The Cleveland County Public Health Board met on Tuesday, June 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

Board members present: Chair Sara Karner, Robert Miller, Marty Hamrick, Patti Alexander, Heather Bridges Moore

Board members present remotely: Street Hamrick, Henry Gilmore

Health Department staff present: Tiffany Hansen, Deshay Oliver, Leslie McSwain, Anne Short, Nathan McNeilly, Andrea Power, Zakoya Spikes, Macy Wesson (intern), Lauren Clark (intern)

County Attorney present: Martha Thompson (remote)

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:**

Chair Sara Karner called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm and welcomed everyone.

Mr. Miller gave the invocation.

**CITIZEN RECOGNITION:**

No citizens requested to appear before the Board.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR JUNE 14, 2022, PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING:**

Chair Karner presented the proposed agenda for the June 14, 2022, Public Health Board meeting for consideration of adoption.

**Motion: A motion was made by Robert Miller with a second by Marty Hamrick to adopt the agenda for the June 14, 2022, Public Health Board meeting as prepared. The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MAY 10, 2022, PUBLIC HEALTH BOARD MEETING MINUTES:**

Chair Karner presented the May 10, 2022, Public Health Board meeting minutes for consideration of approval.

**Motion: Patti Alexander moved that the minutes of the May 10, 2022, Public Health Board Meeting be approved, and Robert Miller made the second. The motion carried unanimously.**

**COVID 19 UPDATE:**

Chair Karner introduced Deshay Oliver presenting a Covid 19 Update. Ms. Oliver shared that there has been a total of 30,298 cases of Covid 19 reported in Cleveland County. We have had 271 cases reported in the last 2 weeks, which is an average of 19 cases per day. We have had 142 cases reported in the last week, which is an average of 20 per day. Cleveland County currently has 2 hospitalizations due to Covid 19. We have had 403 deaths due to Covid 19 dating back to January 1, 2022. Deaths from Covid 19 are reported weekly on Wednesday to NCDHHS. Deaths are now being reported electronically and numbers will change until the backlog from paper reporting is brought current. Ms. Oliver did update the board on vaccinations for Cleveland County. Cleveland County residents vaccinated for Covid 19 with at least one does is 54%, with the state of NC at 66%. The number of individuals vaccinated with 2 doses or 1 does of J&J is 51%, with the state of NC at 62%. Residents vaccinated with 1 booster/additional dose for Covid 19 is 26%, with NC at 56%. Ms. Oliver did state that a pediatric Pfizer booster is now authorized for children ages 5-11 years of age. The CDC now recommends a second booster for adults ages 50 years and older, and people 12 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised. In most situations, Pfizer or Moderna vaccines are preferred over the J&J vaccine for primary and booster vaccination due to the risk of serious adverse events. The J&J vaccine may be considered in some situations, including for persons who had a severe reaction after an mRNA vaccine or who have a severe allergy to an ingredient in the mRNA Covid 19 vaccines, or would otherwise remain unvaccinated for Covid 19 due to limited access to mRNA Covid 19 vaccines, or for those who want to get the J&J vaccine despite the safety concerns. Ms. Oliver also stated that the under 5 Covid 19 vaccine is scheduled for review by ACIP and CDC on June 17 and 18. If authorized by the FDA and recommended by the CDC, the first wave of shipping of the vaccine is scheduled for June 20, 2022, and CCHD will begin administering those vaccines shortly after they arrive. Attorney Martha Thompson stated that the United States is no longer requiring Covid 19 testing when entering the US if they have been traveling abroad.

**SHELBY RAIL TRAIL LETTER OF SUPPORT:**

Chair Karner introduced Tiffany Hansen with the Shelby Rail Trail letter of support. The City of Shelby is asking for letters of support as they are preparing to submit a grant application to the US Department of Transportation through the RAISE grant. They are asking community partners to submit letters of support to help with funding for the Shelby R.A.I.L. Trail Project, (NC Regional Access Improvement Line). The City of Shelby has requested $24,998,438 for Phase 2 of this project to redevelop a former railroad corridor into a safe, off-street 9.3-mile bicycle and pedestrian corridor and 3.9 miles of connecting spurs. This project provides transportation justice for underserved, historically disadvantaged communities where the percentage of residents who do not have access to a vehicle is nearly double the national average. The R.A.I.L. project also provides low-income and high minority population neighborhoods a safe alternate route to and from local schools, especially those which have a higher number of students qualifying for free/reduced lunch programs. This trail will offer safe, affordable, and enhanced opportunities for walking and bicycling along the trail route to residents who might otherwise never participate in physical activity in a meaningful way. The Shelby R.A.I.L. project will provide a new and safe transportation pathway to residents in Shelby, promoting access to jobs and services as well as enhancing the quality of life in these underserved communities.

**Motion: A motion to recommend the Shelby Rail Trail Letter of Support to the Board of Commissioners was made by Mr. Miller and a second was made by Marty Hamrick. The motion carried unanimously.**

**CCHD INTERNAL EQUITY PLAN:**

Chair Karner introduced Anne Short with the CCHD internal equity plan. This plan was built to help implement the principles of equity in developing and implementing programs, advocacy initiatives and decision-making processes in the Cleveland County Health Department. The purpose is to address Covid 19 health disparities and to advance health equity by building capacity and services to the historically marginalized populations in Cleveland County. The marginalized populations identified in Cleveland County are African Americans, Hispanics, Low Income, and Rural. An internal equity team was created, and they developed the internal equity plan and each section of the plan incorporated strategies to address specific identified areas for work. This plan will move through 2023 and includes an annual training for staff on the social determinates of health, work with the minority health council, and a communications campaign to promote vaccinations and booster shots for Covid 19. The internal plan was submitted to the State for 2023 with two internal goals selected. One of those goals was to require training for all staff at CCHD on health equity, health disparities, health literacy or additional information on the social determinates of health. The internal equity team will be choosing some options for this and sharing this information with the equity advisory council for their response on this as well. We will also be involving our equity advisory council when we are looking at policy, system, and environmental changes to increase our outreach to the historically marginalized populations. Community goals for 2023 are a community level education campaign addressing food insecurity and healthier food access, and a walkability assessment with the target community being Kingstown. Patti Alexander asked if citizens could use food stamps at the local Farmer’s Market. Ms. Short explained they do accept EBT but do not accept WIC vouchers at this time. Chair Karner asked if CCHD could partner with local farmers for excess food that could be donated to citizens in the community. Ms. Short explained that there is already a food share program at the farmer’s market that works to distribute excess food to local food banks for citizens in need. Lauren Clark, an intern with CCHD, has been working on updating our food resource guide for the community. Heather Bridges Moore asked if there are any members of the internal equity team that are from historically marginalized populations. Ms. Short advised that the Minority Health Council is composed of representatives from our African American community, which includes 24 total members and averages around 16 members in attendance at each meeting. Ms. Moore expressed how important it is that all minority populations be represented during the health equity meetings, which include African Americans, Hispanic, Low Income and Rural residents of Cleveland County. Ms. Alexander asked if we have any Hispanics included in the health equity discussions. Ms. Short explained that we have not yet successfully recruited any Hispanic representatives, but this is something we are working on. Ms. Short expressed that we are in the very beginning stages of this work and increasing internal knowledge of how we operate at CCHD is a starting point for us in our efforts to advance equity internally and externally.

**BUDGET AMENDMENTS:**

Chair Karner introduced Leslie McSwain with budget amendments for CCHD. The Cleveland County Health Department has been allocated an additional $4,850.00 in funding from Partners Behavioral Health Management’s Cleveland Community Collaborative. These funds will be used to support promotion of prescription drop box locations through the utilization of Red Box Kiosks throughout the County. We ask that these funds be budgeted in our CODAP (548) department. There are currently 19 medicine drop boxes across the County.

**Motion: A motion to recommend the proposed budget amendments to the Board of Commissioners was made by Mr. Miller and a second was made by Patti Alexander. The motion carried unanimously.**

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Chair Karner asked if there was any miscellaneous business to discuss.

Deshay Oliver reminded board members that there will not be a Public Health Board meeting in July. We will resume on August 9, 2022.

**ADJOURN: 7:03 PM**

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

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

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Tiffany Hansen, Secretary

Cleveland County Public Health Board