

**ROWAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
March 10, 2009**

The Rowan County Board of Health meeting was held in the Community Room of the Rowan County Health Department, 1811 E. Innes Street, Salisbury, N. C. at 7:00 p.m. Members attending the meeting were:

Ms. Barbara Andrews, Chair	Dr. Luther Lyerly
Mr. Steve Fuller	Mr. Dan Mikkelson
Mr. Richard Parker, Vice Chair	Dr. Philip Roels
Ms. Elia Gegorek	Ms. Susan Thomas
Dr. Billy Webb	Dr. Robert Tannehill

Special Guest included: Ms. Kathy Chaffin, Salisbury Post. Health Department staff included: Mr. Steve Joslin, Mrs. Nina Oliver, Dr. Jim Cowan, Mrs. Sharon Owen, Mrs. Patty Yost, Mrs. Nora Cartner, Mr. Lynn Aldridge, Mr. Clai Martin, Ms. Kristy Cowden, Mrs. Debra Justice, Ms. Jackie Short and Mr. Leonard Wood.

WELCOME:

Ms. Barbara Andrews called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. She expressed thanks to the Board for their support and vote of confidence in electing her the Board chair at the January meeting. She also thanked Dr. Billy Webb for his contributions to recent child dental screening events coordinated by Ms. Debbye Krueger, state dental hygienist.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Ms. Andrews called for the approval of the agenda. Dr. Lyerly made a motion to accept the agenda with a second from Dr. Webb. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 13TH MINUTES:

Ms. Andrews called for the approval of the minutes. Mr. Mikkelson made a motion to accept the minutes with a second from Dr. Lyerly. The motion was approved unanimously.

CONSENT ACTION AGENDA:

Mr. Wood provided the Board Members consent agenda items for consideration in block.

Dental Fee Scale: The Dental fee scale is being updated because of changes in Medicaid rates. The Health Department is currently using UCR, Health Choice and Medicaid rates, but the new rates will bill at the highest of the three rates. Medicaid and Health Choice will only reimburse at it approved rates.

Women's Preventive Health Bonus Funds (\$12,525): Federal Title X (Family Planning) has approved one-time bonus funding for all local health department (total=\$653,949). Each county will receive at least \$1,647. Additionally, 57 counties will receive performance-based funds based on their caseloads. Rowan County will receive \$12,525.

Seeking Support for Grants from Robertson Foundation: The Health Department is requesting approval to apply for a \$30,000 grant for FY 09-10. These funds will be used to

deliver Health Link services to low-income women of childbearing age and families with children birth through five years.

Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust: Requesting approval to apply for \$40,000. These funds will be used to establish an evidence-based and state-of-the-art indoor physical activity center for North Rowan Elementary. The primary goal is to have at least 90% (420) of all students engaged in quality physical activity for an additional 90 minutes per week.

Healthy Start Foundation Grant: The Health Department has been awarded \$3,000 for FY 08-09. These grant funds will be used to upgrade the Health Link program's Visit Tracker case management software and purchasing Gardasil vaccine for uninsured low-income women age 19-26 years.

Mr. Mikkelson made motion to approve the consent agenda with a second from Dr. Webb. The motion was approved unanimously.

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 2 – PROHIBITION OF SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES:

House Majority Leader Rep. Hugh Holliman (D-Davidson) introduced House Bill 2, legislation to make all indoor worksites and public places smoke-free in North Carolina. At the request of Mr. Wood and Ms. Andrews, Dr. Jim Cowan prepared a letter for the Board Members to approve and send representatives and senators to support House Bill 2.

Ms. Andrews shared with the Board Members that even though Winston Salem was a tobacco community that Forsyth County Board of Health also sent a letter in support of House Bill 2.

Mr. Parker made a motion to support a letter from the Board for House Bill 2 with a second from Ms. Thomas. The motion was approved unanimously.

BY-LAWS UPDATE:

Mr. Wood reviewed the by-laws noting that on page 6 (Article VIII Section 1) there is new language to clarify "Closed Sessions". Mr. Wood explained asked the Board to approve the following change to the Open Meeting section: The board of health shall comply with all open meeting laws of the State of North Carolina. In general, all meetings shall be open to the public unless a "Closed Session" is recommended, according to state law, by a majority of the board members. The Board cannot take any official action in a closed session. Any decisions made by the Board in a closed session will be voted on once the Board has adjourned the "Closed Session" and returned to an open meeting. The minutes of a "Closed Session" will be maintained in a closed file by the Secretary to the Board until the County Attorney or a judge determines that the information should be made available to the public.

Mr. Parker asked if the County Attorney had looked at the by-laws. Mr. Wood said he had not discussed it with the county attorney, but did discuss the changes with the county manager. Mr. Mikkelson stated, "He is familiar with open/closed meetings with the City of Salisbury and the by-laws look very straight forward and appropriate."

Mr. Mikkelson made motion to approve the by-laws with a second from Mr. Parker. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comment

DISCUSSION OF HOUSE BILL 6-CARBON MONOXIDE GAS EUTHANIZATION
ADOPTING A LETTER TO OPPOSE HOUSE BILL 6:

Mr. Wood informed the Board Members that Clai Martin, Animal Shelter Supervisor had attended at least two of the legislative hearings on House Bill 6: Davie's Law/Humane Euthanasia law. This bill is being debated in the House of Representative's Agriculture Committee. The County Commissioners have gone on record opposing House Bill 6 in its current form. Mr. Wood stated, "Representative Coates' office inform him that House Bill 6 and 27 are still in committee." Mr. Wood asked the Board to consider supporting a letter that opposes HB 6 (attached in the Board packet) that will ban the use of Carbon Monoxide at shelters across North Carolina.

Dr. Lyerly commented, "Lethal injection is harder on the animals because they must be restrained. Carbon monoxide, when done correctly, is very effective and approved by the American Veterinarian Medical Association as a humane form of euthanizing. Dr. Lyerly stated further that it is difficult and hazardous to personnel to restrain feral animals for lethal injection since shelter animals are not your domestic pets generally seen at Veterinarian clinics. These animals are wild and are not socialized; and, they generally do not want human contact. It is my professional opinion that the more humane death would be euthanasia with carbon monoxide gas.

Mr. Martin informed the Board Members that carbon monoxide euthanasia is approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). They are the nationally recognized experts on animal care and euthanasia. AVMA reports the advantages of using carbon monoxide gas is loss of consciousness, the animal seems to be unaware, and death occurs rapidly. Animal Shelters should have the flexibility to use the appropriate means of euthanasia depending on the animals.

Mrs. Andrews shared that she doesn't think it's an easy job to put down animals. She stated that she had a personal experience with having a pet euthanized by lethal injections that did not go as expected.

Mr. Parker made a motion to oppose House Bill 6 and/or other bills that will outlaw carbon monoxide euthanasia at North Carolina animal shelters approved by the department of Agriculture. Dr. Lyerly seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Mikkelson, References need to be added to the letter referring to "appropriate situations" and "proper training of staff"- two primary objections. I'd like to see more of that information in the letter.

Mr. Wood stated, NC has three approved methods of euthanasia, carbon monoxide, lethal injection and gunshot. I do think that there is some room for improving the whole process and not take away the ability for shelters to utilize an AVMA approved method of euthanasia. Mr. Wood requested that the Board include in their letter language that opposes HB 6 and any other legislative bills that ban the use of carbon monoxide euthanasia.

Mr. Mikkelson made motion to authorize the Chair to sign a revised letter to opposed HB 6 with the addition of language that will clarify the position of the Board. The motion was second by Mr. Parker. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Mikkelson asked staff if a time could be set for him to evaluate personally a carbon monoxide euthanasia. Mr. Wood made a recommendation that Clai Martin will advise all Board members of a date to view a carbon monoxide euthanasia.

Mr. Wood informed the Board Members that there are folks that do not approve of the shelter's method of euthanasia. The AVMA recommends that animals under 16 weeks of age, pregnant, or injured should be euthanized with lethal injection. Rowan County Animal Shelter is currently using a sedative for these classes of animals prior to putting animals into the chamber. Staff is not using lethal injection. It is my understanding that AVAM recommends that animals under 16 weeks, pregnant or injured should be euthanized by lethal injections.

REVIEW OF THE DRAFT BUDGET:

Mr. Wood presented a draft of the Rowan County Health Department FY 09-10 budget. He stated that the department took a \$37,000 budget cut in operating expenses those cuts are included in next years budget. The overall budget increase 1.45% as compared to FY 08-09 approved budget. County revenue for last year was budgeted at \$2,580,221 verses \$2,828,782 for FY 09-10. This represents an 8.79% increase in county funds requested for next year. The major concern with this year's revenue picture is that Environmental Health fees are projected at about one-half of the budgeted amount. Another shortfall is patient fees of about 20%. It is expected that Medicaid fees will come above the budgeted amount. The department is expecting additional cuts in state funding, but the picture is not clear at this time.

On the expense side, Mr. Wood stated that operating expenses are down secondary to current cuts in expense line items. The largest impact on expense line items as compared to last year are in the salary and fringe benefits line items. Administrative expenses are projected to increase secondary to the need to prepare for electronic medical records or e-charting (\$25,000). The Board will consider adoption of the budget at the April meeting. The department's budget is required to be entered into the county finance system by March 20.

Mr. Parker noted that child health has a 50% decrease. Mr. Wood explained that the department is seeing less children since most are being seen at local private physician offices. Also, staff is recording less time in Child Health services as a result of this decline in demand for services.

Mr. Parker also pointed out that this budget shows a decrease in Health Promotion funds. Mr. Wood explained to the Board that Dr. Cowan only budgeted funds that he knew would be coming to the agency this year. In the past, Allied Health has tried to anticipate getting funds from outside grant sources.

WEB PRESENTATION-UNNATURAL CAUSES:

Dr. Cowan shared with Board members a short web based video called *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick* www.unnaturalcauses.org. One of the fundamental principles that *Unnatural Causes* shares is that the provision of health care is not what makes you healthy, our health care system is designed to help treat you after you are unhealthy. Dr. Cowan stated that if providers/agencies wanted to start to improve health and reduce costs, prevention of disease/obesity should be the priority for our health care system.

ENGAGING THE BOARD OF HEALTH IN COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT:

Dr. Cowan shared with the Board the Community Health Assessment (CHA) timeline and goals. The Health Department is required by the Accreditation process to do a CHA every four years. The CHA team is comprised of 44 individuals including Ms. Gegorek, Ms. Thomas, Ms. Andrews and Dr. Cowan and Mr. Wood. Dr. Cowan is currently compiling and analyzing survey information from members of the Assessment team. Dr. Cowan will present this survey

information at the next meeting of the CHA on March 17. Dr. Cowan stated that the CHA committee will select the initial health priorities. Dr. Cowan and members of the CHA is developing a community and Board of Health survey. This survey will be sent out to the Board of Health and the public in April.

ANIMAL CONTROL CONSOLIDATION WITH SALISBURY:

Mr. Wood presented a draft proposal to look at combining Rowan County Animal Control with Salisbury Animal Control. This draft proposal is in response to the Board request to explore the consolidation of animal control services between the County and the City of Salisbury. On occasion, the county animal control staff has been called by the city to respond to an animal call. The Board of Health has recommended that Mr. Wood develop an animal control consolidation agreement with the City of Salisbury. Mr. Wood shared that he had sent a draft proposal to the County Attorney and Mr. Doug Paris with the city. The main issue for consideration in this agreement is that the City of Salisbury will provide transition funding for the next two years and the County will be responsible for the total cost of the consolidated animal control program at the end of this two year period.

HOUSE BILL 208: SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM:

Mr. Wood discussed House Bill 208 with the Board members. Mr. Wood explained that this bill is entitled: ***An act to appropriate funds to the spay/neuter account and to transfer administration of the voluntary spay/neuter program to the department of agriculture and consumer services.*** This bill will move most of the responsibility from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services. Mr. Wood supported this bill since the Department of Agriculture already inspects animal shelter across the state. This bill is also trying to get funding in place to set up a state wide spay and neuter program.

Mr. Wood stated that there is a state program in place right now that ostensibly will reimburse counties for spay and neuter services. Unfortunately the state does not provide adequate fund and local veterinarians are unwilling to provide spay and neuter clinics at the state reimbursement rate. Since the state reimbursement rates are so low or non existent, the county has been reluctant to take on the additional cost of providing funds for a local spay and neuter program.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: NC ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL HEALTH DIRECTORS:

Mr. Wood shared with the Board Members a copy of the NC Association of Local Health Directors 2009 Legislative Agenda. Mr. Wood explained that he wanted the Board to be aware of this legislative agenda for future reference and potential support. The Association's number one priority is to have the legislature appropriate an increase in Aid-to-County funding. Over the past two years, the state has appropriated approximately \$6.5 million in new Aid-to-County funds. Unfortunately the Division of Public Health has taken \$3 million from local public health Medicaid escrow settlement monies.

IMMUNIZATION ASSESSMENT REPORT:

Mrs. Yost presented a memo of the Rowan County 2008 State Immunization Assessment report. Rowan County Health Department is required to enter immunization records into the North Carolina Immunization registry (NCIR). The immunization rate in Rowan County Health Department has increased from 81% in 2007 to 94% in 2008. The county as a whole has increased from 50% to 64% during the same period. Mrs. Yost shared with the Board that some of the private providers in the county are not required or trained to enter information into the NCIR. The Health Department is

responsible for the county's overall immunization rate although local medical practices give most of the immunizations to children in the county. If a private provide requires assistance, the health department will provide training on the NCIR as needed.

Mr. Parker asked, "What is the definition of a waitlist?" Mrs. Yost responded, "State regional immunization consultants provide NCIR training for current and new providers before bringing additional providers online. The waitlist is a function of the number of providers that have not been trained and are waiting to come on line".

Dr. Webb asked: "Are private physicians mandated to report on NCIR?" Ms. Yost replied, "No they are not required to report online".

Ms. Thomas shared with the Board Members that having the information from the NCIR system has helped the school nurses manage the immunization problems encountered with children entering schools at all age groups.

Mrs. Yost stated that the NCIR system has decrease the number of children getting duplicate immunizations across North Carolina.

Mrs. Andrews asked how many years has NCIR been in place and is there anyway providers can go back and put in records for older children? Mrs. Yost stated that the Health Department does enter immunization records of older children and adults. Dr. Webb wanted to know why there is a delay with entering the information at the doctor's office. Mrs. Yost stated that NCIR is an electronic web-based system and some doctor's office have not been trained or do not have computers to be able to connect to the state NCIR

THE TEN ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH:

Mr. Wood shared the Ten Essential Services of Public Health for accreditation training purposes. The next Rowan County Health Department's accreditation is in 2011.

OLD BUSINESS: No Old Business

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Wood informed the Board Members that the County Manager and Commissioners will be making recommendations about how to trim departmental budgets since the county is expected to have a shortfall in revenues for this fiscal year. Some of the issues on the table are furlough days, reduction in force, and cutting operating expenses.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leonard L. Wood,
Secretary to the Board

LW:dj