

**Foothills Health District  
District Board of Health OPEN SESSION  
Meeting Minutes  
Advanced Manufacturing Center (Universal Building) In McDowell County  
March 9, 2021**

**Board of Health Members Present:**

<b>Rutherford County Representatives [9]</b>	<b>McDowell County Representatives [6]</b>	
<b>Kim Warner</b> <b>Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza</b> <b>Gina Harrill [by remote]</b> <b>Greg Lovelace, County Commissioner [by remote]</b> <b>Dr. Christopher Buchanan [by remote]</b> <b>Dr. David Sutton [by remote]</b> <b>Amy Jenkins [by remote]</b> <b>Pastor Neil Perry [by remote]</b> <b>Susie Bostic [by remote]</b>	<b>Chris Allison, County Commissioner</b> <b>Dr. Ben Hall</b> <b>Carol Wolfenbarger</b> <b>Dr. James M. Gaskill [by remote]</b>	

**Board of Health Members Absent:**

	<b>Julie Harris</b> <b>One Vacancy</b>	
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**Foothills Health District Staff/Guests/Counsel Present:**

**HD Staff:**

**Karen Powell, Health Director**  
**Nancy Marshall, Finance Director**  
**Jason Masters, Environmental Health Director**  
**Renee Nolen, Administrative Assistant**

**Board of Health Legal Counsel**

**Sharon Parker, Board Attorney**

**HD Medical Director**

**Dr. Stephen W. Jones**

***\*\*Please note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Cooper's Executive Orders limiting the size of indoor gatherings, even with social distancing, this meeting was held in the Conference Room of the Advanced Manufacturing Center (Universal Building) in McDowell County so BOH members could socially distance and some could participate in the meeting by two-way video [zoom]. See the remote meeting provisions in Senate Bill 704 as codified as Session Law 2020-3.***

<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>BOARD ACTION</b>	<b>REFERENCE DOCUMENTS</b>
<b>CALL TO ORDER:</b> Chairman Dr. Ben Hall called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. <b>A quorum is present with the in-person Board members and the members attending remotely under the COVID-19 remote procedures as the Foothills BOH currently has one vacancy.</b>	<b>Chairman Dr. Ben Hall</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:</b> The Board Public Comment Policy had been circulated with all Notices for the meeting and posted. No public members were in attendance for this meeting.	<b>No Board action required</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b><u>ACTION ITEMS</u></b>		



## **HEALTH DIRECTORS REPORT:**

### **COVID-19**

Currently, we are testing, contact tracing, now giving the first & second dose vaccines.

When looking back at the history of Covid, the EOC in McDowell County opened on March 16, 2020, and the EOC opened in Rutherford County on March 22, 2020. We are hitting a year anniversary, which is longest in history that the EOC has run at one time.

Since starting, McDowell County had 40,745 people tested with 4,790 positives. Rutherford County had had 6,796 positives and 200 deaths.

Contact tracing daily, working close with the school system. Teachers are immunized in both counties and we are working with all daycare workers.

Covid testing is down, Where in Rutherford County, we would have tested 280, we are now testing 30. McDowell was testing between 280-300 on an average day, but now 80-90. Numbers may change with summer coming and people starting to travel.

McDowell County has given 8,539 first doses of the vaccine just at the Health Department and 4,773 second doses. Rutherford County has given 6,838 first doses and 3,850 second doses.

Rutherford County and McDowell received the Pfizer vaccine, then the Moderna vaccine. McDowell now has the Johnson & Johnson vaccine too. Vaccine schedules in Rutherford are Mondays & Wednesdays. Vaccine schedules in McDowell are Mondays & Wednesdays with an extra day if we have extra vaccine. It takes a lot of people to run these vaccination clinics when you have 800-1000 people coming thru. We are working in the 65 & older group; then medical fragile group; then essential workers. Hopefully, will have these groups taken care of by April and perhaps more if additional groups are opened. We have seen a good response with the age 65 & older. McDowell has 8 people that make appointments and 4 in Rutherford. Some people were registering but not getting appointments, especially in Rutherford. We have added more people so they can be

**Karen Powell, District Health Director**

**Carol Wolfenbarger moved that the BOH prepare a letter to the staff expressing the board's deep appreciation for the department's intense dedication, team work, coordination, and public health leadership for more than 365 days battling the Covid pandemic. The Executive Committee will approve the draft letter and explore other expressions of appreciation for the staff. The motion was seconded by Kim**

answering phones and making appointments right then with no forms to complete.

Allocations of vaccines for both counties continue to go up. There is opportunity for people to get a particular vaccine request if they request at the time of scheduling so they may be directed to the proper provider or location. Rutherford does not have Johnson & Johnson but McDowell does. There is a possibility of children 12 and older being approved for a Covid vaccine by July. Insurance cards taken for the Covid vaccine for administrative fee.

The Board commended the Health Department on the vaccine delivery and covid work. Mrs. Powell reported that the staff was good but physically tired. Employees at the Health Departments are working 7 days a week with long hours.

#### **OTHER HEALTH DEPARTMENT SERVICES**

The health department is still doing all mandated community health programs. Normal clinics continuing as we figured out how to make appointments and bring the public in safely. Two areas of concern are 1) Maternity Clinics so that moms are taken care of and continue to get the care they need; and 2) STD programs so patients are getting the treatment needed. Immunizations will start to pick up with school vaccines.

On March 17, Mrs. Powell and Ms. Marshall will be meeting with the County Managers and Finance Officers to discuss next year's budget process. We are at the end of the plan that we have had for the past few years to step up county allocations incrementally. As soon as we meet with the County Managers, we will work on budget planning for July.

Susie Bostic voiced a concern regarding methamphetamine use in mothers. We see that in some patients. We have care management and OBCM that follows those moms while pregnant, after the pregnancy, to try to get them resources. Ms. Powell will meet with our Nurse Practitioner and care management to see what we may can do. Substance abuse is always on our community health improvement plan. Susie Bostic has offered to help with any group looking at the issue.

**Warner. The motion was approved with remote votes from Greg Lovelace, Dr. David Sutton, Dr. Buchanan, Gina Harrill, Amy Jenkins, Pastor Neil Perry, Susie Bostic, and in person votes by Kim Warner, Carol Wolfenbarger, Dr. Ben Hall, Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza, and Chris Allison.**

<p><b>FINANCE REPORT:</b></p> <p><b><u>Review of Profit &amp; Loss vs Actual July 2020 through January 2021 –</u></b></p> <p>Clinic income trending below budget for July-January. Most significant factor is the pandemic/billing lagging for several months. Insurance is at 34%, 51% private pay, 29% Medicaid.</p> <p>CMARC (CC4C) &amp; CMHRP (OBCM/PCM) are on target. County allocations received. Environmental Health budget revised due to YTD trends, currently under budget for period by \$33,000; however, \$79,000 over prior YTD totals for this period.</p> <p>Federal Funds: applied for CARES Act Lost Revenue replacement fund &amp; received \$41,807. Applied for FEMA reimbursements for COVID expenses, currently only received payment for March &amp; May of last year.</p> <p>Received grants: Child Health \$8,000 from NC Public Health Association, \$36,500 from Cannon Foundation, and \$5,000 from RHI. Also includes \$110,000 passthrough funding for West Marion Community Forum but we received no percentage of this funding.</p> <p>We have not received Medicaid Cost Settlement that comes in the Spring since the paperwork is not completed. We did receive a 10% holdback for 2017 &amp; 2018 totaling \$252,000.</p> <p>Rental income received for the period. State aid-to-county funds on target and received. State funds have been received on schedule. Currently at end of January, we are showing \$4,050,535 in Revenue.</p> <p>Payroll expenses are more than expected due to overtime from pandemic response. We should eventually be reimbursed for this overtime by FEMA, if approved.</p> <p>Repairs and maintenance are slightly over budget due to storm damage to a fire alarm panel. This was reimbursed by insurance in February.</p> <p>No other expenses are significantly over budget for the period. Total expense of \$3,765,892 with Net Income of \$284,643.</p>	<p><b>Nancy Marshall, CFO</b></p> <p><b>Karen Powell, Health Director</b></p>	<p><b>Documents on file</b></p>
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<b><u>BUDGET AMENDMENTS</u></b>		<b>Documents on file</b>
<p>We adjusted Patient Fees down by \$250,000 because of YTD performance due to decrease in patient revenue from pandemic.</p> <p>Other Local Earnings: we are adjusting Environmental Health down by \$56,963 due to YTD trend.</p> <p>We received new awards from RHI for new COVID vaccine software, from Cannon Foundation for ultrasound machine for Maternity in McDowell &amp; nonstress test machines for both counties/other small equipment, the West Marion Community Forum funds from KB Reynolds were strictly passthrough. The West Marion Community Forum grant is to reach out to the Latinx community in response for pandemic for which we are fiscal agent and receive no funding.</p> <p>State COVID Funds: We have additional awards from State of \$125,000 for an agreement for ELC - Enhancing Detection Activities. We also received \$429,000 from CDC for the COVID-19 vaccination program through Paycheck Protection Program Healthcare Enhancement Act. These funds were reduced by \$143,000 for Regional Teams funding for Covid-response in nursing homes which was received in September and expired on December 30<sup>th</sup>. The unutilized portion was reverted to the State.</p> <p>State &amp; Federal Funds – increased due to expected FEMA reimbursements for the period and a \$500 BCCCP amendment from the State.</p> <p>The changes in Revenue captured by these Budget Amendments is \$575,657.</p> <p>Expenses: Salaries &amp; Fringes were up due to COVID response, primarily overtime which will be submitted to FEMA.</p> <p>Professional Services is a reclassification of the FDA grant for Environmental Health that was moved to a different category. We show increased Maternity fees for new contract with Rutherford Hospital and the passthrough expenses related to West Marion Community Forum grant.</p>	<p><b>Kim Warner moved to approve the Budget Amendments as presented with a second from Dr. DeLaGarza. The motion was approved with remote votes from Dr. Gaskill, Greg Lovelace, Dr. Buchanan, Rev. Perry, Gina Harrill, Susie Bostic, Dr. Sutton, Amy Jenkins and in person votes by Dr. Hall, Kim Warner, Chris Allison, Dr. DeLaGarza, and Carol Wolfenbarger.</b></p>	

<p>Pharmacy/Vaccines: due to supply concerns ordering flu vaccine later in the year, we will order in the Spring. This will be a double expense for flu vaccine for 1 year.</p> <p>Supplies/Services: Increased due to additional equipment &amp; supplies purchased with grant funds and spending for COVID response and WIC supplies.</p> <p>Utilities/Telephone : reclassification of the Environmental Health FDA grant, which was moved to Professional Services. Increase in utilities based on YTD trend and maintenance &amp; repairs for failing equipment.</p> <p>Karen Powel stated that the COVID funds have been helpful. When the reduction in force occurred, it was hard to rearrange staff but has helped with the budget. They are still working on areas that had to be scaled back. In 2017, the complaints were in Environmental Health, but now Environmental Health has a great team.</p>		
<p><b><u>PHARMACY BIDS</u></b></p> <p>The pharmacy bids per prescription were opened with Marion Pharmacy bid \$3.50 to fill each prescription; McDowell Family Pharmacy bid \$15.00 to fill each prescription and Prescription Pad of Marion bid of \$9.00 to fill each prescription.</p> <p>The Board accepted the lowest bid cost to fill each prescription of 3.50 per prescription from Marion Pharmacy.</p>	<p><b>Kim Warner moved to accept the lowest bid cost to fill each prescription of 3.50 per prescription from Marion Pharmacy with a second from Dr. DeLaGarza. The motion was approved with remote votes from Dr. Gaskill, Greg Lovelace, Dr. Buchanan, Rev. Perry, Gina Harrill, Susie Bostic, Dr. Sutton, Amy Jenkins and in person votes by Dr. Hall, Kim Warner, Chris Allison, Dr. DeLaGarza, and Carol Wolfenbarger.</b></p>	<p><b>Documents on file</b></p>



<p><b><u>INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:</u></b></p> <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT—</b></p> <p>During the last week of November, we instructed the processing assistants to inform applicants that we may take longer than 2-3 weeks to process applications due to COVID; however, we were able to maintain the 2-3 weeks.</p> <p>We have been seeing a steady pace of septic applications since last July. We have always been the cheapest show in town, but not the fastest. Now, we are both. We have received reports of private soil scientists being booked 90 days out.</p> <p>Between July 1, 2020 through March 9, 2021, the District has taken in 1,394 on-site applications. That is 100 applications less than what we brought in for the full FY 19/20. We are at 89% of what was brought in the last full FY year. Last fiscal year EH brought in 370K. We are at 331K so far this year with 4 months left.</p> <p>In February of 2021, we were \$2,000 away from most lucrative month ever, with \$60,340. If we have another month like February, we will be over what we brought in last year.</p> <p>We are still maintaining a 2–3-week backlog, but the higher numbers of applications do put more strain on inspectors so you may see Jason and the Environmental supervisor helping in the field.</p> <p>On Friday, March 5th, Friday, NC temporarily reduced the required frequency of food establishment inspections. Now establishments that were once inspected 4 times/year are now inspected 2/year. Ok. The State recognizes that local health departments pressed with vaccine clinics and this change allows the staff to help out in other areas. The good news is that since we have been maintaining our 100% compliance, our Food and Lodging inspectors are basically done for the remainder of the FY. Since we have had an uptick in septic applications, we are going to have those</p>	<p><b>Jason Masters, EH Director</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>
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<p>inspectors performing septic system finals, well head final inspections, and water sample collections so our OSWW inspectors can be evaluating lots and issuing permits.</p> <p>During our Potato Project visits, we are reminding establishments of mask mandates. We have found that the food establishments that benefit most from the Potato Project are the same ones who have the most complaints about wearing masks. This will allow us to talk more candidly about the importance of the masks and how the virus is spread.</p>		
<b>No items of new business or any other action items.</b>	<b>Ben Hall, Chairperson</b>	
<b>NO CLOSED SESSION</b>		
<p><b>ADJOURNMENT:</b> At 7:19 pm, Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kim Warner. The motion was approved with remote votes from Greg Lovelace, Dr. Buchanan, Dr. Gaskill, Amy Jenkins, Neil Perry, Gina Harrill, Susie Bostic, and Dr. Sutton in person votes by Dr. Hall, Carol Wolfenbarger, Kim Warner, Dr. DeLaGarza and Chris Allison. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm</p>		
<p><b>SIGNATURES:</b> _____  <b>Karen Powell, Foothills District Health Director</b></p> <p>_____  <b>Dr. Ben Hall, Chair of the Foothills Board of Health</b></p>		

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