

**ROWAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
June 9, 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, NC at 7:00 pm.

Members attending the meeting were:

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

Health Department staff included: Mr. Steve Joslin, Dr. Jim Cowan, Ms. Sandra Long, Ms. Sharon Owen, Ms. Nora Cartner, Mr. Lynn Aldridge, Mr. Clai Martin, Ms. Debra Justice, Ms. Jackie Short, Ms. Patty Yost, Ms. Kristy Cowden, Ms. Nina Oliver and Mr. Leonard Wood.

Public included: Joanne Bryla and Brenda Kirby

**WELCOME:**

Ms. Andrews called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

Ms. Andrews called for approval of the agenda with the addition of an item to recognize Dr. Jim Cowan for his years of service to the Rowan County Health Department. A motion to approve the revised agenda item (#3A) was approved unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF THE April 14<sup>th</sup> MINUTES:**

Ms. Andrews called for an approval of the April 14, 2009 minutes. Mr. Parker made a motion to accept the minutes and a second from Dr. Webb. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Dr. JIM COWAN HEALTHY ROWAN AWARD:**

Ms. Andrews announced to the Board that Dr. Jim Cowan had submitted his resignation as the Allied Health Director of the Health Department effective June 15, 2009. Dr. Cowan will be returning to active duty in the Air Force. Ms. Andrews thanked Dr. Cowan for his years of dedicated service to the Health Department and Rowan County. Ms. Andrews presented Dr. Cowan with a plaque from Healthy Rowan! for his dedication and commitment in promoting healthier lives in Rowan County.

**PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY TO ANIMAL SHELTER EUTHANASIA:**

Mr. Parker shared that the euthanasia sub-committee, consisting of Mr. Mikkelson, Dr. Webb and himself, met with Mr. Wood, Mr. Martin and staff at the Animal Shelter to review the process of how a carbon monoxide euthanasia occurs. The subcommittee did not witness an actual event, only a demonstration of the process and the equipment. Mr. Parker stated that the Board and sub-committee had concerns that County Government and the Animal Shelter need to be transparent in its actions and policies of treatment of animals housed and euthanized at the shelter. He stated further that the local newspaper and other individuals have criticized the

department for not being totally open to the public about the policies and procedures at the shelter. We, as a sub-committee, do not feel that all of this criticism is warranted since we believe that the staff at the animal shelter is very dedicated and concerned about the welfare of the animals coming through the shelter. Unfortunately, the staff is totally overwhelmed at times secondary to the volume of animals and members of the public coming to the shelter for disposition or request for services. The resources provided by the county go a long way toward meeting these needs but in the end it is our opinion that many of the problems encountered by the shelter staff is the results the public providing poor management of their pets and the individual responsibilities of their animals. Mr. Parker went to say that the public should have their pets spayed or neutered to prevent the birth of unwanted animals that sometimes end up donated, dropped off, or picked up by the shelter staff for adoption or euthanasia.

Mr. Parker recommended that the minutes from the June 2, 2009 Euthanasia sub-committee meeting be approved. Mr. Mikkelson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. (see attachment 1)

Mr. Wood shared with the Board Members that the information for the April 21, 2009 sub-committee meeting was emailed by Mrs. Andrews. (see attachment 2 for email from Ms. Andrews regarding the discussion at this meeting)

Mr. Parker made a motion to consider approval of the draft euthanasia viewing policy. There was a second from Mr. Mikkelson.

Dr. Roels asked for a clarification of the phrase in the policy that states: "...viewing of animal euthanasia on the entry side". He questioned if this entry point is a viewing point for the public? Mr. Parker responded that, for safety reasons for both the public and staff, any viewing would be allowed only from a specific point near the entry point of the carbon monoxide chamber.

Dr. Lyerly expressed concerns that some members of the public will make a spectacle of the euthanasia process if this policy is approved. He stated that he could not support the policy as written.

Mr. Mikkelson explained that the policy states only one member of the public will be allowed to view the euthanasia at any given point. If members of the general public abuse this process, then we the members of the board have the right to change or abolish this policy. The Health Director has the authority temporarily restrict the use of this policy and can bring the policy back to the full Board for review.

Ms. Andrews shared with the Board Members that she did not support the policy as written and does not feel that it is in the best interest of the staff to allow the public to view the euthanasia process. She stated further that the Board's feeling about transparency is important, but the viewing of euthanasia will disrupt the normal work flow at the Animal Shelter.

Ms. Andrews called for a vote on Mr. Parker's motion and the board voted to support the motion. Ms. Andrews and Dr. Lyerly voted to oppose the motion. Ms. Andrews thanked the sub-committee and Board Members for all their thought and consideration given to this matter.

#### **OPERATION HOURS OF THE ANIMAL SHELTER:**

Ms. Andrews presented a memo to change the Animal Shelter hours for public access to 11:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday with Saturday hours remaining the same, 8:00 until 11:30.

Mr. Martin recommended, secondary to the new euthanasia rules adopted by the Department of Agriculture and scheduled for implementation in August 2009, that the Animal Shelter be allowed to change its hours for animal separation and euthanasia. Currently the Shelter is open to the public from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm Monday through Friday and 8:00 am to 11:30 am on Saturday. Up until this point, the euthanasia of animals has been done after hours by a contract person. With the implementation of the new Department of Agriculture rules, euthanasia will have to be done during normal work hours and the contract person is not available during work day hours. In addition, the new rules require at least two people to be present during the use of the carbon monoxide chamber and it will require more than one staff member to lethal inject puppies/kittens under 16 weeks and pregnant or injured animals. A delay in opening to the public is needed to give staff time to implement changes for animal and shelter management issues impacting the public.

Ms. Andrews called for a motion to accept the proposal for the new hours of operation. Mr. Parker made motion to accept the new hours and Dr. Lyerly seconded the motion. Mr. Wood asked Mr. Martin for the proposed effective date for the change in operational hours. Mr. Martin requested the change for operating hours be effective August 1, 2009. The motion was approved unanimously.

**THE BLANCHE & JULIAN ROBERTSON FAMILY FOUNDATION \$25,000 AWARD:**

Dr. Cowan asked the Board to approve acceptance of a \$25,000 grant awarded from the Blanche & Julian Robertson Family Foundation for the FY 09-10 year. The Board approved Dr. Cowan to seek funding from the Foundation at the March 10, 2009 Board of Health meeting.

These funds will assist with the delivery Health Link services to low-income women of families with children birth through five years of age. Mr. Parker made motion to approve the FY 09-10 grant from the Robertson Family Foundation.

Mr. Mikkelson asked about the relationship between the Healthy Baby Coalition and the Health Link initiative? Dr. Cowan stated that the Healthy Baby Coalition enables the Health Department and community partners to bring together individuals to solve problems under the umbrella of Healthy Rowan!.

The motion passed with no objection.

**WIC FY 09-10 BUDGET INCREASE \$52,360:**

Mr. Wood informed the Board that the Health Department will receive a per participant rate increase of \$44,880 plus an additional one time funds for good package implementation of \$7,480. These funds are to promote the new WIC food packaging between June 1 and September 30, 2009. Dr. Tannehill made a motion to accept the additional \$52,360 WIC funds and Mr. Parker seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ms. Andrews open the floor for public comments. Ms. Brenda Kirby asked the Board to change the euthanasia viewing policy to allow more than one person to view the process at the same time. She stated that it is always good to have another person with you when dealing with the staff at the Animal Shelter. She stated further that Animal Shelter staff has accused her of saying things that she did not say. Mr. Mikkelson shared with Ms. Kirby that the Board of Health

is appointed to be an impartial and objective Board. The public comment agenda item is set to allow members of the public to express concerns or ideas to the full Board in a public format.

### **2009 ROWAN COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT:**

Dr. Cowan gave an update of the 2009 Rowan County Community Health Needs Assessment. The Health Assessment team is a forty-member team representing many agencies and disciplines in Rowan County. This team has selected a preliminary list of health priorities:

- access to affordable health care,
- access to affordable dental care,
- access to affordable wellness programs,
- minority health disparities, and
- obesity.

It is the goal of the Community Health Needs Assessment Team to seek feedback from citizens in Rowan County to illicit their opinion about the most important health priorities facing this community today. In addition, Dr. Cowan has requested the Board of Health members to complete a survey to identify their list of health priorities. As of this meeting, six of eleven Board of Health members have completed the Health Opinion Survey. The state recommends surveying 210 randomly selected households, however, the Health Assessment team has completed only 21 surveys at this time. Dr. Cowan stated that the goal is to complete the surveys in six to seven weeks. (Since Dr. Cowan has left the department effective June 15, 2009, the ability to complete the number of random household surveys is questionable).

Once the surveys are done the Community Health Assessment Team will use this information to prepare a final report to the community and the Healthy Carolinian's Office. This report is due to the state on December 1, 2009.

### **H1N1 UPDATE:**

Ms. Oliver shared with the Board that beginning April 27, the state Preparedness Office held daily conference calls to update the local health departments about the Novel H1N1 flu epidemic and its impact on NC counties. These calls provided information on surveillance, lab testing, isolation and quarantine requirements, and prevention recommendations.

The Rowan County Health Department is the local receiving site for Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) medications and equipment. On Monday (May 23, 2009) morning at 2 am, the health department received a shipment of SNS (strategic national stockpile) H1N1 medications and supplies for the hospital and the health department. The state required that these medications would be used for treatment of patients who had a confirmed diagnosis of H1N1.

Health department staff provided educational materials to nursing homes, the school system, day cares and other community organizations.

At this time, there are no cases of H1N1 cases in Rowan County. There are 51 cases in North Carolina, 13,000 in United States, 25,000 Worldwide.

The Office of Preparedness, in the Division of Public Health, did a good job in providing and guidance to local health departments during the H1N1 epidemic. Local law enforcement and emergency management staff have been supportive as well. This event has provided a learning opportunity for the Health Department as well as understanding the role of other state and local

agencies in responding to large scale outbreak of Novel influenza. Secondary to problems with the health department serving as the local receiving site for SNS, staff will evaluate the need to identify another location for future SNS deliveries. Ms. Thomas wanted to know what the health department does with the SNS supplies if they are not used at the local level. Ms. Oliver stated that the government does not want any of the supplies to be returned. Mr. Parker expressed concern that it took so long for the feds and state to get the SNS out to the local agencies. Mr. Wood added that this was North Carolina's first attempt at a statewide SNS shipment. Hopefully it was a good learning experience for both the state and local folks.

#### **ANIMAL SHELTER CONSOLIDATED AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF SALISBURY:**

Mr. Wood shared with the Board that Ms. Andrews has signed the Animal Control Consolidated Agreement between Rowan County and the city of Salisbury. He stated further that both the Commissioners and City Council had signed this agreement, and the agreement will go into effect on July 1, 2009.

#### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:**

Mr. Wood informed the Board that the Senate had passed their budget and there were many proposals that may impact local public health. The Senate is proposing a major overhaul of the local public health system in section 10.26 of Senate Bill 202. This section is identified as the "Public Health Improvement Plan". The Health Department is concerned that the distribution of funds from the state will change dramatically with this new Plan.

Other legislative news includes a potential decrease in Medicaid provider rates over the next two years. Currently a 5.5% cut for 2010 and 6 % cut for 2011 is being proposed. This could have a significant effect on health department revenues. Other proposed cuts in Smart Start will impact funding for our Health Link, the maternity program, interpreters, NAPSACC and Child Care Health Consultants.

#### **Bill Updates:**

House Bill 2 – No smoking in public places has been ratified - restaurants and bars.

House Bills 6 and 27 – To abolish the use of carbon monoxide in euthanasia, did not make cross over, so therefore they are dead for this session as well as the short session next year.

Senate Bill 199- Companion bill to these two carbon monoxide bills also did not make cross over.

House Bill 163 – Limited testing well water for VOC.

House Bill 1442- Well protection bill did make cross over, Mr. Wood stated that either the state, locals or homeowner will have to fund this bill.

House Bill 208 – Spay/Neuter program did make cross over

Senate Bill 470 - Companion bill to 208, to be funded by voluntary income tax donations

#### **IMPACT OF STATE AND LOCAL BUDGET CUTS:**

Ms. Andrews asked Mr. Wood if he had any information on county budget cuts. Mr. Wood stated that the commissioners had not passed their FY 09-10 budget yet. He stated further that the county manager had recommended that two environmental health positions be cut from next year's budget, but Mr. Wood recommended that a vacant nursing position and a retiring clerical position be cut instead to prevent the loss of trained and experienced EH Specialists. Mr. Wood stated that the commissioners would not likely pass a budget until late June.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

No Old Business

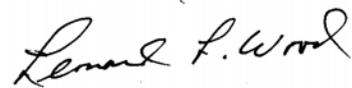
**NEW BUSINESS:**

No New Business

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Leonard L. Wood,  
Secretary to the Board

LW:dj

## **Attachment 1**

### **Rowan County Board of Health Euthanasia: Public Viewing Policy Sub-Committee Meeting**

June 2, 2009

Board of Health members Attending: Mr. Rick Parker, Dr. Billy Webb, Mr. Dan Mikkelson,  
Staff: Mr. Jay Dees, Mr. Lynn Aldridge, Mr. Clai Martin, Mr. Leonard Wood, and Mrs. Debra  
Justice  
Public: Brenda Kirby, Joanne Bryla.

Rick Parker, Vice Chair to the Board of Health, called the meeting to order concerning the Draft Policy for Public Viewing of Animal Euthanasia at the Animal Shelter.

On issues of the Public Forum Access: Mr. Dees noted that the Animal Shelter euthanasia area is a non-public forum. It is considered a restricted access area of the Animal Shelter. Mr. Dees suggested that the policy restrict the time and day that public access is allowed for staff concerns and safety. Mr. Dees stated that the Board should not restrict access based on who and where the individual resides; but, he did say that the Board has the right to deny access to the non-public area of the shelter to protect both the public and the staff.

Mr. Mikkelson and Mr. Parker stated support for the draft policy to ensure transparency of the euthanasia procedures that occur at the animal shelter. Dr. Webb expressed concern for the safety of the staff and public by allowing access to this non-public area of the shelter.

Committee members asked Mr. Martin if he had issues with the policy. He responded that as long as it does not lead to harassment and jeopardize the safety of the shelter staff. Mr. Martin also explained that in the last thirteen years no one has ever asked to view animals being euthanized at the Rowan Animal Shelter. The only request has come from the NC Coalition for Humane Euthanasia. This group has been and continues to oppose the use of carbon monoxide to euthanize animals. Mr. Martin stated that he has contacted at least eight other counties in NC requesting their policy for public viewing of animal euthanasia. None of the eight counties contacted allowed this type of public access to their shelters.

The members of the committee requested that the Board continue to be informed about staff concerns of harassment and abusive behavior on behalf of anyone requesting access to the animal euthanasia area of the shelter. Mr. Wood advised the sub-committee members that if he felt that this policy was being abused, he would suspend public access and ask the Board to rescind this policy.

Mr. Mikkelson made motion to accept the policy as discussed and have the policy brought before the full Board of Health meeting on June 9, 2009. The motion was second by Mr. Parker and it was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned.

**Attachment 2**

Email from Barbara Andrews concerning the euthanasia sub-committee meeting at Port City Java on April 22, 2009 at 12:15.