

Moore County Board of Health
May 4, 2020

Members Present: William Mang, PharmD, Chair
Betty J. Goodridge, MHA, CMA
Michele Keel, OD
Warren Lewis
Max Muse, RN, ME
Kamron Monroe, DDS
Sharon Odom, RT
Leo Santowasso, PE, PLS, Vice Chair
Robert R. Wittmann, MPH, Secretary to the Board

Members Absent: Mark Brenner, MD; Louis Gregory

Call to Order and Introductions:

The meeting of the Board of Health was held via Webex and dial-in. Chair Bill Mang called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Health Department staff present were: Teresa Forrest, Administrative Officer; Melissa Fraley, Nursing Director; Matt Garner, Health Educator; and Jennifer Wallace, Administrative Officer. Misty Randall, County Attorney, was present for the meeting. Board members and staff introduced themselves.

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: Warren Lewis made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Sharon Odom. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Public Comments: O'Linda D. Watkins, President of the Moore County NAACP, provided and read the following written statement to the Board:

Good Evening Chairman Wittman and Board Members.

My name is O'Linda Watkins McSurely. I was raised on the property of my ancestors, slaves, carved out of the area called Needmore, just beyond the city limits of Carthage and today I serve as President of the Moore County NAACP. As our members watched your virtual meeting last week, we could not help but notice that there are no Black people participating in the group that forms and implements our County's Health policies. The Health Department is hardly unique among county agencies in that regard, and that lack of diversity is often reflected in decisions and policies affecting communities of color 56 years after the passage of the civil rights act. Addressing the disparities or lack of awareness in public policy is at the heart of our organization's mission.

This evening, we want to thank all of our essential and front line workers. We would note that people of color are disproportionately represented among those essential workers. Protecting them is essential to protecting the community at large, but especially to protecting our communities.

From the very beginning of the Corvid 19 pandemic, the Moore County NAACP has been very involved in the safety of the people in this mighty great county, state, nation. We have kept up with the Pilot and watched your virtual member's meeting last week. This evening we are asking for a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss concerns beyond our 3 minutes comment timeline.

I have two questions for you this afternoon:

1. Is there contact tracing in place for workers employed in multiple work sites test and protect residential living and home health workers in the 10 nursing homes in Moore County?

2. How many members of your staff, board, and advisory committees are Black Brown, Native American or LGBTQ?

Joining us in this evening's conference is Nancy Kingfisher. She is a veteran Registered Nurse and she serves as Moore County NAACP Chair of our Health Committee. We ask that the Board hear her this evening.

THANK YOU!

The next public comment was from Nancy Kingfisher, RN, and Health Committee Chair of the Moore County NAACP. Ms. Kingfisher stated that she had a concern observing a pattern of people working both in assisted living facilities and home care agencies, simultaneously, and not being tested. Also, patients are going back and forth from the hospital to assisted living facilities and home without any testing being done between places. She stated that she understood that the clinics have an ample supply of tests available. She strongly urged that tests be used for these people, both the health care workers and the patients who need follow-up before transfer from one facility to a congregate living situation.

Board of Health Education/Staff Reports:

Department's Third Quarter Activity Report: Robert Wittmann reviewed the activity report with the Board.

FY 20 Third Quarter Fiscal Report: Robert Wittmann reviewed the fiscal report with the Board.

Department's Performance Measures: After review of the performance measures, Warren Lewis asked about the status of inspections for food and lodging. Robert Wittmann stated that the State has waived requirements for some of these facilities. For those facilities remaining open and serving takeout, they are still in line to get their regular inspections. Food and Lodging staff are also giving COVID-19 consultations, reviewing plans, and making preparations for when the shutdown restrictions are lifted. Warren Lewis asked if establishments would be required to be inspected before reopening. Robert Wittmann stated that he did not know but would find out. Sharon Odom asked if establishments that were closed would get back in line for inspections. Robert Wittmann stated that the answer would come from the State and it was not known at this time.

Health Department Response to COVID-19: Robert Wittmann reviewed the Health Department's COVID-19 response with the Board. He noted that the Department's pandemic influenza plan was exercised at a tabletop meeting with Fort Bragg and other area health departments. Our first goal in response is to protect our most vulnerable population. With COVID-19, this is the elderly and those with underlying physical conditions. The government is trying to keep our hospital system and healthcare workers from being overwhelmed. The Health Department's main tool at this time is public information. Information is shared from the national Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS). Guidance has been shared with local providers and facilities via emails and faxes. The Department has posted information on social media, our webpage, and via news releases to local media. Health Department staff have also conducted virtual meetings with local partners and State consultants. During Phase One, limited testing was available to the Health Department. At that time, the State was giving the local health departments three test kits at a time from the State lab. The County had an outbreak in a local skilled nursing facility. Per NCDHHS guidelines, in a long term care facility, two cases constitute an outbreak. With help from FirstHealth of the Carolinas, the Health Department set up testing for residents and staff in the facility, requesting test kits from the State lab. In addition to testing at long term care facilities, NCDHHS guidance for testing focused on symptomatic people or those with close contact to a COVID-19 positive case. Robert Wittmann stated that he credits the public with their response to the Governor's request for physical separation. In addition, the school system and local government response went a long way in helping guide the public to follow control measures. With the introduction of Phase Two, testing capacity was expanded. At this time, the Department has adequate testing materials to offer to the most vulnerable populations. Thanks to the Board of Commissioners for their funding, we now have contracts with private laboratories for test kits and processing. The Department has offered free kits/processing and consultation to local long term care facilities. At this time, the Department has received limited response to this offer. However, nursing homes continue to monitor and test all those who are symptomatic. Our response will change in the future, with businesses and schools re-opening, and with the development of a vaccine. Leo Santowasso asked if the Health Director had legal authority to go in to a nursing facility if there were less than two positive cases. Robert Wittmann stated that there needed to be a declared outbreak for the Health Department to require testing. Misty Randall stated that she had conferred with State attorneys and it does require two cases in a 28-day period in order for a health director in North Carolina to require testing. BJ Goodridge asked if there were any drive-up sites available in Moore County. Robert Wittmann stated that the FirstHealth of the Carolinas site was still active at West Pine Elementary, with a doctor's referral. Bill Mang asked if the Department was still in regular contact with the Sheriffs Office. Robert Wittmann stated that they are monitoring all inmates at the jail and all staff who interact with inmates. They jail has a quarantine block. Any symptomatic staff would be tested and quarantined at home waiting for the test results, with isolation, if positive, until they were no longer communicable. No cases have been reported in inmates. The Sheriffs Office has had some positive cases which were not connected to the jail. BJ Goodridge stated that pharmacists were now allowed to do COVID testing and asked if this was happening in Moore County now. Robert Wittmann and Bill Mang stated that they were not aware of this being done in Moore County at this time.

Nursing Director's Report: Melissa Fraley spoke to the Board about the case count locally. They currently averaged three to four cases a day. School nurses have been utilized to help with case investigation. A request has been submitted to the State asking for contact tracers, data entry personnel and COVID testers. The Department has filled three nursing positions; Maternal Health, Family Planning and Communicable Disease. These nurses are getting oriented to the Health Department and to our clinic programs. Our Physician Assistant, Temeka Wallace, will be going on leave for a few weeks. Deborah Barrett, Nurse Practitioner and former Health Department employee, will be covering clinics during that time.

Health Director's Report: Robert Wittmann stated that several people have volunteered to help the Department with contact tracing. They will need to be trained on the State's new platform, which is still in development. Health Department staff will also need to be trained on that system. The system is expected to coincide with the Governor's relaxation of control measures. Data will have to be entered in the North Carolina Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NCEDSS) before entering in the new platform. Two nurses are currently certified in NCEDSS and Robert Wittmann stated that the Health Department has requested two nurses from the State who are capable of entering data in NCEDSS. The Health Department is advertising for one full-time and one part-time nutritionist for the WIC program. Currently, one part-time nutritionist is working remotely with clients. Some State and federal requirements have been waived for the WIC program. A resource processing assistant will be added to the program next week to help with the work flow. In Management Support, one administrative assistant position is currently being advertised, to replace an employee who was promoted. Leo Santowasso asked if the various reporting agencies were doing anything to get the case counts and deaths current. Robert Wittmann stated that one of the private labs, Mako, had been unable to upload data into NCEDSS but the State is working on that. That would go a long way to getting the numbers in line. In addition, the Health Department updates daily but the State has a process and there is more of a lag in having numbers updated. Bill Mang thanked Robert Wittmann and the Health Department staff for everything that they do.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Consent agenda included minutes for the March 9, 2020 meeting and the April 27, 2020 meeting. Max Muse made a motion to approve the minutes. Leo Santowasso seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business: Robert Wittmann stated that the Nursing Director, Melissa Fraley, had done admirable work, working around the clock, not only on COVID response, but also on training new nurses. Matt Garner, Health Educator and PIO, has done a fantastic job as well. Matt Garner reviewed the County dashboard with the Board. Data is updated in real-time, when data is received. The Health Department sends all press releases through County Emergency Management to be disseminated to local media. The Department's Facebook and Twitter accounts are updated regularly. We are putting out brief videos on social media as well. A listing of FAQs (frequently asked questions) is posted on the website and we will continue to update that. Warren Lewis asked that Matt Garner consider a video explaining the County dashboard to the public. Matt Garner asked that Board members let him know if they have any

other ideas about getting information to the public. Robert Wittmann stated that Teresa Forrest, in coordination with On Target Preparedness, has worked to ensure all new staff have respiratory fit training and testing and we have the necessary supplies on hand. Robert Wittmann thanked Jennifer Wallace for her help with the response. He also thanked all the line staff for their front-line work every day. Warren Lewis asked if there was anything missing that the Health Department needed. Robert Wittmann thanked the Board of Health, Board of Commissioners, County Management, Public Safety, the Sheriffs Office, FirstHealth of the Carolinas, Moore County Schools, as well as our other partners, for all of the support the Health Department has received. He stated that what we need isn't available yet. We have made a request to the State for staffing help. The County has worked with Moore County Schools to get school health nurses in the Department to help with case investigations and people have volunteered to help as well. As soon as the State develops the contact tracing platform and training is available then we will move forward with that.

Health Department FY 2021 Budget Update: Robert Wittmann stated that the budget process was modified due to COVID-19. As far as the Health Department, he has no concerns that the Commissioners will not continue to support us. More nurses will be needed in next year's budget. One Public Health Nurse position was eliminated in the current fiscal year but it is requested to be reinstated for the upcoming fiscal year. That nurse will be necessary for response in the fall with the expected second wave. In addition, school health nurses will no longer be available to help with our response.

Appoint Committee for Health Director's 2020 Evaluation and Job Description for October, 2020: Chair Bill Mang had technical difficulty and Leo Santowasso, Vice Chair, presided over the remainder of the meeting. Warren Lewis, Sharon Odom, and Leo Santowasso volunteered to serve on the Committee for the Health Director's 2020 Evaluation and Job Description. Robert Wittmann stated that the Chair is an Ex Officio member of every Board of Health Committee. The Committee will coordinate setting up a meeting. Robert Wittmann stated that Dawn Gilbert, Moore County Human Resources Director, will be a resource to the Committee. Misty Randall, Moore County Attorney, stated that they need to follow open meetings laws and asked that the Committee contact her before a meeting.

Adjourn: Max Muse made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Michele Keel. All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.