

Moore County Board of Health May 2nd, 2022

Members Present:

Tony Price, Chair
Paul Kuzma, MD. Vice Chair
Benjamin Wacker, OD
Leo Santowasso, PE, PLS;
Robert Lupski, R.Ph., M.S
Alex White, Dr.P.H, M.S., M.P.H., D.D.S.
Pauline Sandness R.N., B.S.N
Janice Baker, DVM, MS, DACVPM,
Mark Brenner, MD
Matt Garner, Secretary to the Board

Members Absent: Betty J. Goodridge, MHA, CMA; Frank Quis

Call to Order and Introductions:

The meeting of the Board of Health was held in the Community Room of the Rick Rhyne Public Safety Center in Carthage, NC. Chair Tony Price called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Health Department staff present were Melissa Fraley, Nursing Director and Miriam King-Gill, Administrative Officer. Stephan Lapping, Associate County Attorney, was present for the meeting. Jayme Baxley from The Pilot was also present. Miriam King-Gill did roll call for Board Members.

There were brief introductions by each present member to orient the other members with their experience and profession.

Invocation: Matt Garner gave the invocation.

Secretary to the Board: Matt Garner 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: There were no adjustments to the agenda. Mark Brenner made motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Leo Santowasso. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Public Comments: Tony Price outlined the operational procedures for making public comments.

First Speaker: *Kevin Lewis*

Mr. Lewis expressed his differing viewpoints than those who oppose vaccination for COVID-19, and the recommended preventative measures such as masking and social distancing. Kevin Lewis proceeded to share his disappointment that Jayne Lee, who had been previously serving to fill the ‘Nurse’ vacancy left by the passing of Max Muse, was “wrongfully terminated”. Mr. Lewis mentioned Jayne’s credentials and notable service to the MCBOH and community. He stated that only commissioner Quis, voted against replacing Jayne. Mr. Lewis continued by stating that the newly appointed Nurse Representative, Pauline Sandness, was not fit to serve on the MCBOH. He made sure to state that his discontent was not due to her race, and that he was more than proud to see more diversity on the MCBOH in the form of an African American female. Mr. Lewis suggested that due to her lack of experience and proper qualifications/credentialing as well as her not having served as a nurse since 2015, that she had little to no accurate experience as a nurse at the onset and during the stay of COVID-19. Therefore, Mrs. Sandness was not fit to offer counsel nor make decisions regarding Moore County’s pandemic response. Furthermore, he stated that her appointment, was due to the recommendation by Tom LoSapio, and other members of the “anti-vax” anti-mask” group of individuals who frequent both the MCBOH and MCBOC meetings. Mr. Lewis shared that such a swift almost unanimous vote so proximal to receiving a recommendation was not only hasty and politically driven but did not follow fair process in appointing a Nurse Representative. Mr. Lewis called members of what he considers the “anti-mask” “anti-vax” group by name and used terms such as ‘fools’ to describe those making decisions that oppose scientific data.

Second Speaker: *Tom LoSapio*

Mr. LoSapio spoke against statements made by Dr. Fauci, calling for multiple sources of data to be used instead the same federally issued sources who have the majority of control. Mr. LoSapio spoke about the politicizing of the pandemic, and how due to its politicization, other agendas would soon be presented. He advocated for a truth that is not from Federal Legislation to be presented. Mr. LoSapio mentioned that Dr. Fauci and his team, predicted a secondary pandemic-like event that would surface in October of 2022.

Presentations: *Tammie Fox: Moore County Health Department Dental Hygienist*

Tammie gave a brief overview of the Oral Health for the county. Ms. Fox mentioned that establishing proper oral health habits in childhood statistically yields good oral health results later. Throughout the county, Tammie is involved in oral health education and career day, back to school events, and even conducts school-based sealants programs under the North Carolina

State Dental Program. In 2021, Tammie received the Delta Dental grant to administer childhood dental supplies and information to children in our elementary schools, including portable mouth and teeth models.

COVID-19 hindered her school-based oral program, so she coordinated and administered homebound vaccinations and was heavily involved in the COVID-19 contact tracing response effort. Currently, Tammie Fox is screening kindergarten children for early dental issues. The determination for a Sealant Project, will be based on these screening results. Selected schools for the Sealant Project must meet minimum of 50% free and reduced lunch. Since April, 784 kindergarten students have been screened. Of those, 140 had one or more obvious decay sites. Tammie detailed the decay rates for each school that she has screened thus far.

After Tammie's presentation, Leo Santowasso asked if help was needed in the form of an additional employee to aid Tammie in her efforts. He mentioned the need for additional resources as the county elementary spans largely and Tammie is covering the area alone.

Dr. Brenner and Janice Baker asked if there were pediatric dentists in the area for children who needed care but could not afford care. After which Tammie detailed the referral process which involves sending letters home to parents and establish communication with local pediatric dentists.

Paul Kuzma made a public apology to the those in the room and specifically to Pauline Sandness for the comments made by Kevin Lewis earlier. He expressed that she was indeed welcomed and reiterated that comments made should be tactful.

Board of Health Committee, Education/Staff Reports:

The Communications Committee met April 27th. There are now ads are running in newspapers and local platforms for the French west Vaughn campaign regarding COVID-19 vaccination and best practices.

COVID-19 Update:

Matt Garner shared that 99 of North Carolina's 100 counties meet the low transmission rate. The county averaged 8.2 new cases a day for April, with FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital housing COVID19 patients. The county has gone a month and a half without a covid death. S of this meeting, cases are up to around 13.7 cases per day, with a total case count of 24350 since the pandemic's beginning. Of the total count, 23906 have been considered recovered. There are 121 active cases, and 323 deaths since the pandemic's onset. Our case positivity rate stands at 8.4% and we are working toward our goal of 5% or lower. The National Snapshot shows that Northeastern states are the only with moderate to high transmission, whereas the rest of the nation is in low transmission. Omicron subvariant is close to 90% of positive cases. Variant BA2 is not more severe but is still highly transmissible.

Nursing Director's Report:

Melissa Fraley shared that there is a Women's Health Care program monitoring/auditing. These audits are normal procedure and will go through the first week of May as well as occur again in June. The clinical staff will be participating in Women's Day at Sandhills Community College, providing COVID-19 vaccines.

Health Director's Report:

All 100 North Carolina counties have adopted NCDAVE for registering and recording death certificates. NCDAVE replaces the former manual paper filing process that was lengthy to complete and sometimes required funeral home staff to drive to multiple health departments for completion. The new system allows for greater efficiency, data accuracy and consistency in the reporting process. Through NCDAVE, North Carolina funeral directors, medical certifiers and medical examiners will compile death information electronically, which can then be submitted to local registrars for the creation of the death certificate. Matt Garner applauded Mrs. Jeanie Garcia, who serves as the health department's Deputy Registrar for Vital Records. Jeanie has worked diligently over the past year to ensure that our county certifiers and funeral directors have been trained and are in our compliance with the new system.

Our COVID-19 public relations campaign with advertising firm French West Vaughn is currently running May-June. Most recently, our first full page ad placement was in Sunday's edition of The Pilot and our 2nd radio ad was featured on local 102.5 and 103.1 FM stations. The concept for the campaign is "Get Out" which encourages everyone to protect themselves by getting vaccinated or boosted before they get out to enjoy the regular spring and summer activities that may have been put on hold over the last two years. Our campaign coincides with the Department of Health and Human Services and their campaign "Spring into Summer", which shares similar key points

In addition to the Women's Health program audit, we are also going through a WIC program audit. The Women Infants and Children and Supplemental Nutrition Program will be undergoing its audit May 17th – May 19th by NCDHHS. This audit is conducted every two years and looks at caseload success, and client participation. This year's audit will be conducted remotely via a state monitoring tool.

The Health Department's Sewage and Water Protection Division continues to work through a backlog with septic permit applications that generated during staffing shortages at the close of 2021. For this effort, we have solicited assistance from some recently retired staff and registered EHS from other counties as resource staff. These resource staff serve during both the regular work week and on the weekends. Two additional resource staff, John case from Wake County and Tracy Murray from Lee County have brought the total number of part time resource staff to seven. We currently have three full-time staff in our Onsite division—however, two of those are

trainee. The trainees should complete their CIT or Centralized Intern Training at the end of this month, which means they will be fully authorized to issue permits. There are three vacant full-time registered EHS positions in the county. Our staff conducted an interview last week on with a potential candidate who we hope to hire. Environmental Health welcomed Mr. Russ Kelly as an Environmental Health Technician. Russ is tasked with completing some of the preliminary work of the permitting process. We are accepting applications for the Nutritionist II and EHS positions. The applications have closed for Health Director, Health Educator II, Processing Assistant, and Public Health Nurse.

Alex White, Pauline Sandness and Robert Lupski have filled the MCBOH's: dentist, nurse, and pharmacist vacancies, respectively.

Approval of Agenda Minutes Tony Price asked for a motion to approve the agenda minutes. Leo Santowasso made a motion which was seconded by Ben Wacker. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Old Business: no old business

New Business: Matt Garner expressed training and accreditation requirements for members of a Board of Health. Trainings are provided by the NC School of Government. Members of the Board discussed the training and shared the length of time it takes to complete as well as format of the training. It was decided that trainings would be completed individually instead of as a group.

Ben Wacker volunteered to help as a "fill-in" for the Communications Committee until someone is officially appointed. He was assigned and will remain in place until the new Chair will is chosen.

Topics in turn: Tony Price emphasized that the Code of Conduct must be implemented for public comments and anyone violating such code would be removed from future meetings.

Closed Session: The Board entered into close session at 7:00pm.

Action was taken during the closed session. It was announced that as the MCBOH found no one qualified to fill the position of Health Director, that the position would be reposted and the application/interview process would recommence.

Adjourn: Tony Price asked for a motion to adjourn. Alex White made a motion, which was seconded by Leo Santowasso. All were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.