

Henderson County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting – August 8, 2023

Classroom of the Henderson County Department of Public Health
1200 Spartanburg Highway Hendersonville, NC 28792

I. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Health meeting was called to order by Mr. Steve Smith, Secretary to the Board, at 6:01 p.m. Mr. Smith qualified the meeting as the board's annual organizational meeting and that he would only preside until a new chairperson was elected as specified in the operating procedures.

Members Present	Kathleen Baluha, Registered Nurse John Bryant, General Public Member Maggie Hayes, Physician – Chairperson Jennifer Hensley, General Public Member Bill Lapsley, County Commissioner Scott Prechter, General Public Member Alison Reid, Dentist Kenesha Smith, Pharmacist – Vice Chairperson Jeffrey Young, Professional Engineer
Members Not Present	Leslie Leidecker, Veterinarian
Staff Leadership Present	Steve Smith, Health Director Camden Stewart, Administrative Officer Crystal O'Dell, Director of Nursing Seth Swift, Environmental Health Director Stacy Taylor, Community Health Director

Quorum Present

II. Approval of the Meeting Agenda

Mr. Smith asked the board to review and approve the meeting agenda if no changes were needed. **Motion:** Dr. John Bryant made a motion for the agenda to be approved and Ms. Kathy Baluha seconded the motion. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

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III. Nomination and Election of Chairperson

Mr. Smith opened the floor to board members for nominations of candidates to serve as Chairperson. Ms. Baluha nominated Dr. Maggie Hayes for Chairperson. Mr. Smith inquired if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Mr. Smith closed the floor for nominations. **Motion:** Ms. Baluha made a motion for Dr. Hayes to serve as Chairperson for the FY 24 organizational year and Dr. Bryant seconded. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote. Dr. Hayes thanked board members for their support.

Mr. Smith yielded the meeting to Dr. Hayes as the newly elected chairperson.

IV. Nomination and Election of Vice Chairperson

Dr. Hayes asked board members for nominations for the Vice Chairperson. Dr. Bryant nominated Dr. Kenesha Smith to serve as Vice Chairperson. Dr. Hayes inquired if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Dr. Hayes closed the floor for nominations. **Motion:** Dr. Scott Prechter made a motion for Dr. Smith to serve as Vice Chairperson and Dr. Bryant seconded. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

V. Approval of the FY 24 Meeting Schedule

Dr. Hayes referenced the proposed FY 24 meeting schedule that had been provided noting that it reflected the typical meeting dates on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. **Motion:** Dr. Jennifer Hensley made a motion to adopt the meeting schedule and Dr. Bryant seconded. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

VI. Approval of the June 13, 2023 Minutes

Approval of the January 31, 2023 Budget Review Committee Minutes

Dr. Hayes requested approval of the June 13, 2023 meeting minutes. **Motion:** Ms. Baluha made a motion for the minutes to be approved as presented and Dr. Jennifer Hensley seconded the motion. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Dr. Hayes then asked the board to proceed with approval of the January 31, 2023 Budget Review Committee Minutes. **Motion:** Mr. Young made a motion to approve the committee minutes and Dr. Prechter seconded the motion. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

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VII. Public Comments

None.

VIII. Presentations

Child Advocacy Center 101

Ms. Meredith Harding-Bremner, a Physician's Assistant for AdventHealth, that works as a Child Medical Exam provider began by describing child advocacy centers as community-based, child-friendly, and trauma-informed organizations that coordinate a multidisciplinary response to child maltreatment allegations. It was emphasized that this best practice model brings together, child protective services investigators, law enforcement, forensic interviewers, prosecutors, family advocates, and medical and mental health professionals to provide a coordinated, comprehensive response to victims and their caregivers. Ms. Harding-Bremner also shared that the attention, care, and support provided to children in need of these services created a positive experience because the children were provided an opportunity to express themselves and to be heard. She then shared some photographs of the new facility with updated exam rooms, kid-friendly spaces for forensic interviews and a meeting room for the multi-disciplinary team members. Ms. Harding-Bremner closed by thanking public health for their support of the initiative and most recently for providing interpreter services.

Ms. Lauren Wilkie, the Executive Director for Safelight which includes the Child Advocacy Center, added that the organization provides a large array of related services including trauma-focused counseling and support for caregivers and survivors of interpersonal violence, court advocacy and legal assistance, emergency sheltering and job training. She shared that Safelight was leading another current priority to re-establish Nurse Examiners for Sexual Assault within both hospitals. That previous capacity had been challenged over time by retirements and job changes, but the expertise was essential when victims were brought into the local emergency rooms.

IX. Reports

Health Director's Monthly Report

Mr. Smith indicated that the first year of the next accreditation cycle would be ending on September 7, 2023 and that staff had been busy documenting evidence for activities that required annual evidence. Additionally, he mentioned that a Staff Appreciation Day had

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occurred on July 19, 2023 and that it was well attended. As a final note, Mr. Smith referenced an expanded effort to conduct more outreach in the community and that staff were to be commended for working these events into an already demanding schedule.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

Annual Review of Board of Health Policies

Dr. Hayes reminded the board that their annual review of board policies would be addressed at the September meeting. Mr. Smith indicated that he would broadcast those policies in advance, but only anticipated proposed changes for the Bad Debt/Debt Setoff policy to provide more clarity.

Behavioral Health System Coordinator Position

Mr. Smith informed the board that the scale and complexity of initiatives being established with the benefit of opioid litigation settlement funds resulted in a decision to shift the staff person in the public health coordinator position to lead those efforts. Mr. Lapsley reminded the board about the national level settlements and how a North Carolina Memorandum of Agreement determined the amount of funding for each local government and the scope of deliverables that were expected.

Mr. Smith shared a letter from the Henderson County Partnership for Health that advocated for retaining the public health capacity associated with the existing position to continue addressing the broader community health priorities of mental health and substance use. Dr. Hayes and other board members agreed with the importance of the position and discussed possible strategies. Mr. Smith suggested that a letter of support formalizing the board's position could be communicated to the County Manager. Mr. Smith stated that letter would then be considered in the future funding plan being developed by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Lapsley agreed that would be a practical way for the board to express its interest in maintaining the position. **Motion:** Dr. Bryant made a motion for Dr. Hayes to forward correspondence to that effect to the Henderson County Manager and Ms. Baluha seconded the motion. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

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Session Law 2023-90 and Environmental Health Fee Revisions

Mr. Seth Swift, Environmental Health Director, referenced the recently passed legislation which included a number of new requirements including restrictions for the fees that could be charged for certain on-site wastewater system services. Given the statutory requirements, Mr. Swift then referenced a current version of Environmental Health fees contrasted with a new version of fees that would comply with the law. Mr. Swift emphasized that the fee changes were required to become effective as of September 1, 2023. **Motion:** Dr. Smith made a motion for the fees to be approved by the board and for them to be forwarded to the Henderson County Board of Commissioners for consideration and final approval. The motion was seconded by Dr. Prechter. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

COVID-19 Update

Mr. Smith shared a recent posting from the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Immunization Branch which outlined the transition and timeline for COVID-19 vaccines to shift over to the commercial market. Ms. Crystal O'Dell referenced the 2-step process that will have to occur including initial Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval and then the subsequent approval by the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices (ACIP) within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It was noted that the latter body will develop the standard Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) that must be provided to every individual seeking that particular vaccination.

XII. Discussion

Dr. Reid stated that she had ongoing concerns that individuals considering COVID-19 vaccinations were not receiving all of the information they deserved to make an informed decision. Dr. Reid stated her desire to create a more robust process with additional information before COVID-19 vaccinations were provided. Dr. Hayes mentioned the standardized Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) that were required to be provided to everyone and Ms. O'Dell confirmed that process was followed for department patients. Dr. Hensley shared similar concerns about COVID-19 vaccinations and stated that individuals sometimes had extreme reactions to the vaccine with little opportunity for remedy with the pharmaceutical companies.

Dr. Hayes stated that as a physician, she had confidence in vaccines in general and their approval process through the FDA and CDC including for COVID-19 vaccinations. Dr. Prechter added that he understood components of both positions. He agreed the legal requirements for vaccine provision were being met, but also agreed with some research data that differed from original representations by vaccine manufacturers.

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Dr. Smith added that vaccinations were an important tool for prevention of serious illness or being hospitalized. She stated that was particularly important when you considered that people of color had been disproportionately affected by the disease. Dr. Prechter and Dr. Hensley expressed disagreement about that statistic.

Dr. Hayes stated that she respected the individual perspectives being put forth by board members.

XIII. Adjournment

Motion: Ms. Baluha made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Dr. Bryant. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted:



Secretary to the Board/Health Director

9/12/2023

Date

Approved by the Henderson County Board of Health at the September 12, 2023 meeting.