

The Cleveland County Public Health Board met on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Board members present: Ronnie Whetstine, Marty Hamrick, Robert Miller, Tom Spurling, Randy Sweeting, Kale Meade, and Mark Heiner

Health Department staff present: Tiffany Hansen, DeShay Oliver, Alisa Leonard, Jamie Todd, Anne Short, Nathan McNeilly

Tim Moore and Martha Thompson, County Attorneys were present (remote).

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:

Chair Spurling called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm and welcomed everyone.

Mr. Miller gave the invocation.

CITIZEN RECOGNITION:

Teresa Seen introduced herself as a citizen of Shelby. She explained that she wanted to attend tonight's meeting to personally thank the Cleveland County Health Department and the Cleveland County Public Health Board for leading our county through the COVID-19 pandemic and doing a wonderful job of keeping the community informed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR MAY 11, 2021 PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING:

Chair Spurling presented the proposed agenda for the May 11, 2021 Public Health Board meeting for consideration of adoption.

Motion: A motion was made by Ronnie Whetstine with a second by Randy Sweeting to adopt the agenda for the May 11, 2021 Public Health Board meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 13, 2021 PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

Chair Spurling presented the April 13, 2021 Public Health Board meeting minutes for consideration of approval.

Motion: Randy Sweeting moved that the minutes of the April 13, 2021 Public Health Board Meeting be approved as presented. Robert Miller seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

2021 PRIDE SURVEY RESULTS

DeShay Oliver welcomed Jamie Todd, a Health Education Specialist with the Cleveland County Health Department who serves as the Drug Free Community Grant Coordinator. She explained the PRIDE Survey is a survey done in Cleveland County Schools every other year with students as a requirement of the Drug Free Community Grant. Jamie Todd stated that the survey results were just received two weeks ago. Due to COVID-19, this survey was administered online for the first time. As a result, data may be slightly different than what it has been historically. We had roughly a 50% participation rate this year. In previous years we have had a 60 – 70% participation rate. The school did a great job getting as many students surveyed as possible given the circumstances with COVID. We had a total of 1,210 total participants. Mr. Todd shared the following data with the Board via a PowerPoint presentation:

Annual Use- 28% of 12 graders reported illicit substance use in the past year. Alcohol was reported as the most widely used followed by e-cigarettes. Marijuana was the most used illicit substance in the county with 25% of our 12th graders reporting using marijuana in the past year followed by prescription drugs and over the counter medications. We have seen a decrease in annual prescription drug use trends across all grade levels with the exception of last year's 9th graders. Past 30 Day Use is what we use to guide our work plans over the next year or two. It was reported that 20% of 12th graders used an illicit substance in the past 30 days. Overall, we did see a decrease in all substances except for alcohol, which had a very slight increase. For 30 day use, e-cigarettes were most widely used with alcohol and marijuana following closely behind. 30 day alcohol use trends from 2006 to current show 12th grade reporting a 1.1% increase, but the other two grades reported a decrease. We did see a decrease in 30-day marijuana use across all grade levels and a major decrease in the 9th grade level. We saw a decrease in all grade levels for prescription drug use trends in the past 30 days. In tobacco use we see a decrease in all grade levels. We also had a decrease in e-cigarette use across all grade levels. Some new data we received this year is the Perceived Harmfulness of Nicotine Product by Grade. All grade levels believed tobacco products are more harmful than e-cigarettes. The primary way students reported getting e-cigarettes is from friends. We have done a lot of work with local vape shots to make sure they are checking ID. For perception of risk, students report marijuana use being the least harmful followed by binge drinking defined as 5 or more drinks of alcohol 1-2 times per week. It is concerning that students think this is the second safest substance use behavior they can engage in, as we know there is great risk associated with binge drinking and acute alcohol poisoning. The average age of onset of substance use was around 11 years old for 6th graders, 13 years old for 9th graders, and 15 years old for 12th graders. Survey results indicate depression, mental illness and suicide have increased, likely due to COVID-19. Results show 41% of 12th graders have had thoughts of suicide. The last slide is Risk and Protective Factors with the top three protective factors being (1) Make good grades, (2) Parents set clear rules, (3) Parents punish for breaking rules. The top three Risk Factors were (1) Take Part in Community Activities, (2) Get in Trouble at School, (3) Take Part in School Activities.

Robert Miller stated he was asked to be part of a Zoom meeting talking about menthol cigarettes and how they were trying to get legislation passed that would ban menthol flavored tobacco

products. He stated that over 85% of menthol cigarettes are sold to the African American community. Mr. Miller asked if anyone knew the status of this Bill and whether it has been passed by the House and Senate. Anne Short stated that this was a ban issued by the FDA, but it still has to go through legislation. Ms. Short stated we have distributed No Menthol Sunday Materials through the Minority Health Council to use in their churches because menthol sales do target minority populations. Tom Spurling referenced the suicide data and asked about access to school counselors and other mental health resources within the school setting. Mr. Todd stated there are counselors within the school, but he was not aware of any mental health counselors stationed within the schools. However, he was aware of programs that will go to the schools and that have the ability to provide mental health services virtually.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

Ms. Hansen provided a COVID-19 update to the Public Health Board. As of yesterday, May 10, 2021, we have a total of 11,444 confirmed cases in Cleveland County. We have around 91 active cases. We have had 224 deaths and 11,129 recovered cases in Cleveland County. The Percent Positivity as of this morning was at 5.7% for the state and the County was at 4.9%. Ms. Hansen shared that in Cleveland County as well as across the state of NC, we have been seeing a slight increase in cases among our 25-49 age group. Ms. Hansen shared data on vaccine uptake. For Cleveland County, 32,111 (32.85%) have had at least one dose administered. We have had 28,649 (29.2%) who are fully vaccinated. We are seeing our highest saturation of vaccinations in our 65 and older age range. We are hoping with the FDA expansion for Pfizer to include our 12-15-year-olds we may start to see an increase in our 0-17 age range as we move forward. Ms. Hansen shared all the sites in Cleveland County that are currently providing the COVID vaccine. She provided an overview of the efforts and campaigns that have been developed to encourage community members to receive their vaccine. She shared the sites where we have hosted vaccine clinics in an effort to reach various parts of our county. We have hosted clinics at Crest High School, Burns Middle School, Kings Mountain Intermediate School, LeGrand Center, Eaton Corporation, Clearwater Paper Corporation, NVR Building Products, 44 Residential Care or Group Homes, Gardner-Webb University, Cleveland County Fairgrounds, and here at the Health Department. Lastly, Ms. Hansen shared contact information for our COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment Line 980-484-6019 and our COVID-19 Helpline 980-484-5316.

Robert Miller asked Marty Hamrick if Atrium is providing the COVID vaccine with no appointment at the hospital. Mr. Hamrick shared that Atrium Health Lincoln is the closest Atrium hospital setting that is providing the COVID vaccine and it is being done in a drive-thru setting. Ms. Hansen shared that we have now transitioned our vaccine efforts from operating as a drive-thru at the fairgrounds to now providing the vaccine at the health department through our General Clinic by appointment.

A question was asked as to whether there is any data on the COVID variant from India. DeShay Oliver stated that, according to NCDHHS, about 44% of our cases in North Carolina are the B.1.1.7 UK variant, which is now the most common COVID strain in NC. The variant from India has been detected in NC in individuals that have not had any foreign travel, which indicates we are experiencing spread and transmission of this variant in NC. A question was asked as to whether

we have heard any discussion regarding the COVID-19 vaccine being a requirement for school. Ms. Oliver stated that she has not heard any discussion around making the vaccine required for primary or secondary schools. There are some colleges and universities that have begun requiring the vaccine. Ms. Oliver also shared that our School Health team has been working with Cleveland County Schools to schedule vaccine events on site at the High Schools in an effort to make it more accessible to ages 16 and older. There are events currently scheduled for this week and next week at our high schools. A question was asked if we have administered any Johnson and Johnson vaccine. Ms. Hansen stated that we have received 100 doses here at the health department. We have allocated these vaccines for vaccine clinics at the Detention Center for justice involved individuals as well as for EMS to utilize for homebound or homeless individuals who would be the most challenging to reach for a second dose.

2021 COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS:

Anne Short stated that the full results for the 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey were sent to the Board as part of their package. The first page is the questions we used to help gauge satisfaction with all of our general services. Overall, satisfaction with our General Services has been consistently high. The second page has new questions we developed to measure satisfaction with our COVID-19 services. These include testing services, telephone hotline, contact tracing and case investigation, appointment scheduling line, and then our vaccine clinics. Overall, our excellent/very good ratings across the board for COVID work was outstanding. We did have a few negative comments related to our appointment scheduling process and we very much recognize this was a challenge for community members when the demand for the vaccine was initially so high and the supply was very low. We had more responses in 2021 than we have had in years past because more people have received public health services this year and last due to our COVID response. However, there is still stigma associated with public health and the health department and we continue to work very hard to overcome that stigma.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS:

DeShay Oliver presented the budget amendment.

ITEM NUMBER ONE

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has allocated \$21,423 to support food and lodging activities and programs. This will help support salaries and fringe benefits in our Environmental Health Department.

A motion to recommend the budget amendments to the Board of Commissioners was made by Robert Miller with a second by Kale Meade. The motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Ronnie Whetstine stated he appreciates all the great work Cleveland County employees have done. Rates for our Wellness Fund have remained consistent for the eleventh year in a row and families

will not have to contribute any additional funds for their health insurance, when most other insurance premiums are increasing up to 20%. All twenty-eight county departments are working together as one and this pandemic has helped bring everyone together. The budget was a lot easier this year.

Anne Short stated that the Satellite Farmer's Market will be opening on Tuesday, June 1, 2021 from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm and will be open every Tuesday for the next fourteen weeks.

ADJOURN: 7:04pm

There being no further business, Chair Spurling called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Randy Sweeting moved, with a second by Mark Heiner that the Cleveland County Public Health Board meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Tiffany Hansen, Secretary
Cleveland County Public Health Board
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