

The Cleveland County Public Health Board met on Tuesday, February 9th, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., via teleconference call.

Board members present: Ronnie Whetstine, Robert Miller, Kale Meade, Patti Alexander, Deanna Mosely Lawrence, Tom Spurling, and Randy Sweeting

Health Department staff present: Tiffany Hansen, DeShay Oliver, Leslie McSwain, Anne Short, and Nathan McNeilly.

Tim Moore and Martha Thompson, County Attorneys were present.

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:**

Chair Spurling called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm and welcomed everyone.

Mr. Miller gave the invocation.

**CITIZEN RECOGNITION:**

No citizens requested to appear before the Board.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 9TH, 2021 PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING:**

Chair Spurling presented the proposed agenda for the February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Public Health Board meeting for consideration of adoption. Chair Spurling stated that he would like to add before the adjournment a section for Miscellaneous Business. Mr. Tim Moore asked what the Miscellaneous Business is because it may need some more specificity. Chair Spurling stated that he would like to discuss two different things. One item would be when we might reconvene as In-Person Meetings and the second item is the Board's role in the health department's budget process. Mr. Tim Moore stated that the better course is to list the individual items. Chair Spurling asked for a motion to be made for the agenda with the additional agenda items which include In-Person Meetings and the Budget Involvement for 2021-2022.

**Motion: A motion was made by Patti Alexander with a second by Robert Miller to adopt the agenda for the February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Public Health Board meeting as presented with the additional agenda items. The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 12, 2021 PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING MINUTES:**

Chair Spurling presented the January 12, 2021 Public Health Board meeting minutes for consideration of approval. DeShay stated that there was one suggested revision to the minutes as they were distributed. We had Anne Short listed as in attendance for the meeting and she, in fact, was not present at that meeting. This revision has been made.

**Motion: Randy Sweeting moved that the minutes with the suggested change of the January 12, 2021 Public Health Board meeting be approved as presented. Mr. Miller seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

**COVID-19 UPDATE:**

Mrs. Oliver provided a COVID-19 update to the Public Health Board. All of the data is available on the NC DHHS COVID19 dashboard. As of today, February 9, 2021 we have a total of 9,628 confirmed cases in Cleveland County. We have had a total of 600 cases within the last 14 days which averages to 43 cases/day. In the last 7 days, we have had a total of 242 cases which averages to 35 cases/days. We have 16 residents currently hospitalized and 207 deaths as of today in Cleveland County.

As of February 9th, 2021, 56% of confirmed cases were female and 44% were male. Percentages by age group were as follows; 34% ages 25-49, 23% ages 50-64, 11% ages 65-74 and 9% were 75 and older.

Ages 25-49 contain 3% of deaths, 50-64 contain 11% of deaths, ages 65-74 contain 25% of deaths and 58% of deaths fall into the age of 75, 41% male and 55% of deaths were female.

Of the confirmed cases, 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 0.5% Asian, 15.8% Black or African American, 62.5% were White, 9.7 % were Other and 9.6% Unknown. The deaths broken down by race are as follows; 0.0% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 0.5% Asian, 22.4% Black or African American, 69.8% were White, 6.3% Other and 1.0% were Unknown. These numbers indicate a slight disparity in the number of deaths seen in our Black or African American populations.

Mrs. Oliver also shared the percentage of positive tests as compared to the total tests in the County. As of today, 8.3% for Cleveland County, 8.6% for NC. There were over 3,000 weekly tests administered in Cleveland County.

Mrs. Oliver shared some testing events in addition to our normal standing locations in Cleveland County. We have partnered with Kintegra for a free testing event on Saturday February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 here at the Cleveland County Health Department from 10am to 2pm. On Saturday February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 10am to 2pm at Shelby Middle School will be another free event through StarMed.

**COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN UPDATE:**

Mrs. Tiffany Hansen gave an update on the COVID-19 Vaccination via a PowerPoint that was shared on screen to all Board members.

Mrs. Hansen stated that we get a number of questions related to decision making and who has the ability to make decisions at what level. Slide (3) of the presentation explained the following:

- \* Manufacturer (Pfizer and Moderna) and their main focus is on the production of the vaccine.
- \*US Federal Government – They are the sole contractor with our manufactures and they also control the State Allocations.
- \* NCDHHS – They control who will receive doses and where and how many doses per county.
- \*Cleveland County is the local level. The main control we have is how we are going to give the vaccines.

Slide (4) is the most up-to-date framework (January 14, 2021). We are still continuing on Groups 1 who are Health Care Workers, Long-term Care Staff and Residents and Group 2 which are 65 and older. Group 3 is our Frontline Essential Workers. Group 4 are Adults at High Risk for Exposure and Increased Risk of Severe Illness and Group 5 is Everyone.

The next slide (5) has one addition to Group 1 which now includes \*\*Home caregivers to medically fragile children and adults providing regular medical care. All the other frameworks remain the same.

The next slide (6) outlines our timeline that we have experienced. In early December we started hearing about the vaccine and late December North Carolina received our first shipment of vaccine. This is when NCDHHS came out with the initial vaccination framework really prioritizing health care workers, first responders and those with chronic disease. Then, NCDHHS changed our framework to start including those over 75. NCDHHS then shifted the framework again to include health care workers, first responders and those over 65. This is when we also learned that our vaccine allocations were based on our performance, so if we are able to administer more than we would receive more. We were lucky enough to partner with Atrium to receive 2,000 Doses following this guidance as well as another allocation. Last week we learned from NCDHHS that our vaccine distribution method would be modified and exclusively be based on population. Over the last 45 days we have had 5 shifts in framework and vaccine allocations.

In the next slide (7) you will see that dose allocation formula changed on 01/19/2021 to no longer be based on County performance. The state of NC will receive approximately 127,000 vaccine doses per week. NCDHHS plans to re-allocate approximately 84,000 of those to NC public health departments across the 100 counties. Cleveland County is set to receive 700 doses weekly for the next 3 weeks and we are currently in week 2 of this. This is significantly under our capacity of 2,500.

In slide (8) there are two significant changes to our vaccine model. First, we felt our Communication Platforms needed to be more efficient. So, we are doing structured phone appointments at a consistent time. As dose allocations allow, these will be available on Fridays at 1pm until appointments are filled. The number for appointments is (980) 484-6019. We will also hold Pop Up Vaccination Clinics as doses allow from Atrium. The major change here is no US postal letters. We did do two vaccine clinics utilizing the letter platform and only saw approximately 50% engagement at those events. Those doses were reallocated and redistributed via other appointment mechanisms. The other primary change is on our vaccination location. In

an effort to be efficient as possible, we are now utilizing the Cleveland County Fairgrounds as a fixed location for both our first and second dose clinics.

Some exciting news on the next slide (9). According to NCDHHS, of the 127,000 vaccines it receives weekly, it is withholding approximately 41,000 doses to be allotted to Mega Sites around the State such as Lowes Motor Speedway or Bank of America Stadium. Communities may apply for additional one-time doses allocations if they can demonstrate: (1) Inter-Agency Collaboration and maximize daily dose allocation, (2) Target historically marginalized populations, (3) Communicate and market to the community. Applications opened up last week. Cleveland County submitted our application as soon as we could. We are proposing to partner with Atrium Health, Gardner-Webb, Health Care Foundation of Cleveland County and the County Faith Leaders for 6,000 one time doses that we would distribute over 3 days. Our goal, if approved, is to have an event near the end of February.

This next slide (10) is our goal timeline. In January we are hoping to be in Groups 1 & 2 and we are. In March, we hope to be in Group 3. In April we hope to be in Group 4 and by May we hope to be in Group 5 depending on our dose allocation.

The last slide (11) shows our inventory for the week. The total COVID-19 first dose vaccines received by Cleveland County Health Department as of 02/06/21 was 5300. The total COVID19 first dose vaccines administered by Cleveland County Health Department was 5210. 98% of COVID19 doses were administered.

#### **CHIP APPROVAL:**

Anne Short stated that everyone has the approval letter for the Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIP). This is required for accreditation and wanted everyone to have a copy of the letter.

#### **ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PREVENTION (APP) DATA:**

Anne Short stated that everyone was sent the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (APP) data for results from the half year of 2019-2020. This represents one semester of work. It still showed some significant improvements while using a new curriculum. We will tentatively be back in the school teaching starting the week of March 1<sup>st</sup>. We are looking forward to another half year that we are able to report by June.

#### **BOARD OF HEALTH OPERATING PROCEDURES: ATTENDANCE:**

DeShay Oliver stated that in the last meeting in January there was some discussion around whether or not our by-laws or operating procedures should include language regarding attendance requirements for board members to ensure we are meeting statutory requirements for having representation from required sectors. We talked about getting some sample language from other counties and what they may have in their by-laws. Tiffany did reach out to some other local health directors in surrounding counties and we did receive one sample from a neighboring county. Mrs. Oliver provided a copy of the sample bylaws to Board members for review to serve

as a starting point for discussion. Mr. Miller stated last month that we should take into consideration if someone has an excused absence such as for medical purposes. The sample reads, with exception of medical reasons, any member of the board may be removed from office if he or she is absent from 3 consecutive board meetings or has less than a 60% annual attendance record at board meetings. It also lists some additional reasons why the Board of Commissioners could consider removing somebody from the board as well. We can discuss if we want to include some of those items in our operating procedures. Mrs. Oliver stated that it might help to discuss the number of consecutive meetings that a board member can miss as well as the total percentage of attendance that would be expected of a board member if that is something we are wanting to include in our operating procedures. Mr. Miller stated that 3 consecutive board meetings is 90 days and that is more than necessary. Mrs. Oliver stated that we typically host 10 meetings because we do not meet in July or December. This would mean Board members could miss no more than 4 meetings to have a 60% attendance rate (attendance at 6 out of 10 meetings). Tim Moore stated that he would suggest that if the appointees are appointed by commissioners, then it must be recommended to the Board of Commissioners for removal of the board member. Martha Thompson stated that we would change the wording of this to any member may be removed by the Board of Commissioners at the recommendation of the Board of Health. It does say may be removed and it is not an absolute. Mrs. Oliver stated that this allow us to work with Martha to formulate some localized language and consider at a future meeting.

#### **NEW PHARMACIST BOARD MEMBER:**

Tiffany Hansen stated that the Board of Commissioners appointed a new Pharmacy representative for our Board. Our new Pharmacist is Marty Hamrick. He is currently a Pharmacist at Atrium. Mrs. Hansen stated that over the next few weeks she and DeShay Oliver will be finding time to meet with him and provide him with an Orientation. He will begin attending our meetings next month.

#### **BUDGET AMENDMENTS:**

Leslie McSwain presented several budget amendments.

#### **ITEM NUMBER ONE**

NC Department of Health and Human Services has allocated \$45,473 to support COVID vaccination planning and implementation of mass COVID-19 vaccination. These funds will be used to support employee salaries/fringe who are assisting with vaccination clinics. Also, funds will be utilized to purchase medical supplies needed for clinic, and other related expenses. We ask to have these funds budgeted in our Adult Health Department (533).

#### **ITEM NUMBER TWO**

Cleveland County Health Department has received a \$50.00 donation from Officer Brooks with the Cleveland County Sheriff's Office. This donation will help support the cost of lunch provided

to staff and volunteers working COVID-19 vaccine clinics. We request these funds to be budgeted in our General Administration Department (530).

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

**IN PERSON MEETING TIMELINE:**

Chair Spurling asked if we can consider returning to in person meetings. DeShay Oliver stated based on the decreases we are experiencing with our daily COVID case counts, she and Tiffany would be supportive of returning to in person meetings in March. However, this decision is ultimately up the Board. By utilizing the large conference rooms on the first floor, each member could have their own table that ensures social distancing. Mrs. Oliver also stated that if there are members who are not comfortable with attending in person, she could provide a call-in option. Martha Thompson stated that as long as there is a State of Emergency declared by the Governor, you have that option or meeting virtually. Once the governor lifts the State of Emergency declaration, we will have to evaluate whether meeting virtually could remain an option. DeShay stated that we will continue to monitor our numbers and if they continue to decline or remain at current status, we will plan to have an in person meeting. She will send correspondence prior to the meeting to communicate plans for the meeting.

**BUDGET INVOLEMENT:**

Chair Spurling asked whether the Board's status as an Advisory Board would change their role in reviewing the health department's proposed budget for the upcoming year. Martha stated that the Board of Commissioners would appreciate the Advisory Board's input. Historically, the proposed budget has been presented to the Board of Health to discuss major changes in budget or operations before it is presented the Board of Commissioners. This process will continue.

**ADJOURN: 7:06pm**

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

**Motion: Robert Miller moved, with a second by Patti Alexander that the Cleveland County Public Health Board meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Tiffany Hansen, Secretary  
Cleveland County Public Health Board  
/jl