

**Chatham County Board of Health  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 20, 2024  
Dunlap Building – 80 East Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312**

The Chatham County Board of Health held a regular meeting on Monday, May 20, 2024, in the Board Room of the Dunlap Building in Pittsboro.

**Attendees**

**Board Members:** Karen Barbee, EdD, Chair, Rya Williams, Carol Reitz-Barlow, MSN, RN CCRN, William Roscoe, OD, Zachary Brian, DMD, MHA, Tammy Lloyd, MD

**Absent Members:** Stephanie Freese, DVM, Franklin Gomez Flores, Ashley Pappas, PharmD, MHA, Alan Rimer, PE

**Staff:** Michael Zelek, Danielle White, Bianca Sahota, Dorothy Rawleigh, Kyle Chambers, Zach Deaton, Anne Lowry

**Guests:** Rob Schooley, Chatham Public Schools, Jennie Kristiansen, Department of Social Services

**Welcome and Call to Order**

Dr. Barbee started the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

**Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

None.

**Introductions**

None.

**Approval of Agenda**

*Dr. Lloyd made a motion to approve the agenda as presented and Ms. Reitz-Barlow seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.*

**Consent Agenda**

*Dr. Brian made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, and Ms. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.*

**Public Input Session**

None.

## Reports

### **School Health Position Annual Update**

Rob Schooley, Chatham County Schools School Health, Physical Education, & Wellness Instructional Program Facilitator, delivered an annual update report. He noted that he was previously the only staff member in this position statewide, but now there is another county with a similar position.

Mr. Schooley stated that Chatham County Schools (CCS) has a total population of 9,143 students. The strategic approaches taken are increasing teacher resources, targeting professional development and emphasizing community collaboration. Mr. Schooley said that this position is guided and has a defined scope. According to NC Healthful Living Essential Standards, the position has a contractual obligation to coordinate classes, including classes on alcohol, tobacco prevention classes among adolescents, as well as opioid and vaping use. Mr. Schooley noted that the position must follow federal and state policy, such as the Healthy Youth Act, Healthy Active Children, CCS Policy 6140 and CCS Policy 3540. He said that an implementation assessment helps ensure that classes are taught in line with these standards. The School Health Advisory Council, which monitors student health and wellness, collaborates with partners like the Chatham County Public Health Department (CCPHD) to verify that health information that is taught is in line with what should be taught according to state standards.

Mr. Schooley said that data collected throughout the project will be analyzed to see if anything specifically sticks out for Chatham County. Community collaboration is also very important, and most recently involves partners such as the Sheriff's Prevention Partnership on Controlled Substances. A significant collaboration that took place in the past year was a partnership with Chatham Drug Free. Mr. Schooley said that a podcast was started that focused on parenting, substance use, youth vaping, which received positive feedback. He said he is also trying to incorporate substance use prevention curriculum into the schools. Mr. Schooley added that he is working with one of the county's retired teachers to create standardization for alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) guidance. CCS also hosted parent information sessions on substance use this year, provided by the Poe Health Center (offered in both English and Spanish). Mr. Schooley said that the Recovery Celebration will be hosted at Chatham Middle School on September 28, 2024 to promote mental health; a 5K will also be offered. Mr. Schooley said that this year, the UNC School of Nursing conducted a community assessment. CCS also has a new relationship with Safe Routes to Schools.

As part of data collection, Mr. Schooley said that a curriculum implementation assessment took place in 2018 and 2023. Teachers K-12 rated communication, mental and emotional health higher in 2023, showing progress. Mr. Schooley noted this progress is because of a dedicated staff member providing guidance, as well as a strategic approach (collaboration, increasing resources) and increased accountability. Every year, Mr. Schooley said he sends out an attestation to see if a teacher has implemented curriculum, which is the reason for this accountability. The attestation rate rose significantly for ATOD, Nutrition & Physical Activity,

Personal Consumer Health, Interpersonal Communication & Relationships and Mental & Emotional Health. Looking forward to next year, Mr. Schooley noted he would like to see new Healthful Living standards implemented. Mr. Schooley hopes that classroom exercises and nutrition literacy professional development could be offered to teachers. He also hopes that there is more teacher access to resources for ATOD instruction, as well as more support for students facing addiction to nicotine, and support for same and instructive student learning environments.

Mr. Schooley also mentioned work around naloxone access in schools noting there are statewide efforts that would help facilitate it and that it is currently carried by all school resource officers. Dr. Barbee said that increasing Narcan accessibility in schools was previously discussed. Ms. Reitz-Barlow said she hopes to see an equipped school nurse in every school. Mike Zelek, Chatham County Public Health Department Director, said that this is something Ms. Reitz-Barlow has shared in the past and that the department receives only \$100,000 per year in state funding to support nurses in schools.

### **Community Child Protection/Fatality Prevention Team Report**

Jennie Kristiansen, Chatham County Department of Social Services (DSS), Social Services Director, and Mike Zelek delivered a report on the community child protection/child fatality prevention team (CCPT-CFPT). Ms. Kristiansen noted that the team is responsible for reviewing all under 18 fatalities and developing strategies to prevent them. There is a recommendation that all fatalities be reviewed based on recommendations that are likely to lead to prevention efforts. She added that there is also a recommendation that will help compare Chatham County data to the state, and there will also be an option to choose between a multi or single county team.

Ms. Kristiansen said that the Chatham County Board of Commissioners (BOC) appoints five members at large. She also shared that there has been a gradual increase in the number of families referred to child protective services (312 a year in 2023 compared to 300 in 2023; 289 in 2021). Almost half of these are due to an “injurious” environment, such as a child being left overnight without supervision. Ms. Kristiansen said that between fiscal years 2021 through 2023, there has been a tripling in abuse reports. She added that there have been changes in state reporting policy that may have influenced this. She said that parents and children who are seen through the team often have similar needs. In most families who were observed during this time (8 in total), parents had some level of involvement with the justice system. Ms. Kristiansen shared that three recommendations were made to the state by the team:

1. Expand/fast track prevention services for foster care prevention and child abuse/neglect efforts.
2. Fast-track solutions for children with behavioral health needs.
3. Fund a stronger kinship care plan.

Mr. Zelek said that in 2023, 7 child fatality reviews were conducted. Of those, he noted that 3 were deemed to be unpreventable, and that ages of the death reviewed were from newborn to 18 years old. Mr. Zelek shared that traffic accidents remain the leading cause of death in youth in Chatham County, and that youth mental health continues to be a focus, as well as safe storage of firearms. Mr. Zelek said that safe sleeping environments are also of importance. He added that several speakers were invited to deliver reports to the group on several areas of focus, including representatives from CCS (Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Parents Bill of Rights), an expert formerly with the UNC Highway Safety Research Center (Traffic Safety), and the statewide CFPT coordinator (CFPT Review Refresher).

Mr. Zelek said the team and partners also experienced some successes in 2023, including the start of medical expansion; to date, just over 1,800 have been able to access Medicaid within Chatham County due to expansion. The CCPHD and its partners continue to offer the car seat safety check program, reaching 148 individuals in 2023. He added that gun locks were able to be provided through Safe Kids, in addition to storage lockboxes. Mr. Zelek also shared that EMBRACe work toward advancing birth equity continues. In 2023, the Maternity Care Center returned to 24/7 operations and childbirth classes are now offered in both English and Spanish. Thanks to the efforts of Morgan Culver, Opioid Settlement Coordinator, naloxone distribution has dramatically increased.

Ms. Kristiansen said that enhanced behavioral health services offered by Monarch are providing critical resources to residents of Chatham County, particularly in Pittsboro. CCS also launched teletherapy services through Daybreak. Ms. Williams asked for more information about the youth mental health services at Monarch Clinic. Ms. Kristiansen said that it is a private facility for all ages. Ms. Williams asked if Monarch is a partner for behavioral health services. Ms. Kristiansen said, yes, Monarch is another option because they accept Medicaid, along with Daymark. Mr. Zelek said that Renaissance Wellness has also been a key provider in the community. Ms. Kristiansen said that there was previously only one option for these services in Siler City, so it is good to have this new option.

Ms. Kristiansen said Senate Bill 20 authorized funding for relative-kinship care to support children in foster care who remained with relatives. DSS has been working on a multi-year effort to enhance family time. She said that in 2023, a series of trainings were provided to child welfare social workers on improving the quality of time with parents and children through pre-planning, educating parents on the purposes of family time, and providing meaningful feedback. Safe sleep is another area of focus; continuing work to provide educational materials to families and caregivers.

Ms. Kristiansen said Chatham County continues to increase investments in housing services with the launch of the Emergency Housing Assistance Program in June 2023. The County also launched Strong Fathers, (previously provided by Pathways to Change) a virtual intervention program for men who have used violence in the home; this is open to anyone in the community.

## **New Business**

### **Board of Health Seat Appointment Recommendations**

Dr. Barbee announced that the nominating committee provided a list of recommended applicants to fill the Board of Health's vacant seats. Dr. Roscoe said excellent candidates had applied for these vacancies and it was difficult to choose.

The following candidates were recommended to fill the Board of Health's seat vacancies:

- **Nurse**
  - Catherine Crawford
- **Optometrist**
  - Heather O'Mara
- **Physician**
  - Dana Iglesias
- **Public**
  - Erika Dunnon

*Dr. Barbee made a motion to approve the candidates that were recommended by the nominating committee, and Carol Reitz-Barlow seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

### **FY25 BOH Officer Chair/Vice Chair Committee**

Dr. Barbee announced she will not be able to serve another term as Chair, as she is currently expecting. Dr. Brian mentioned that he would be interested in assuming Vice Chair. Dr. Barbee mentioned that Dr. Freese is potentially interested in acting as Chair of the Board.

An agenda item on who will succeed Dr. Barbee and Dr. Freese as Chair and Vice Chair will be added for discussion and vote in June.

## **Health Director Report**

Mr. Zelek shared the following updates:

- The County released its recommended budget for next fiscal year. Both CCPHD expansion requests were included, as is a 4% raise for County employees. The budget will not be finalized until next month.
- The Community Assessment is now up to around 330 surveys. It has been a true team effort.
- CCPHD staff held the annual all-staff teambuilding day this past Friday. Staff seemed to have a good time and it was nice to see mingling across divisions.

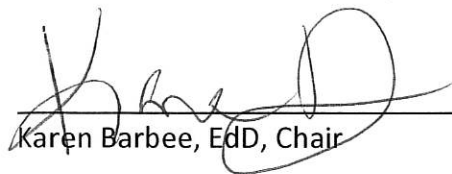
- Roxana Lopez, Environmental Health Tech, recently graduated with her bachelor's degree and also was promoted to an Environmental Health Specialist position.
- Kyle Chambers, Communications Specialist, recently graduated with his master's degree.
- Tia Brown, Youth Health and Tobacco Initiatives Lead, passed her Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES).
- Interviews are being conducted for our two vacancies: an Environmental Health tech position and the Community Health Worker position.
- Environmental Health currently has two externally funded interns. One intern will be working on researching food borne illness risk factors in our regulated establishments and developing intervention strategies to address the risk factors. The other intern will be developing outreach materials to encourage well owners to sample their wells and developing training materials for owners to sample their own well.
- Environmental Health recently hosted two events, a pre heat season meeting and a bed bug meeting with Social Services. Both were well attended, and Anne Lowry, Environmental Health Director, was the lead for both.
- Three Opioid Settlement public meetings took place over the last month to get public input on the use of the settlement funds. There is also a survey to provide input that can be found on the CCPHD Facebook page.
- Vital Records has officially moved over to the Clinic Admin team. Mr. Zelek expressed gratitude to the team for their willingness to take this on.
- CCPHD expects to have a new medical director next fiscal year, likely one we have worked with before and is well regarded by our team. CCPHD will continue to contract with Piedmont for provider time at the clinic.

**Old Business**

None

**Adjournment**

*Dr. Lloyd made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, and Ms. Reitz-Barlow seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.*

  
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 Karen Barbee, EdD, Chair

  
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 Secretary Ex Officio  
 Michael Zelek, MPH, Public Health Director