

Madison County Board of Health Meeting

Thursday January 25, 2024 6:00 pm

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Members

Dr. Robert Adams DDS, Chair
Dr. Suzanne Sheldon, DVM
Hanna Hardin, Pharmacist
Crystal Webb, Public
Larry Peek, Engineer
Ricky Young, MD

Joey Chandler, Public
Jeremy Hensley, Commissioner
Caleb Massey, RN
Diana Rogers, RN, Public
Cheryl Conway, PhD, RN
Dr. Melissa Robinson MD. Ex Officio

Regular Meeting Special Meeting

Present In Person:

Dr. Robert Adams DDS, Chair
Larry Peek, Engineer
Ricky Young, MD
Diana Rogers, RN, Public

Joey Chandler, Public
Cheryl Conway, PhD, RN
Caleb Massey, RN
Jeremy Hensley, Commissioner

Attending Virtual

Dr. Suzanne Sheldon, DVM
Dr. Robinson MD, Ex Officio

Hanna Hardin, Pharmacist
Staff in Attendance: Robin Wallin, Director of Nursing

AGENDA

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Adams called the January 25, 2024, Board of Health Meeting to order at 6:00 PM by welcoming everyone. He introduced Dr. Young and asked him to share a bit about himself. Then, he encouraged each board member to do the same.

II. Consent Agenda - Approval of

- a. Agenda - Chair Adams called for a motion to approve the agenda. Joey Chandler made the motion, seconded by Cheryl Conway. After a unanimous vote from the board members, the agenda was officially approved as presented.
- b. Board of Health called Minutes, November 16, 2023
Chair Adams for a motion to approve the minutes from November 16, 2023, as they were written. Larry Peek made the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Suzanne Sheldon. Following a unanimous vote, the minutes were officially approved.

III. Public Input Session

No community members were present to provide public input.

IV. Announcements

1. Chair Adams expressed gratitude to Commissioner Hensley for his invaluable assistance in ensuring the retention of our dentist at the Health Department.
2. Acknowledgments were also extended to Larry Peek for his dedicated service spanning three consecutive three-year terms, totaling nine years of commitment. Chair Adams then asked for Mr. Peek's continued support, particularly considering the absence of an applicant with an engineering background. Mr. Peek graciously agreed to extend his service until a suitable engineer could be found.
3. A sympathy card was circulated for Crystal Webb, whose father passed away earlier this week. The funeral is scheduled for this weekend, and our thoughts are with her during this difficult time. Crystal also has lost 2 grandparents over the past 7 weeks from the flu and Covid.
4. Larry Peek reported that Habitat for Humanity will be breaking ground on another lot next to the house they just completed. He also encouraged us to spread the word about Habitat for Humanity.

5. Tammy provided an update, noting that she and the sheriff and chief deputy dedicated a significant portion of their day to attending presentations at the Western Carolina Rescue Mission. Among the presentations was one highlighting the Women's Substance Abuse Recovery program, specifically focusing on Abba's House. This program offers a six-month residential recovery program tailored for mothers and infants, with an additional six-month transitional stay available if needed. The overarching goal is to empower mothers with the necessary tools for a substance-free life. Notably, there are options available in Cleveland County, with potential expansion considerations in Madison County. Additionally, they engaged in presentations covering men's substance abuse recovery programs, men's shelters, and women's shelters.

V. New Business

a. Conflict of Interest

Kathy clarified that each board member had been provided with a packet containing two forms: one for the Conflict-of-Interest declaration. She kindly requested that members sign and return these forms to her before departing this evening.

b. Confidentiality

Kathy also asked them to please sign the confidentiality form before departing this evening.

c. Kathy further clarified that their packet included a jump drive containing essential documents such as the Board of Health Handbook, along with pertinent information regarding Accreditation and the Health Department

d. Advent Letter of Support:

Tammy brought to the Board's attention that Advent had requested a letter of support regarding neonatal acute care beds in Henderson County. She was given a template and subsequently presented a draft letter to the Board of Health. Following the presentation, Chair Adams called for a motion to approve the letter of support. Caleb Massey motioned for Tammy to send the letter, which was seconded by Diana Rogers. During the discussion, concerns were raised about the distance and the possibility of crossing the state line to Johnson City. Additionally, the topic of EMS transporting patients across state lines was addressed, with Jeremy Hensley reporting that EMS can transport patients across state lines. Dr. Young abstained from voting due to his spouse's employment at Advent Health. The Board voted in favor of sending the letter, with Chair Adams designated to sign it.

e. Inclement Weather

Tammy shared with the Board of Health concerns about when it snows and is icy on our parking lot and sidewalks. She is concerned that someone will fall outside. Tammy reported that our Director of Maintenance slipped on some ice and fell into the portable generator outside of our building and he required several stitches for his face. We did put cones up and tape up around where he fell and the cones in the iced-over parking lots. The Health Department follows the county manager's decision. The personnel policy for the county concerning Inclement weather is at the employee's discretion. The employee will have to use earned vacation leave.

f. Staff Salary Analysis prepared by

The Management and Personnel Services Group, Inc. was commissioned by the County Commissioners to analyze staff salaries, revealing that Madison County lags behind neighboring counties in terms of compensation. The company provided recommendations to address this issue. Particularly, the Health Department and DSS face unique challenges as they are under the purview of local government personnel. However, the classification system for these positions has remained stagnant for years.

Notably, the living wage for a single adult with no children in Madison County is \$40,819 annually or \$19.62 per hour, equivalent to or even surpassing those of counties like Buncombe, Wake, Watauga, and Mecklenburg. This finding raises serious concerns. Additionally, the report highlighted the problem of compression within the County, where new employees are being paid similar salaries to long-term employees, potentially leading to motivation and morale issues.

Compression also hampers the County's ability to offer competitive salaries to more experienced new hires, as they might enter the workforce earning more than their long-serving counterparts. The salary report sparked significant discussion, with Jeremy Hensley noting that the Commissioners have yet to address its findings.

V. Administrative Reports

a. Medical Director's Report

Dr. Robinson presented the following report:

Respiratory Diseases

The flu is especially nasty this year – H1N1 is back. Vax reduces severity.

At MCHD, covid flu and RSV have all trended down in the past few weeks.

A similar report from Mission Hospital (right)

Covid wastewater monitoring is most effective for non-hospital reporting. Buncombe is the closest checkpoint. Data looks similar but was last reported in mid-December.

At MCHD, flu vax rates at MCHD are at baseline and Covid booster vax rates are very low.

Treating 1 patient currently for latent TB.

HCV

7 patients currently in treatment

Referrals are mainly internal from our MOUD patient screenings. Referrals from HSHP down, looking into reasons.

MOUD Program

Active patients: 73 (+5)

Insured active patients: 46 (+12)

Uninsured active patients: 27 (-7)

Dr. Robinsons patients: 8

Dr. Le Hew's patients: 36

Melinda patients: 29

New patients in past month = 8 but 3 were lost to follow-up, so net 5 new patients

Other News

Applied for another 2-year MedServe Fellow; a salary subsidized by AmeriCorps would cost \$6K-9K for a half-time employee.

b. Health Director's Report Tammy reported on the following:

Staffing Report:

Vacancies: New Dental Assistant for the new dental operatory

After 2+ years we have hired the 3rd full-time environmental health specialist

Hired for the WIC Admin Support position.

Environmental Health Fleet-(3 full-time staff 2 part-time = need 5 vehicles) Currently 1 good vehicle

1. Subaru number 7 has transmission issues and possible electrical issues to be evaluated.
 2. The Subaru number 3 transmission is out, will get estimates for the transmission, which must be towed to be repaired.
 3. The Subaru number 1 catalytic converter stopped up, will get a new estimate on repair.
 4. The Chevrolet Truck (rolled into covert) has obvious body damage that must be repaired to put in a windshield, mechanical issues will be an estimate on repair.
- New strategies for production in the dental center, monitoring, and adjustments as needed.
 - Playground update - basic grading work last week that slopes the front area of the playground; gravel to occur soon. Fence to prevent access to drain field necessary (goals of a momma and I swing, adult equipment, ADA compliant equipment, water fountain, health program)
 - MCHD Building Expansion - dried in
 - Roof project complete
 - Reaccreditation process, all early submission benchmarks were submitted in December. The State Review process is underway. We will be sent questions for clarification 2 days before the site visit. Day of the site visit we will learn of additional data needed.
 - Have a list of maintenance items to occur before the site visit.
 - Opioid Settlement -funding a position for a community specialist will be housed out of the MCHD; now on hold due to new regulations being established which prevent the county from spending funds.
 - Electric Informational Sign - Solar Power
 - Dr. John Graham with NC Telehealth Network Association at UNC
 - Food Pantry challenges with Manna/Beacon Enon Baptist and the Lord Harvest
 - New Partnership with WCU Environmental Health Program to supply interns.
 - New federal initiatives to address mental health, and funding coming to local health departments to help coordinate services fit well with our mental health first aid program.

 - Alpha-Gal Syndrome (AGS) is associated with tick bites. Evidence suggests that AGS is primarily associated with the bite of a lone star tick or Asian Lone Star tick in the United States, which is a serious, potentially life-threatening allergic condition. AGS is also called alpha-gal allergy, red meat allergy, or tick bite meat allergy. AGS is not caused by an infection. Dr. Sheldon reported that it is a human problem. It is spread by the lone star tick, and Dr. Sheldon reported that in all the years she has worked in this county she has not seen a lone star tick. Our county has the deer tick, and the American Dog Tick and the people who are coming up with Alpha-Gal

Syndrome are getting it somewhere else research does not show this, but different ticks are starting to carry AGS. However, she does not believe that is the case. She has seen a reduction in Lyme disease in dogs, Lyme disease is dog disease, and cats and horses care for Lyme disease. Make sure that your dogs are protected from ticks. If your dogs are exposed to ticks, then get your dogs vaccinated for Lyme disease. Alpha Gal Syndrome is not a reportable disease. The resident claimed that the government was not being honest about the Asian Lone Star tick and that we have a lot here. Dr. Sheldon stated that she is part of the tick surveillance, and she has not seen a Lone Star tick since she left Georgia in 2013. Robin stated that she did reach our Agri department concerning some reports of two farms having cattle die, allegedly from the Lone Star Tick. The State Agri extension sent people up here and they combed both farms. Robin stated that she was concerned that residents were reporting misinformation. Dr. Sheldon stated that Lyme disease is more of an issue than Alpha Gal Syndrome in this area.

- Finance and administrative (Billing and coding) audits went very well.
- WNC Rescue Mission reviewed programs and how they could help our residents, with emphasis on residents with SUD.
- A A – Retention-
- The generator pad was poured, and the generator was installed.
- Got one quote for a propane tank and propane.
- Getting a second quote
- I'm hoping to purchase the tank (with COVID AA) to avoid monthly fees.

b. Financial Reports:

Tammy provided the Board of Health with the finance report:

You are provided with the revenue and expense report for December 31, 2023. This would put us at 50% of our revenue and expenditure. This is a good place to evaluate our financial status.

Revenue

We continue to see an increase in Medicare immunizations. We are currently at 71.26% of anticipated revenue. We have received \$35,000 more than anticipated in our Medicaid Cost Settlement this year. Adult Health is at 72.67%. We continue to see a significant increase in Medicare immunizations, currently at 1,158.20% of anticipated revenue. Maternal Health Insurance is at 92.29% but that is a small line item. Restaurant Plan Review fees are at 80.71% and water sample fees are at 70.12% but both are minimal line items. Dental Insurance is already at 100.94% (\$65,608) so hopefully, we can double that line item.

Medicaid Family Planning is at 28.20% (-\$4,000), and Medicaid Dental is at 33.10% (-\$18,000), we are currently back billing due to a billing issue that required her to be recertified. Adult Health Insurance is at 32.60% (-\$5,500), Maternal Health fees is at 2% (-\$480) Communicable Disease Insurance at 38.53% (-\$35,000) Child Health fees are 37.38% (\$400) Child Health

Insurance 36.03% (\$250)

Expenses

In previous years we were able to offset the cost of some janitorial supplies with COVID funds, which are no longer available to us. We are currently over budget in our janitorial line, 2110 (-\$200). The increased cost of supplies is adding to this burden. We have seen an increase in the cost of vaccines and drugs which has resulted in those lines being over budget 79.30% (-\$12,000) 75.58% (-\$350). Travel and Travel Sub are at 3.12% and 1.70%. This is solely due to regional ARPA funds that have paid approximately \$10,000 in required travel costs.

Grants are on their cycles so do not correspond with the county fiscal year thus the 50%. All our grants are on track. I have no concerns with our grant lines currently.

I am still optimistic that our revenue and careful spending plan will balance our budget.

Other Business

BOH Officers for 2024

Chair Adams opened the floor for the nomination of Chairperson and Vice Chair for the year 2024. Larry Peek nominated Chair Adams for the position, and he then made a motion to close the nominations. The motion was seconded by Caleb Massey, and the Board unanimously voted for Chair Adams to remain as the Chairperson. Dr. Adams accepted the position and thanked the BOH for their support.

Next, Chair Adams opened the floor for nominations for the Vice Chair position. Larry Peek nominated Cheryl Conway, and the nomination was seconded by Diana Rogers. The Board then unanimously voted for Cheryl Conway to become the Vice Chair.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Adams asked for a motion to adjourn. Joey Chandler made a motion to adjourn, and Caleb Massey seconded the motion. The Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:40 PM

Next Meeting: March 28, 2024, at 6 pm



Chair, Board of Health



Health Director

3-28-2024
Date