

**Buncombe County Department of Health  
Board of Health Minutes  
February 11, 2010**

The Buncombe County Board of Health held a meeting at the Hughes Building on February 11, 2010.

**Board Members Present:** Winnie Ziegler, Richard Oliver, Bill McElrath, LC Ray, John Whitener, Linda Morgan, David McClain, Carol Peterson, Susanne Swanger and Gibbie Harris.

**Staff Present:** Eddie Shook, Julie Montanea, Karan Smith, Jim Holland, Lisa Eby, Rich Munger, Amy Harmon, Erin Henderlight, Christina Papesh, Nelle Gregory, Sharon West, Dr. Yancey and Terri Rogers.

**County Administrators Present:** Mandy Stone

**Guests Present:** Jerome Hill

Chair Winnie Ziegler called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the January Integrated Meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Ms. Swanger to accept the minutes Mr. Whitener seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Guest Introduction:** Ms. Ziegler introduced Jerome Hill to the meeting. He is a Mars Hill College student that is attending this meeting for part of a class project as an observer.

**PRESENTATION:**

**CTS Update – Public Health Assessment:** Eddie Shook

Mr. Shook presented to the board the most recent data that was shared with the residents of the community affected by the ongoing CTS site. This public meeting was held at TC Roberson High School on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Members of the NC Dept. of Health and Human Services, Department of Public Health presented the study findings and report. They also spoke to many of the residents that had questions about the study.

This study was conducted by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Epidemiology Branch, in Cooperation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. The NC Department of Public Health (DPH) evaluated past and current analytical data collected by EPA and NC Department of Natural Resources. Evaluated potential health risks associated with contaminants identified in the data, incorporated highly protective health effect assumptions for exposure concentrations, and evaluated the potential for increased cancer rates in the area around the CTS facility.

The evaluation included all chemicals detected in drinking water, ground water, surface water, soil samples and air samples. The results reached were 5 conclusions.

1. Chemicals identified in the past and current samples of private well waters, surface waters, sub-surface soils, crawl-space air, sub-surface soil gas, and outdoor air are not expected to harm people's health.
2. The DPH cannot currently conclude whether groundwater with elevated concentrations of the metals chromium and lead could harm people's health.

3. The DPH concludes that other groundwater contaminants, including TCE and vinyl chloride are not expected to harm people's health.
4. The DPH concludes that the residents using a private well identified in 1999 as contaminated with TCE for possibly as long as 11 years, could have been harmed by drinking the water or breathing TCE escaping from the water to the household air. Persons using two spring private wells serving one home until 1994 and serving two other homes until 1999 could have been harmed by drinking the water or breathing TCE escaping from the water to the household air. (These households and subsequent households with TCE levels found to pose a threat to health were connected to the municipal water supply.)
5. The DPH N.C. Central Cancer Registry determined that cancer rates for the population living in a one mile radius around the CTS property were not elevated.

Mr. Shook asked if there were any questions that he could answer to help clarify any of the study.

Mr. McElrath asked how big an area from the CTS Site is tested or what might be the path of testing.

Mr. Shook explained that Bonnie Ware in Raleigh is working on the path for that area, and that as of now they have included an area in a 1 mile radius.

Dr. McClain asked how many wells have been tested, Mr. Shook replied that there have been 66 tested. Ms. Morgan asked how are residents of that area are to go about getting a physical by a Doctor, is there is protocol for doing so or a specialist that will be doing those. Ms. Harris explained that they have a special Physician they are to contact and some have already done so.

Ms. Harris also mentioned that the community seemed pleased to have the State representatives there and answering questions, the results may not have been what they wanted to hear though. One condition in particular was that the children in that area are to be allowed to play in the water of the creeks. She attended a meeting the following morning at the office of Sen. Burr here in Asheville with Rep. Hagan, Rep. Shuler, EPA, NCDNER and some of the residents of the area at CTS to discuss the results.

Ms. Peterson stated that residents continue to attend the County Commissioner Meetings to share their concerns, these meetings are video taped and those residents sections are sent to the State and Federal authorities for assistance in the matter.

#### **Transition Follow-UP:** Gibbie Harris and Division Directors

In August 2009 the Commissioners voted to transfer Primary Care to WNCHHS, this began on 1/4/2010. In the first month of opening the Primary Care at WNCHHS at total of 2200 patients were seen, of that amount 1617 of those patients were past patients of the Buncombe County Health Center. The transition went well, with a few small glitches with the phone lines and pharmacy refills. They have waived all co-pays for prescriptions until the month of April.

Mr. Ray commented that he was very impressed with the amount of patients that they were able to give services to in that first month. With as many changes in such a short amount of time, he recognized the stress level was a bit high, yet a wonderful job had been done.

Mr. Holland mentioned that the January patients were 80% of what WNCCHS saw in the calendar year prior to the transition at there previous location before the transfer of the Buncombe County Health Center patients were added to their population.

Ms. Stone mentioned that they will be holding an open house an once a date is set she will relay that information to the Board.

#### Department of Health Position Changes

Gibbie Harris introduced Dr. Cynthia Yancey as the new Medical Director and Nelle Gregory as the Community Health Administrator.

### Support Services

Eddie Shook discussed the new law that prohibits smoking in restaurants and bars. Complaints sent into us from Raleigh are followed up by a visit from inspectors in Environmental Health.

H1N1 vaccines that have been given out up to date in the county have reached a total of 6000. This was done through a variety of clinics held at the mall and at the schools. We are continuing to offer these vaccines at the Dept. of Health through an appointment line recently set up with Daniels Communications. This line will run until March 1<sup>st</sup>. After that people can get them as walk ins with Immunizations.

### Clinical Services

Sharon West related the changes to an “innovative distraction” rather than not focusing on less but on growth with the clinical services of the Dept. of Health. She shared that everyone is working together on learning programs that are now under the same umbrella.

Dr. Yancey complimented the choice of staff that was done prior to the transition, those staff placed into positions that stayed all are very hard working dedicated staff and very knowledgeable. The nursing staff will be dispensing pre-natal medications through the pharmacy. Pre-natal is accredited for ultrasound to be able to bill Medicaid. Centering Classes have begun with MAHEC for child birth education.

### Community Health

Nelle Gregory shared that the WIC Department is moving to the basement level where the WNCCHS Dental Clinic was previously located. They are closing for 3 days to complete the move. They will have staff available to assist anyone that comes in to see someone in WIC. They are also preparing to change the patient flow process in that department.

Regulations regarding the smoking law are handled through Health Promotions. The majority of locations in our County are compliant with the regulations. There weekly reports sent to us from Raleigh with complaints that are sent in to a hotline. These complaints come in from actual customers that either call or go on line to smokefreenc.gov a website to lodge complaints. We are sending the establishment that has complaints informational letters and warning letters by a protocol but have yet to fine any establishment. After an educational letter is sent they are given 3 separate warning letters prior to the letter that will fine them \$200.00 a day they operate out of compliance. Overall we have had 26 complaints on 12 different establishments.

We have been given a grant to work with Special Needs children. This has just been started and more information will be shared as it progresses.

### **Update and Approval on Billing Guide:** Jim Holland

Immunization billing changes are coming from the State. Due to those changes we have to update our billing guide. Information in the packets to the Board need reviewed and approved to take to the County Commissioners Meeting on 2/16/10 for final approval.

Mr. McElrath motioned to approve the Billing Guide, seconded by Mr. Oliver. Motion passed.

## **REPORTS**

### **Health Director's Report:** Gibbie Harris

#### Update on Strategic Planning

In December a Strategic Planning Session was conducted over a 2 ½ workshop with various staff from Leadership Team to front line workers in all departments at the Dept. of Health. This planning session was facilitated by Lisa Eby and it brought forth the vision and future needs and services that we as a health department want to bring to the community and how to go about making that happen.

It was a very good process and involved many staff that worked hard to come up with our plans. The next steps will take place soon and in that process we will have volunteers from each area within the Dept. of Health to sit on planning committees to get the plans in motion. A few of the Board Members were able to attend this Strategic Planning Sessions and the input they shared was greatly appreciated.

Ms. Harris shared that the MATCH Report will be out next week. This report was conducted by partnership between the University of Wisconsin and the Robert J. Wood Foundation. It will show within the State of North Carolina by County how each county ranks in health. The rankings are measured by Physical Environment, Social and Economic Factors, Clinical Care and Health Behaviors. This ranking was done for all 100 counties in NC. Whether or not we rank high or low, there is much work to be done for our county and partnerships developed to work on to make our county healthier.

**Monthly Financial Report:** Jim Holland

The expenditures of budget is 58.33% into the year, the salary YTD shows it being 62.67% at this time due to the severance and salaries paid to those that had positions end with Health due to the transition with WNCCHS which brought about the increase in that percent.

The remainders of the expenditures are right on track for this time of year in the budget.

The revenues through 1/31/10 are at 10,699,062. A grant amount is included from both NFP and H1N1 received monies.

**HR Recruitment & Retention:** Lisa Eby

Ms. Eby discussed a document in the packets of the overall picture of the Dept. of Health after the transition in Jan. and how it looks now. Some Coordinators are covering different divisions at this time. Prior to the transition there were 234 staff and now we are working with 182 staff.

**Performance Analysis Reviews:** Karan Smith and Julie Montanea

Ms. Smith gave some information regarding the newest addition to the PAR Report which is NFP. The largest number of referrals to NFP is from BCDH prenatal and BCDH MCC. We are looking at including school nurses and pregnancy support services. MAHEC has sent a few referrals and of the private practices we see the most referrals from WNC and Family to Family.

We have been able to find shelter for homeless moms, keep moms out of jail, keep them in school, and really follow up on mental health issues that would or could cause some very dangerous outcomes for both mother and baby. Currently there are 56 enrolled and by the end of the week 60 total and we now have 4 babies in the program. This program stays with a mom from pregnancy to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the child's life.

Ms. Montanea covered the area of the last reporting that will be done on Primary Care. Overall the numbers were at 15% more than the previous month eve with patients aware of changes with WNCCHS and the services transferring in January. There were still a number of new patients seen of 148. With that in mind the prescriptions were also a bit lower in daily averages. The call center times went up slightly on wait times. This had some to do with staff out and in other areas getting trained on the duties for after the transition.

**Behavioral Health Services:** Rich Munger

Mr. Munger shared with the board a recent experience that he had in dealing with the homeless population and how it also is a mental health issue in many cases of homelessness. He spent time with an employee of Asheville-Buncombe Homeless Count. As an example Mr. Munger was introduced to a man that he called "Willie" that essentially is homeless, he resides in a storage building on the property of a homeowner, it is just that, no running water yet did have a power cord reaching it to provide some electricity. Willie is 60 years old, a Vietnam Vet, receives Social Security, is currently 6 years sober, and a very talented artist. He for personal reasons does not utilize services with the VA. One of the first goals of the Asheville-Buncombe Homeless Count is to assist those homeless, housing, that is the most urgent need then other issues such as mental health care will be more likely to be addressed.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The next meeting will be at 6:00 pm on March 11, 2010. The location to be announced via email notification.

Mr. Whitener motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Swanger.

Chair, Winnie Ziegler adjourned the meeting at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Gibbie Harris, Secretary

Adopted:

Winnie Ziegler, Chair