

CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES BOARD



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Dr. B. Keith Cash, OD
Ms. Pamela Corbett, MA
Mr. John Davenport, Jr., PE
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Dr. Linda Petrou, PhD.
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Dr. Peter Robie, MD
Dr. Ricky Sides, DC
Ms. Claudette Weston
Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt, County Commissioner

Chair

Mr. J. Phil Seats, R.Ph., MBA

Vice Chair

Mr. Fleming El-Amin, County Commissioner

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

MINUTES

September 2, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. J. Phil Seats, Chair
Mr. Fleming El-Amin, Vice Chair
Mr. John Blalock
Ms. Pamela Corbett
Mr. John Davenport
Dr. Calvert Jeffers
Dr. Charles Massler
Ms. Heather Parker
Dr. Linda Petrou
Ms. Sharon Pettiford
Ms. Sharon Rimm
Dr. Peter Robie
Dr. Ricky Sides
Ms. Claudette Weston
Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt

PH/DSS STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Shontell Robinson
Mr. Victor Isler
Mr. Joshua Swift
Ms. Lorrie Christie
Ms. Tanya Donnell

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Keith Cash
Dr. Palmer Edwards

GUESTS PRESENT

None

Call to Order:

On Wednesday, September 2, 2020, the Forsyth County Health and Human Services (HHS) Board held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting virtually. Mr. J. Phil Seats, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Moment of Silence:

A moment of silence was observed by all.

Consideration of Minutes:

The minutes of the August 5, 2020 HHS Board were reviewed. The following changes were requested: Mr. Seats noted the adjourn time was not correct – the meeting adjourned at 7:00pm. Commissioner Fleming El-Amin, Mr. John Davenport and Dr. Calvert Jeffers stated that they were present but it was not indicated on the minutes. Mr. Seats asked for a motion to approve the minutes, with modifications. Commissioner El-Amin made a motion to approve and Dr. Jeffers seconded. After a roll call, the minutes were unanimously approved with the modifications.

Assistant County Manager's Comments: Ms. Shontell Robinson gave the following updates (see handout on file in the Administrative Binder):

- **Gun/Gang Violence Committee:**

Ms. Robinson wanted to make the board aware that she is involved on the committee along with Commissioner El-Amin, Commissioner Tonya McDaniel, some city elected officials, Department of Social Services (DSS), Department of Juvenile Justice, Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD), and the Sheriff's Office. The purpose of the committee is to discuss the increase in gun/gang violence in Winston-Salem, specifically juveniles. The committee is not sanctioned by anyone specifically, so it is more of a meeting. The committee tries to address some of the issues and to determine other additional programs that may be needed. The county does have a Juvenile Prevention Council that Ms. Robinson, Commissioner El-Amin, DSS and Public Health (PH) staff participates in. Ms. Robinson reiterated the fact that this is something they are doing and the Commissioners will be discussing tomorrow whether or not there are additional funds that could assist with the efforts – the county already received almost \$900,000 from the State just for juvenile crime prevention programs but they are trying to see where some other measures are that they can do. Ms. Robinson stated they are looking to collaborate with city counterparts as well as see if there are any kinds of programs they can do within recreation centers. Ms. Robinson added, as this is developing, they will probably know more by the next meeting in October.

- **Family Justice Center**

Ms. Robinson reported that the first Family Justice Director was hired about a month ago. The plan is that the Family Justice Center will hopefully be open by the end of the year. Ms. Robinson said they are working through the budget – General Services and Management Information Services (MIS) are getting the infrastructure in place and wanted to remind everyone that this is really a one-stop shop with all things related to interpersonal violence – PH and DSS are both partners within the Family Justice Center as well as other organizations such as Family Services, Legal Aid, Children's Law Center, Sheriff's Office, and the WSPD. Ms. Robinson told the Board that once the Center is up and running they will be invited to the grand opening and it will either be in person or may be virtual. They will get to see what we are and see all the hard work that has gone into making this beneficial for our community.

- **Cardinal**

Ms. Robinson told the Board that we are still facing the same challenges that we have been talking about with Cardinal in terms of authorization periods being very delayed. They have asked Cardinal to have a 72-hour authorization for our youth as well as their network is not up to par. Ms. Robinson stated that Mr. Victor Isler has been in the thick of things with Cardinal representatives, including the CEO, Mr. Trey Sutton and the COO, Mr. Dietrick Williams, as well as Commissioner Donald Martin, who had a meeting last Thursday with Cardinal board members to discuss the challenges with Cardinal. Mr. Isler and Commissioner Martin are meeting with them on Friday with State Representative Donny Lambeth and Deputy Secretary Dave Richards from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to continue to escalate the concerns with Cardinal. Ms. Robinson spoke with her counterpart in Mecklenburg County. They are facing the same kind of challenges and discussed their concerns more publicly, in the media. Ms. Robinson is hoping to partner Forsyth County with Mecklenburg County to address the issues jointly with Cardinal to they understand that this is not an isolated incident. She thought if two large counties come together, they may be able to get a little more traction.

Department of Public Health (PH) Director's Comments: Mr. Joshua Swift gave the following updates (see complete/detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder):

- **Testing:**

On August 24th, CDC came out with new recommendations about being more restrictive about testing – we immediately got guidance from North Carolina that this will not affect our testing guidance that comes down from the State Division of Public Health. Mr. Swift pointed out that there is some kind of confusion because there are guidelines that the State releases and shares and then we reshare. We communicate on a bi-weekly meeting with our partners about those screened protocols and those procedures for testing. Sometimes, it is affected by the supply and demand based on those people that are symptomatic or not.

For testing focused on zip codes 27101, 27105 and 27107, especially for our historically marginalized populations, you do not have to be symptomatic. We are seeing people as they come through – since late June, when we first started, lines were exceptionally long, waiting for over an hour to get tested (300 people in four hours). Throughout early to mid August, we saw lines go down but now we are seeing an uptick with colleges back in session, increased marketing – we are seeing about 10% of people that come through are positive – it is quite a high rate. We are expanding opportunities for testing and we are having those bi-weekly meetings with our partners. This includes both hospital systems, Community Care Planning, United Health Center, also the Division of Public Health and we are just trying to find any rate limiting factors to remove those.

- **Tracing:**

We are continuing to use Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC) contact tracing staff (they have over 30 staff that help, along with temporary staff).

- **Trends:**

We are continuing to monitor not only our case counts, which continue to rise, but also the percent positive, which seems to be trending down and also we look at hospitalizations.

- **Recent and Upcoming Events:**

Just a snapshot of things going on: On last Tuesday, August 25th – 29th, approximately 200 people came through Southeast Plaza to be tested. We are trying to do these rhythms of Tuesdays and Saturdays (Tuesdays from 5:00pm – 8:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am – 12:00pm).

- **Vaccine:**

The long range planning committee is focused on distributing vaccine to the majority of citizens. The State is working on their plan, due to the Federal Government by October 1st but we are already starting discussions.

We will be conducting a tabletop exercise later this month to discuss vaccine distribution and to look at different ways for distribution across the community. Something that concerns Mr. Swift and that he has seen with previous pandemics is we are not going to get 385,000 doses for all of Forsyth County at one time.

We anticipate guidance from the State with early distribution limited to long-term care residents and staff, first responders and those at high risk. In the past, like H1N1, it came out in phases or for people who were over 65 years of age, or healthcare workers and we got limited supplies each time. We expect more information on that and we are already planning.

Mr. Swift provided a summary of statistics put together by Dr. Lovette Miller, Public Health Epidemiologist (complete detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder). He reported that as of August 29th there were just under 6,000 cases of COVID-19. The charts also gave a breakdown by gender, age and race. He stated there was not much difference by gender but by age, almost 30% of our cases are 24 years of age or less – that is something we are keeping an eye on. We are also looking at colleges, private schools and public schools open back up.

If you look at race and ethnicity, we still have the majority of our cases being Hispanic and that is a holdover of months ago when we had the huge influx of cases that started at Tyson – upwards of 70% of our cases were Hispanic. That has continued to go down every week. Mr. Swift stated that our White and African-American rates are going up and the unknowns have stayed around 13-15% - that rate when it comes from the State is closer to 35% (when people go to get tested they do not necessarily fill that box for the provider).

Mr. Seats asked, do you have any way of knowing what percentage of the positives are symptomatic versus asymptomatic?

Mr. Swift responded that is an excellent question. We do not have a number for us – what we hear is probably what you have heard. I have heard numbers as low as 25% and I have even heard 50% but we do not have that statistic for Forsyth County.

Mr. Swift continued on to talk about our CVS locations that do testing. He added we do not include these numbers in our total testing count – our total testing count is almost 50,000 tests between Baptist, Novant and Starmed at our community testing. The reason the CVS numbers are not included is because we do not have the address of those individuals but we are sure that the majority of those tested at those locations are Forsyth County residents. The

State asked us to test 5% of our population – 5% of our population would be a little over 19,000 per month which equals about 4,500 tests per week. That goal has been increased for us because we are one of the Op Nine counties (one of the nine largest counties with the largest number of cases). Our goal is at 5,500 tests per week between all of our partners – this past month in August we were over 5,784 tests per week. Between the hospitals, our FQAC, our free clinics, Community Care Center, CVS locations, now testing in Walmart and FastMed – there is a lot more availability. Mr. Swift added we have noticed this as our total numbers have gone up.

Dr. Jeffers asked do the colleges share their testing data with you.

Mr. Swift responded yes, but it gets complicated. We have been in contact with the colleges – Wake, School of the Arts, Winston-Salem State University (WSSU), Salem College and Forsyth Tech, we have had weekly communications with them. The one we are still working to build a relationship with is what was called Piedmont, but is now Carolina University. We have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WSSU and the School of the Arts because they are in the University of North Carolina (UNC) system. UNC required all of their colleges and universities to have MOUs with their local health department. Mr. Swift further explained that it gets complicated when you have a student who is from a different county or state, what address do they use – that is why we built that relationship because that is a time lag – the time the school gets the results and the results go to the address the student gave. So by building that relationship, by the time the school gets the results, we are finding out. Mr. Swift stated he gets emails from WSSU on every positive (it goes to him and Ms. Glenda Dancy, Assistant Health Director). This way, they do not have that lag for the State system.

Mr. Swift gave COVID-19 testing data by zip code saying they have three zip codes they are paying attention to as well as the others. They are hitting 13-15% of the population tested in the three priority zip codes (27101, 27105 and 27107). He added we have had concerted effort and are well over that 5% that was the initial push by the State. He also showed the zip code distribution of Forsyth County residents who received a COVID-19 lab test as of August 29, 2020.

Mr. Swift showed the percentage positives rolling average for Forsyth County and said that rate went from roughly 10% on August 9th to now we are down into the 6%.

Lastly, Mr. Swift showed the number of Forsyth County deaths. As of August 29, 2020 we had 74 deaths in the state and 1.2% of our cases resulted in death. It has been primarily male and the age is overwhelmingly over 65 years of age. Mr. Swift stated that he, Ms. Robinson and Dr. Peter Robie were in a discussion with the State that morning and it was said that 28 of our deaths have been in long-term care facilities – 35% of our deaths are in long-term care facilities and the State average was well over 50% (now believes it is 45-46%). Mr. Swift added that maybe Ms. Robinson or Dr. Robie could confirm his numbers. Regarding race/ethnicity of our deaths, the majority is White and then African-American and Latino are second and third. Dr. Robie confirmed that Mr. Swift's numbers are correct.

Dr. Linda Petrou asked what kind of a test are you giving – are you giving the quick one or the one that goes all the way up to the brain or the one that just goes to the front of the nostrils?

Mr. Swift responded the Starmed test is the PCR that goes all the way up. Different organizations, different partners do different tests. Some are self administered like at CVS and some are the more nasal rapid swabs that does not go up as far, not as uncomfortable.

Dr. Ricky Sides commented that he has heard great things about Starmed and he thinks we have a good partner with them and compliment you on choosing them to work with us.

Mr. Swift thanked Dr. Sides and said they had been chosen as the OP Nine vendor to serve us and seven other counties across the state. They are learning – we have had some growing pains and they have been very receptive to that. Mr. Swift said it is a process and he appreciates all the partners. The partners we already had, those partnerships have gotten stronger and we have developed more partnerships – a better community is through better partnerships. He added that from The Twenty, the group that comes every time we do testing to provide tents and information and hand sanitizer and masks to the public. Also, the churches, the organizations, Que Pasa and El Rey radio, all these organizations that we work with and our hospital systems – everything has been a great opportunity. Mr. Swift said he also wanted to brag on the public health staff, great team, four strong Assistant Health Directors, who have taken on other duties as assigned during this process.

Mr. John Blalock added we really need to praise and recognize the efforts from the group because if you think about it all the enhanced outreach and testing that you all have done, if you consider all the tests that have been completed, add around a 10% positive rate off of those, how many people did you all reach that may not have gotten tested before and what kind of impact does that have of those people knowing now, in terms of stopping the spread of COVID-19 in the community – so tremendous efforts there, deserves recognition. Mr. Swift thanked Mr. Blalock for his comments.

Department of Social Services (DSS) Director's Comments: Mr. Isler gave the following updates:

- **Daycare Subsidy:**

There has been a lot of conversation through the community in regards to child care and going back to school and looking at virtual learning in reference to the DSS and COVID-19 update. We have been working with the State about how do we manage our wait list – we have around 560 individuals that are on the wait list. Under normal circumstances that waitlist is around 1,600 – the reason that waitlist is low, lower than normal is largely because when March came and COVID was in place, due to unemployment, parents had to fall off the waitlist so individuals are now reapplying. We get around \$16 million annually - \$1 million is for administrative and staffing and the rest of the \$15 million is for service delivery - we can only serve around 1,800 kids at a time. We are offering a lot of partial childcare services meaning that children in full day summer childcare arrangements now have transitioned to partial childcare arrangements due to those daycares providing some form of virtual support. Mr. Isler stated that their spending coefficient is around 107% and it will go down throughout the year. Those children that normally receive summer childcare support are staying on. The State is aware that spending coefficient for all counties will probably be higher this year and they are looking at how to allocate funds. Mr. Isler is on the Board with Forsyth Promise and they are working to look at virtual learning sites that are economical or either free. They have been able to secure a partnership with the City of Winston-Salem through Forsyth Promise to offer at an extremely economical rate. Also there are several churches and

community-based organizations that are trying to work through the technicalities of the MOU process which is a new system. The statute reads: if you do not have an established MOU with the school system, you can not actually provide services to children for more than 2 - 4 hours. The provision through that MOU will allow that service to take place. We are still trying to build capacity with Forsyth Promise to look at low cost if not free community-based virtual learning programs and we are actively admitting our foster children to the childcare subsidy list to pay for their virtual learning and expense, as well.

- **Foster Care Stipend Increase of \$100.00:**

Due to the shift in virtual learning, the State has increased the foster care stipend an additional \$100 for each foster pay on a monthly basis – that is in place to help offset the expense of our foster children remaining in the home or either going to programs. As a county, we pay for the virtual learning programs – that is not an expense that is paid for by the foster parents. The average stipend for a child 0 to 5 is around \$435 per month. Virtual learning at the academies associated with that, are around \$1,200 per month. There is acknowledgement that ends do not meet and historically when children are in foster care, the agency or either through federal state dollars, pays for childcare. We have been able to mitigate for our foster parents.

- **Adult Protective Services (APS)/Child Protective Services (CPS) Funds:**

We are receiving around \$244,000 from the State for APS and CPS. Originally this was budgeted for salary expenses but we have not seen the increase in cases to warrant that – you can not spend it on salaries or positions that were already budgeted. We have looked at overtime to pull some of the money down. The State is allowing an opportunity for us to look at county policy for telework expenses, PPE equipment as well as looking at childcare arrangements due to virtual learning. A Dear County Director letter came out this past Friday allowing us to spend in those categories that were just referenced. Mr. Isler said they are putting together a plan between Adult Services and Child Welfare to look at how they can further pull funds down.

- **Medicaid Transformation:**

Medicaid Transformation is moving forward and our Secretary of State already released an announcement that we are looking at a statewide launch on July 1, 2021. Open enrollment will begin for the month of March 2021, all the way up to May. Mr. Isler acknowledged that this is a very small window. He added they will be taking phone calls and helping individuals understand this new privatized system. We will move forward with auto enrollment – they will identify a beneficiary or service providers for Medicaid in this privatization process on May 15th.

Commissioner El-Amin commented that he has been in summer sessions with parent groups about their need for help when it comes to teaching their kids and how to use this new method of learning. One parent had three kids at different grade levels – she has to literally teach all three of them, three different lesson plans and she is learning as they are learning – it is causing some minimal frustration. He does not see the State responding to needs like that. Have you seen anything like that in the pipelines to assist parents who need that kind of assistance?

Mr. Isler responded I have not, but we are on the same page. Mr. Isler said that has been the big push from communities nationally and one thing he brought up last week was that we need to look at how do we provide some level of support in coaching because this is a big learning curve as it relates to technology, learning how to operate and navigate the canvas platform. That is a challenge for parents and you are right there is a missing service provision as it relates to parental support and coaching. Hopefully we will be able to roll out something through the new partnership with Forsyth Promise and the school system to offer technical support. There is something called Care Teams, however there is not a lot of discussion around the intentionality of how do we support and coach parents. I hear you loud and clear with that and it is a missing gap.

Commissioner El-Amin continued on to say one parent had a 1st grader, a 3rd grader and a 6th grader and she had no idea how to teach reading to her 1st grader. So you can imagine what she is going through trying to teach her child 1st grade skills, not knowing herself, so it is a serious issue. Some culture is really needed for that parent population.

Mr. Isler responded I have referenced that to Forsyth Promise and United Way. Hopefully we can get a service provision for it.

What's New - COVID-19 Research: Dr. Robie

Dr. Robie told the Board about a virtual seminar that he participates in on every Monday. He talked about some interesting research being done at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Robie said the research involved the use of regulator T cells to modulate the body's immune system to a COVID-19 infection, avoiding a fatal cytokine storm.

New Business:

- **Recommendations to Fill Board Capacities**

Mr. Seats shared with Board members that they needed to make some recommendations to the County Commissioners for filling four (4) of the members whose terms expired this month. He stated that they do have one person, Mr. Davenport, who has been serving the dual role as engineer and consumer. Since Mr. Davenport's application only stated engineer, Mr. Seats asked if he was applying for dual capacity and if so, could he make a statement to the Board acknowledging he also wanted to be a consumer representative. Mr. Davenport was asked to state his qualifications for being a consumer and then the change could be made in his application and be considered for the dual role since he has been fulfilling it in the past.

Mr. Davenport confirmed that he did want to be considered for both. He stated that as an almost lifelong resident of Forsyth County and actually residing about two miles from the health facilities, he has used them in the past and he is familiar with the need for what we do in the community. Mr. Davenport continued on to say that he felt that he, his wife, his family and his community that he lives in are represented well as a consumer.

Mr. Seats told Mr. Davenport that the Board would consider his application modified and actions going forward would be to consider him for both roles, as they make their decisions.

The Board reviewed the applications and after some discussion proceeded to the vote on the recommendations to the County Commissioners.

Ms. Robinson reminded everyone that they would need to get a roll call vote, according to law, before they can adopt the applications. She clarified the names of the applicants: Optometrist – Dr. James Doub; Pharmacist – Mr. Seats; Engineer and Consumer – Mr. Davenport; Consumer – Dr. Sides

Dr. Petrou made a motion to approve a slate of applicants as follows: (Dr. Doub - Optometrist; Mr. Seats – Pharmacist; Mr. Davenport – Engineer and Consumer; Dr. Sides – Consumer). Dr. Massler seconded the motion.

After doing a roll call, Mr. Seats announced the motion passed. The five applicants were unanimously accepted and will be recommended to the County Commissioners.

Dr. Sides asked what is the term limit? Mr. Seats responded it is his understanding that you can serve three full four year terms. The terms that just expired were not full terms so they are eligible for three full four year terms. Note: After the meeting adjourned, Mr. Seats followed up that answer with an email correction to all Board members which stated that the correct response to the term limit question is two full four year terms plus any initial term less than four years which a Board member may have received at the time of appointment to the original Consolidated Health and Human Services Board.

Adjourn:

Before adjourning, Mr. Seats announced that in an attempt to bring back some normalcy, he would like for the committee reports to resume. He asked Dr. Massler and Dr. Petrou if they could report out next month and they agreed.

Dr. Petrou asked when are flu shots being given? Mr. Swift responded we have the month of October as our general public clinic. We have a clinic starting in a few weeks for Forsyth County employees and we will also be going out to our partners because we expect a higher demand than usual for flu vaccine.

Mr. Seats asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner El-Amin made a motion and Dr. Petrou seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.

SR/lgc

Next Meeting: October 7, 2020 - 5:30pm