, Strategic Planning and Development Officer, gave a presentation on the Strategic Community Outreach and Engagement Action Team. Ms. Hilliard said this topic was one of three priorities for the CCPHD this year and has not yet been presented.

Ms. Hilliard said the group was brought together to answer the goal of fostering community engagement and community-led action in pursuit of our health priorities. This is part of pursuing Public Health 3.0. It also falls into #3 and #4 of the 10 Essential Public Health Services. The goal of the group is to “build stronger trusting relationships with the community through the establishment of a robust coordinated community engagement strategy that facilitates a mutual exchange of information between the Public Health department and the community.”

The group has discussed getting clarity on what we mean by “community engagement.” Ms. Hilliard said the goal is moving from just doing outreach to getting the community to initiate and direct action. The group has identified three large strategies:

- Enhancing Community Assessment recruitment, data collection, and dissemination
- Build community engagement and decision-making into Department programs
- Community Engagement Team, building capacity

Ms. Hilliard concluded by saying that this is important work but can be tricky to do.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Update

Brenda Clegg, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, provided an update on DEI at CCPHD. Ms. Clegg shared updates on internal DEI initiatives, including adding new standard interview questions, selecting a DEI learning platform, and forming two new employee working groups. The department has had 10 job openings since July 2022. Two positions have been filled internally, 5 from outside sourcing, and 5 positions are open.

Ms. Clegg reported that she is moving to the County Manager's Office as the Chief Equity and Community Engagement Officer. She added that she will continue to work with the CCPHD. She said the health department has served as a great pilot effort. She said she will continue to lead the Equity Committee and continue in other CCPHD work while passing some on to others.

Ms. Clegg concluded by sharing information on five healthcare contributions made by Black medical professionals: James McCune Smith, MD, Dr. Daniel H. Williams, Iona Rollin Whipper, Dr. Charles Drew, and Kizzmekia S. Corbett, PhD.

Mr. Zelek commented on the great work Ms. Clegg has done with CCPHD and that, while he is sad to not have her based in the department, he is glad she will continue with the County and grow this work. Given she will be continuing much of the work she has been doing with CCPHD, there is flexibility in how her position will be used moving forward that is currently being discussed.

CCPHD 2022 Highlights

Mr. Zelek shared a slide show of CCPHD highlights from 2022, including production of the 2021 Chatham County Community Assessment; a new all-staff newsletter; teams leading strategic-planning efforts; multiple new and transferred staff; a new partnership with NC State to map wells in Chatham; relaunch of Newborn Postpartum Home Visiting Program; providing flu and COVID booster shots, including at no cost to those without insurance; Safe Kids car seat program launched; recruiting for Overdose Prevention Specialist; RDs partnering with Chatham Libraries on grant initiatives; Lou Ann Vasquez certified as enhanced role nurse; staff giving presentations on various department work and topics; Terri Buchanan graduating from the county's Leadership Academy; CCPHD taking Halloween honors; and CCPHD earning reaccreditation with honors.

Health Director Report

Mr. Zelek provided several reports:

- He shared that recommendations were shared to UNC Health leadership from the Maternity Care Center task force.
- Budget season is underway, and Finance Officer Gary Thomas will meet with the board next month. The Board's Budget Committee will meet before the February Board of Health meeting. There will be one expansion request, the Community Engagement Specialist, which was submitted last year but denied.
- The clinic continues to provide flu and COVID booster shots. There is an upcoming clinic this Sunday at Roca Fuerte church.
- CCPHD continues to recruit applicants for several positions.
- The county's COVID transmission is at the moderate level right now. Mr. Zelek said there are different variants out there, and vaccines and boosters are continuing to do some good things.

Dr. Herman-Giddens asked about COVID-19 case data, considering at-home tests. Mr. Zelek said case numbers are an undercount, as at-home tests are not counted. He referenced wastewater

surveillance, which has not been available in Chatham County recently (Pittsboro was previously a site).

Dr. Herman-Giddens expressed concern about seeming complacency about COVID. She said it is still there and is bad in some places. Dr. Freese said the ability of the disease to mutate is less the further it goes along. Dr. Herman-Giddens said the country seems to be acting like COVID over. She said it seems unrealistic and premature to be acting like it is over. Mr. Zelek said pandemic fatigue is certainly part of it. He said the CCPHD's work continues around vaccination and education, including a recent press release that was sent out noting the increase in cases. He said it may not be in the same crisis mode as it used to be but the work continues.

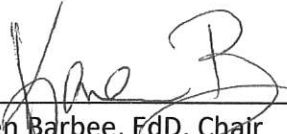
Old Business

None.

Dr. Freese stated that the board will continue to deal with infectious disease and low staffing levels and high demand. She said that it is good that the board will continue to work together, and hopes that this year will usher in a new era that is not bogged down by COVID-19.

Adjournment

Dr. Rimer made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Pappas. The motion passed unanimously.



Karen Barbee, EdD, Chair



Secretary Ex Officio
Michael Zelek, MPH, Public Health Director