

Moore County Board of Health
October 5, 2020

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

Members Absent: Mark Brenner, MD

Call to Order and Introductions:

The meeting of the Board of Health was held at the Moore County Agriculture Center. Chair Leo Santowasso called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Health Department staff present were: Krista Dees, Laboratory Manager; Lora Denning, Administrative Assistant; Teresa Forrest, Administrative Officer; Melissa Fraley, Nursing Director; Matt Garner, Health Educator; Miriam King, Health Educator; and Jennifer Wallace, Administrative Officer II. Ward Medlin, Deputy County Attorney, was also present for the meeting. Board members introduced themselves. Robert Wittmann noted that the new Board of Health member, Janice Baker (veterinarian) had been given orientation and sworn in that day.

Invocation: Robert Wittmann gave the invocation.

Approval of, and/or Adjustments to, Agenda: Max Muse made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by B.J. Goodridge. All were in favor and the motion carried.

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.

Public Comments:

No one signed up for public comments.

Presentations: COVID-19 Update:

Matt Garner reviewed all the information updates with the Board, reviewing the latest number of cases (61 added that day), recovered and active cases and deaths. It was noted that the number of new cases on Mondays tend to be higher because they incorporate cases added

during the weekend as well. Cases were reviewed by zip code. There was a 7-day rolling average and an average number of daily cases (20 on that day). He compared Moore County to surrounding counties. It was noted that testing turnaround times for results are currently approximately twenty-four hours. Matt Garner spoke about the Department's educational campaign regarding the 3W's and the State's campaign "Get Behind the Mask". Long Term Care Facilities (LTCF) information was reviewed, regarding cases and outbreak status. Robert Wittmann noted that the Board of Commissioners had asked the Health Department to review the research on rapid testing. Krista Dees compiled that information for review, and it was given to Miriam King for presentation to the Board. Rapid antigen tests perform best when the person tested is in the early stages of infection with COVID-19 and the viral load is generally high. Rapid antigen testing may also be helpful when the person tested has a known exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19. Rapid antigen tests can be used for screening in high-risk LTCF in which repeat testing could quickly identify persons with a COVID-19 infection. In this case, immediate results with antigen tests may be helpful even though they have lower sensitivity than polymerase chain reaction (pcr) tests. It was noted that the federal government had directly supplied LTCF with rapid antigen tests, but the local facilities were choosing to use pcr tests at this time. It was noted that labs needed a special CLIA certification to run the antigen tests in-house, although B.J. Goodridge stated that labs could get a waiver for this. B.J. Goodridge asked how the antigen tests were reported to the Health Department. Melissa Fraley stated that these tests show on the system as 'probable' and have to be investigated. Board members discussed the merits of pcr versus antigen testing. Louis Gregory stated he was concerned if a LTCF would have the discretion to pick which test to use. Robert Wittmann stated that the State determines which tests are acceptable. LTCF can choose to use rapid antigen testing for a quick snapshot and can choose to follow-up with a pcr test. Both tests use naso-pharyngeal swabs. Melissa Fraley stated that antigen tests have their place as a good screening method but the pcr tests are more accurate and are the gold standard. She stated that, in the majority of LTCF in outbreak status, most are using pcr tests. Robert Wittmann stated that, if a lab was not certified to perform the rapid test in-house, then the test would have to be sent out to a certified laboratory for processing, which would take 24 hours. Currently, pcr tests can be sent out for processing and results are available within 24 hours as well. Matt Garner reviewed the situation with Moore County Schools and their COVID-19 response. The Governor gave school systems the choice of offering K-5 classes entirely on-site. The Moore County Schools Board is considering this. Robert Wittmann recommended waiting until the first semester ended. This would give the schools and the Health Department time to survey data as it comes in, plan for social distancing and disinfecting, and adjust their logistics plans. Tony Price asked about the Moore County Health Department's stand on flu shots. Matt Garner stated that flu shots are more important than ever this season. Robert Wittmann stated that the Health Department is strongly recommending seasonal vaccinations on social media, urging people to get their vaccination as soon as possible. He noted that for people 65 and older or at high risk, a high-dose flu vaccine is recommended. Kamron Monroe asked if the cases reported by the school system were classroom spread or community. Melissa Fraley stated that, with the exception of the cluster in Robbins, the cases were community spread. Paul Kuzma asked if the County provided flu shots, through the Health Department, at low or no cost. Robert Wittmann stated that the Health Department has not given flu vaccinations for several years, due to the

high availability with local providers and pharmacies. The Health Department buys flu vaccine for its Maternal Care patients only. Tony Price stated that there is a segment of our population that can not afford a flu shot. Robert Wittmann stated that he was willing to talk about addressing this concern. B.J. Goodridge asked if there should not be more done this year. She noted that people have transportation issues. Robert Wittmann said that, our community partner, Goshen Health might be able to offer mobile vaccinations. He stated that the Health Department staff were already dancing as fast as they can. Also, the flu vaccine ordinarily needs to be ordered a year in advance and the Health Department has been trying to order additional vaccine but has thus far not been successful. B.J. Goodridge said that she would like the Board of Health to make a statement to community health leaders to help people this year and make offering flu shots a priority. Paul Kuzma asked that we reach out to vulnerable and under-served populations through contacts to let them know how important it is. Matt Garner stated that Goshen Health has partnered with us on mobile COVID-19 testing, with no costs out of pocket. Robert Wittmann stated that the Health Department is trying to get the word out that people need to get tested for COVID-19 and he asked that the Board members please promote this. Matt Garner gave the Board a COVID-19 vaccine update. He told the Board about the Slow Covid NC app, which is available for personal phones, to notify people if they have been in close contact with a positive COVID-19 case.

Board of Health Education/Staff Reports:

Department's FY 21 First Quarter Activity Report: Robert Wittmann stated that the last month of the quarter had just ended therefore some of the statistics for this report were not available. He said that it could be sent to the Board and placed on the November meeting agenda for discussion.

FY 21 First Quarter Fiscal Report: Robert Wittmann stated that things are moving along well. There are no fiscal surprises, but it is still too early to see any trends.

FY 21 Department's Performance Measures: The measures were presented to the Board.

Nursing Director's Report: Melissa Fraley stated that, although COVID-19 takes center stage every day, there are other reportable communicable diseases in the County, requiring investigation and public education. There have been cases of salmonella, mainly from backyard chicken coops and family farms, but with no links between cases. There have been sporadic cases of rabies, mostly in foxes, but also in a cat and a dog. A new policy has been put in place to provide Immune Globulin to keep people out of the Emergency Department. There was also a very small outbreak of chickenpox, which affected one school. Any unvaccinated children must quarantine for 21 days to prevent spread.

Health Director's Report: Robert Wittmann noted that the Board of Health had passed a resolution at their last meeting supporting the 3W's. As instructed, he had submitted that resolution to the Board of Commissioners, for inclusion on their next meeting agenda. However, the Commissioners declined to place the resolution on their agenda. Robert Wittmann noted that there is a Public Health Nurse vacancy and a Nutritionist vacancy in the Health Department. All press releases from the Health Department are listed on our website, sequentially. The Health Department has focused its efforts on slowing the spread of COVID-19. Robert Wittmann asked the Board if they would like to schedule their regular Board of Health training for the November meeting. Although UNC will not be able to send a trainer on-site, they

provided the Department with the training information, which Health Department staff can present. Board members discussed this, and it was decided that the training would be given at the November meeting.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Consent agenda contained the minutes for the September 14, 2020 meeting. Max Muse made a motion to approve the minutes. Paul Kuzma seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business:

Moore County Health Department Risk Assessment: The State Public Health Preparedness and Response Branch grant monitor reviewed the Health Department's preparedness program, and it was deemed a 'low risk', which is a good outcome. The Health Department, as are all health departments, is under continual audit. We do not spend a penny or receive a penny without clearance by the Board of Commissioners in advance, through the Finance Department, and overseen by the County's Internal Auditor.

Election of Vice Chair: Max Muse volunteered to be nominated for Vice Chair. Kamron Monroe asked for clarity on what period the Vice Chair was being elected for. Robert Wittmann stated that the Vice Chair would serve for the remainder of the year. He said that, the Board of Health Operating Procedures provides that, the Vice Chair is automatically nominated for chair at the first meeting of the calendar year, however, nominations are always open to others as well. Kamron stated that the term, then, was just for a few months. Kamron made a motion to approve Max Muse as Vice Chair, seconded by B.J. Goodridge. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Leo Santowasso spoke to the Board. He stated that he met with Wayne Vest, County Manager, Frank Quis, Chair to the Board of Commissioners, and Louis Gregory, Commissioner member of the Board of Health, to review a plan he proposed for the Board of Health to help the Health Department. The Board of Commissioners and the County are behind this Board and will commit any resources necessary to improve the effectiveness of the operation of the Moore County Health Department. He proposed to create 3 task forces, or work groups, within the Board of Health:

1. COVID-19
2. Vaccines
3. Communications

For the first work group on COVID-19 (management, testing, follow-up, tracing, etc.), he appointed Mark Brenner, Max Muse, and Ben Wacker. The group is to work with Matt Garner and Robert Wittmann. He asked that they be proactive and not reactive. For the second work group on vaccines, he appointed Paul Kuzma, Bill Mang and Janice Baker. He asked that the group look at vaccine supply, distribution, management and plans. For the third work group, he appointed Tony Price, Kamron Monroe and B.J. Goodridge. This work group was to focus on communications to the public, media and partners, including response to questions from the public and from the Commissioners. He asked that the group help the community understand

what the Board of Health does and what the Health Department does. In addition, the group would help resolve issues when questions come up. He noted that he had spoken to each Board member, with the exception of Mark Brenner, who he was unable to reach before the meeting. Each work group was to go out, find out information, get involved and take any recommendations back to the Board for discussion and action. The groups have to abide by the Open Meeting laws, with public notice and attendance. Leo Santowasso noted that he and Louis Gregory would be ex-officio members, available to help if needed. Ward Medlin stated that the groups have to give notice of a meeting, with the place, hour of meeting and purpose stated. If the meetings will be regular, then a schedule can be established and published. Otherwise, if not a regular schedule, then all meetings would be special, and a public notice would have to be given at least 48 hours in advance. Ward Medlin stated that he would be available to communicate further with each work group/committee and would assist with drafting the notice for these meetings. Robert Wittmann stated that each committee should elect a Chair. He stated that he would be the liaison with the committee Chair and the Health Department staff. He asked that the committees lay out their expectations, i.e. how often to meet and to report to the Board of Health. Leo Santowasso stated that it would be up to each group. Ward Medlin stated that, individually, the committee Chair could meet with the Health Director. However, a majority of the group meeting would be a public meeting and a matter of public record, including records such as emails.

Leo Santowasso stated that the next meeting would be Monday, November 2nd, 2020, at 6:00 pm at the Agriculture Center in Carthage.

Adjourn: B.J. Goodridge made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Max Muse. All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.