

Moore County Board of Health
January 11, 2021

Members Present: Leo Santowasso, PE, PLS, Chair
Janice Baker, DVM, MS, DACVPM
Mark Brenner, MD
Betty J. Goodridge, MHA, CMA
Louis Gregory
Paul Kuzma, MD
William Mang, PharmD
Max Muse, RN, ME, Vice Chair
Kamron Monroe, DDS
Tony Price
Benjamin Wacker, OD
Robert R. Wittmann, MPH, Secretary to the Board

Members Absent: None

Call to Order and Introductions:

The meeting of the Board of Health was held via Webex and dial in. Chair Leo Santowasso called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. Health Department staff present were: Teresa Forrest, Administrative Officer; Melissa Fraley, Nursing Director; Matt Garner, Health Educator; and Jennifer Wallace, Administrative Officer. Ward Medlin, Deputy County Attorney, was present for the meeting.

Invocation: Robert Wittmann gave the invocation.

Secretary to the Board: Robert Wittmann read the following statement: *Does any Board Member have a conflict of interest concerning agenda items the Board will address in this meeting?* None were noted.

Approval of, and/or Adjustments to, Agenda: Leo Santowasso asked that the agenda be modified to have the Board of Health Committee reports after public comments and before the Department's quarterly reports. There were no objections.

Public Comments:

There were no public comments. Leo Santowasso asked if there was an answer to the questions in the public comments from the previous meeting. Robert Wittmann stated that Matt Garner had reached out by telephone and answered the questions. Leo Santowasso stated that he would like a record of answers to public comments, either an email or a hard copy. Kamron Monroe said it was appropriate to reach out by telephone to answer questions promptly but then inform the Board of those responses, with a report or transcript, so the Board knows how and when the responses are given to questions.

Board of Health Committee Reports:

- 1.) Communications Committee Report:** Tony Price stated the Committee met on January 6th, with Tony Price, BJ Goodridge, and Kamron Monroe present. Matt Garner also attended the meeting. The Committee wants the Health Department present on all daily conference calls with FirstHealth. He noted that the Board of Health is inundated with emails from the Health Department and the Committee would like those emails to be reviewed before they are sent. Matt Garner will be reviewing these emails. The Committee would like Matt Garner to send all press releases to the Board of Health at the same time as the releases are sent to the press. Also, the Committee asked that all communications to the Board of Commissioners be sent to the Board of Health. The Committee had asked for a monthly call with the Health Department and local long-term care facilities (LTCF) and wanted the status. Robert Wittmann stated that he had reached out to the Region 6 LTCF Coordinator, Tamiko Gland, and asked that she facilitate this call. Initial feedback was that the independent corporations in charge of the LTCF were reluctant to share problems with their competitors. He noted that the Coordinator is sharing best practices. Robert Wittmann stated that most local LTCF have received vaccinations for their staff and residents. Tony Price stated that there was a problem with a delay in reporting deaths. The next Communications Committee meeting is scheduled for January 27th.
- 2.) Vaccine Committee Report:** Bill Mang stated that the Committee met last month with Robert Wittmann to discuss the preliminary vaccine strategy. Paul Kuzma stated that he was elected Committee Chair at a meeting on 12-15-20. He met with Health Department staff and the Department's consultant for planning on 12-18-20 and received an update on vaccination planning. Paul Kuzma is in regular communication with the local medical community. He stated there are concerns about the level of transparency over vaccine doses available and administered. He wanted this information available in a way that is easily accessed by the public. Paul Kuzma is in touch with multiple physicians who have volunteered to help with vaccinations. He stated Robert Wittmann has concerns with liability relating to volunteers. There were questions about the requirement of doctors' notes for some patients before they could get the vaccine; including nursing mothers, pregnant women, cancer patients and patients with clotting issues. This may be a barrier and may also give the appearance that the vaccine is not safe. Paul Kuzma asked if this was a federal, state or local concern and what would be accepted for the note. Robert Wittmann stated that, for the information about vaccination doses and number given, the Health Department would mirror what the State provides. This information is available weekly. The Health Department is offering vaccination clinics on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, as long as vaccine is available to us. Currently, the target group is 75 and older. We are vaccinating those who have signed up with the County (hotline or online preregistration) on a first-come, first-served basis. In regards to volunteers, Robert Wittmann stated that he envisions volunteers providing most of the second doses to come, with a minimum of regular staff involvement. Tony Price stated that FirstHealth has agreed to vaccinate all Moore Free Care Clinic patients 75 and older at the Fair Barn. Louis Gregory stated that he was getting questions from people who had signed up and asked about the procedure to be notified. Melissa Fraley

stated that multiple staff members are calling people on the preregistration list all day, every day to schedule appointments for vaccination. With the high rate of response from the public, it will take some time and people need to remain patient. With the State still in phase 1A, the vaccinations for 75 and older were due to start the following day, concurrent with the remaining group in 1A. Melissa Fraley stated that the Department has had no wasted doses. There is a backup list of eligible people to call in for unclaimed doses at the end of the clinic. The Department is working towards the vaccination of 250 people per clinic. There are limitations due to the required post-vaccination monitoring, due to social distancing requirements. She noted that the registered nurses in local health departments traditionally work with direct physician oversight and therefore require standing orders. The template given by the State for COVID vaccinations requires further consultation with medical providers for patients breastfeeding, pregnant or taking blood thinners. The only way the Department knows that this has occurred with the patients' providers is with a doctors' note. The Moore County Health Department contract obstetrician was not comfortable with prenatal patients or breastfeeding patients receiving the vaccine. The Department does not require that cancer patients have a note before receiving the vaccine. Nurses will discuss with the patient that their immune response might be affected but they will be able to receive the vaccine.

3.) COVID Committee Report: There was no report from this Committee.

Presentations: There were no presentations.

Board of Health Education/Staff Reports: Robert Wittmann presented the following reports: Department's Second Quarter Activity Report, FY 21 Second Quarter Fiscal Report, Department's Performance Measures, and the Department's 2020 TB Assessment.

COVID-19 Update: Matt Garner provided an update on the Health Department's COVID response. Robert Wittmann thanked County staff for their work on the vaccination online-portal and call center for preregistration. He noted that scheduling for vaccination clinics is dependent on the availability of vaccine. He stated that the Department had reached out to the local NAACP chapter and Hispanic communities to get the word out on the vaccine. The latest information on the Department's response is available on the website. Louis Gregory asked about the delay in reporting COVID deaths. Melissa Fraley stated that there is a process to confirm the COVID diagnosis and then report this to the State before reporting it locally. Sometimes there is difficulty in confirming the cases. This nursing report is different from vital records and death certificate processing. Robert Wittmann stated that the two systems have two sets of regulations. Leo Santowasso stated that this needs to be explained to the media. BJ Goodridge asked if COVID has to be the primary cause of death to be reported as a COVID death. Melissa Fraley stated that, if COVID is listed in any capacity on the death certificate, it is reported as a COVID death.

Nursing Director's Report: There was no additional nursing information.

Health Director's Report: Robert Wittmann stated that there are two nutritionist positions vacant, with no qualified applicants.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Consent agenda contained the minutes for the December 7, 2020 meeting. Max Muse made a motion to approve the minutes. BJ Goodridge seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business:

Election of Board of Health Chair and Vice-Chair: Robert Wittmann noted that the Vice Chair is automatically nominated for Chair. Since Leo Santowasso, as 2020 Vice Chair, was filling out the term of Chair, he was automatically nominated for 2021 Chair. Kamron Monroe nominated Max Muse for Vice Chair and made a motion to approve this, seconded by Paul Kuzma. There were none opposed. Max Muse made a motion to approve Leo Santowasso as Chair, seconded by Tony Price. None were opposed and the motion carried.

FY 2022 Budget Resolution: Robert Wittmann asked that the Board approve a resolution that the Health Department follow the Moore County process and schedule to complete the Health Department budget for fiscal year 2022. Max Muse made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Kamron Monroe. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Kamron Monroe noted that there were no changes to the policies presented to the Board for annual review, which included: Board of Health Orientation and Training Policy, Board of Health Approval of Minutes Policy, Policy on Policies, the Environmental Health Fee Policy and the Clinical Fee Policy. Kamron Monroe suggested that the policies be approved as a group. BJ Goodridge made a motion to approve the policies, seconded by Tony Price. There were none opposed and the motion carried.

Adjourn: Max Muse made a motion to adjourn, seconded by BJ Goodridge. All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.