

Henderson County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting – April 9, 2024

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 Dr. Maggie Hayes, Chairperson, at 6:01 p.m.

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

Quorum Present

II. Approval of the Meeting Agenda

Dr. Maggie Hayes asked board members if they were prepared to approve the proposed agenda. **Motion:** Ms. Kathy Baluha made a motion for the agenda to be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jeff Young. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Henderson County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting – April 9, 2024

III. Approval of the March 12, 2024 Minutes

Dr. Hayes requested approval of the March 12, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

Motion: Ms. Baluha made a motion for the minutes to be approved and it was seconded by Dr. Kenesha Smith. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Approval of the March 12, 2024 Closed Session Minutes

Dr. Hayes requested that copies of the closed session minutes be distributed to members present. **Motion:** Ms. Baluha made a motion for the minutes to be approved and it was seconded by Dr. Jennifer Hensley. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Public Comments

None.

V. Presentations & Reports

Communicable Disease Annual Report 2023

Ms. Crystal O'Dell, Director of Nursing, began by sharing insights about the proportions of various diseases identified in Henderson County. For sexually transmitted diseases, chlamydia and gonorrhea accounted for 72% of cases. For other communicable diseases, campylobacter infection, streptococcal invasive infection and salmonellosis represented 65% of the disease burden.

Notable trends and concerns included a steady increase in syphilis cases (all stages) from 8 in 2018 to 31 in 2023. Ms. O'Dell remarked that this trend was consistent with case increased throughout the United States and that the circumstances were often complex requiring an extraordinary amount of effort to ensure control measures had been completed. Candida auris, an emerging fungal infection, and Group A streptococcus were also noted as diseases that had been identified locally which had required a disproportionate amount of work to investigate and address. Rabies was also referenced with 200 domestic and wild animals having or creating exposures for humans. Approximately 62% of involved domestic dogs and cats were current with rabies vaccinations.

As a final note for communicable disease efforts and the department's performance in 2023, Ms. O'Dell relayed that the statewide goal was for all case investigations to be completed within 30 days. Henderson County's performance was 97.7% which was attributed to the work of the program staff and the budgetary investments supported by the board of health.

Henderson County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting – April 9, 2024

State of Environmental Health

Mr. Seth Swift, Environmental Health, greeted the board and began by reviewing local programs which spanned restaurants, summer camps, public swimming pools, septic tank systems and private drinking water wells among others. Mr. Swift emphasized that one of the dramatic improvements that had occurred over 2023 was stabilization of staffing capacity which had allowed the division to return to typical performance levels for customer service expectations and program accountability. Specifically, turnaround time for septic tank system and well permits was 2 weeks or less. It was also noted that 100% of food and lodging inspections were forecast to be within the required timeframe.

Workload demand for food and lodging remained high with 1,650 inspections estimated for 2024 and 2000 for septic system inspections.

Mr. Swift's highlights for the program included no staff turnover in 2023, the ability for the public to view all existing septic permits online and that all vehicles had been replaced over the last several years. Future challenges were noted as likely near term retirements for 4 senior staff members, new onsite wastewater rules which incorporated more complexity and new legislation/changes anticipated from the NC General Assembly. Mr. Swift credited the board and commissioners for their support to advance environmental health in Henderson County.

Health Director's Monthly Report

Mr. Steve Smith updated the board about a number of current items. Mr. Smith confirmed the proposed budget adjustments requested by the board at the last meeting had been incorporated within the FY 25 budget request. Mr. Smith also shared that the new Zoom phone system installation was underway and that the department would go live with that new model in the coming months. A final information item was noting a significant stormwater project that would be initiated on the Human Services campus in the next couple of weeks. That project would eliminate access to some parking spots and would disrupt some of the typical traffic flow.

VI. Old Business

None.

Henderson County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting – April 9, 2024

VII. New Business

Proposed Fee Schedules for FY 25

Ms. O'Dell stated that staff had followed the process outlined in the board policy to determine costs and set fees. Based on that analysis which included recognition of higher staffing costs for staff-delivered services, an increase of 5% was proposed for that particular category. Other direct costs like vaccines and medical supplies were adjusted to current pricing with the overall goal of achieving cost recovery.

Mr. Swift shared that the cost analysis for septic system permits in particular was in the \$1,400 to \$1,500 range with current fees set at \$1,000. Mr. Smith indicated that a comparison to fees in other counties demonstrated that most were at the same level as Henderson County. Mr. Smith said the board could justify a proposed increase for those types of permits. Mr. Swift added that the other costs of services did not support any additional increases with those fees at this time.

Motion: Dr. Smith made a motion to accept the proposed fee increases for the Health budget and to forward them as part of the department's budget proposal. Additionally, she indicated no additional fee proposals at this time for the Environmental Health budget. Dr. Hensley seconded the motion. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Board of Health – Review of Member Terms

Dr. Hayes reminded members that had terms expiring in June 2024 and asked them to let her know if they were willing to serve another term. She noted that Dr. Leslie Leidecker had served a maximum of 3 terms and would not be eligible for reappointment. Mr. Smith indicated that Dr. Leidecker had been discussing the opening with other veterinarians in the county.

Health Director Job Description Review

Dr. Hayes reminded the board they had an annual obligation to review and approve the health director's job description. **Motion:** Dr. Smith made a motion to approve the job description and Ms. Baluha seconded the motion. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Proposal for Swearing-in Ceremony of Health Director

Dr. Hayes proposed that the new health director be sworn in at the May 14, 2024 board of health meeting and for the transition to occur at that time. Board members agreed with this plan.

Henderson County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting – April 9, 2024

VIII. Discussion

No further discussion.

IX. Adjournment

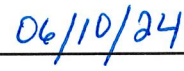
Motion: Ms. Baluha made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Dr. Hensley.

Vote: The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted:



Secretary to the Board/Health Director



Date

Approved by the Henderson County Board of Health at the May 14, 2024 meeting.

