

**Foothills Health District  
District Board of Health OPEN SESSION  
Meeting Minutes  
McDowell County Health Department  
April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**Board of Health Members Present:**

<b>Rutherford County Representatives [6]</b>	<b>McDowell County Representatives [3]</b>
Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza Greg Lovelace, County Commissioner Dr. Christopher Buchanan Gina Harrill Susie Bostic Leon Godlock	Dr. James M. Gaskill Chris Allison Becky Young

**Board of Health Members Absent:**

Amy Jenkins Martha Robinson Kim Warner	Julie Harris Shirley Garcia
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**Foothills Health District Staff/Guests/Counsel Present:**

**HD Staff:**  
Karen Powell, Health Director  
Nancy Marshall, Finance Director  
Miranda Smith, Public Health Educator II  
**Board of Health Legal Counsel**  
Sharon Parker, Board Attorney

<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>BOARD ACTION</b>	<b>REFERENCE DOCUMENTS</b>
<b>CALL TO ORDER:</b> Chairperson, Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and announced that a <b>quorum was present</b> with the in-person Board members as the Foothills BOH currently has one vacancy.	<b>Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza, Chairman</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:</b> No Public members were present.	<b>Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza, Chairman</b>	<b>N/A</b>

<p><b>SWEARING IN OF NEW MEMBERS</b></p> <p><b>Becky Young and Leon Godlock were sworn in as BOH members:</b></p> <p><b>Becky Young, McDowell</b>, a retired RN who worked with the RPM District Health Department, will complete Carol Wolfenbarger’s unexpired term to 6/22/2022 and will start her first full term.</p> <p><b>Leon, Godlock, Rutherford</b>, retired the Rutherford County Sherriff’s Department, will complete Neil Perry’s unexpired term to 5/23/2023 and then start his first full term</p> <p>The BOH still has one vacancy in McDowell for an Optometrist but this positions may need to be converted to a public member since no Optometrist residing in the district has agreed to served in the year long search.</p>	<p><b>Sharon Parker, District Board Attorney</b></p>	<p><b>Sworn Statements</b></p>
<p><b>Election of Dr. Gaskill to Executive Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Sharon Parker, District Board Attorney</b></p> <p><b>The election of Dr. Gaskill to the Executive Committee was moved by Greg Lovelace with a second by Chris Allison. The election was approved unanimously.</b></p>	
<p><b><u>ACTION ITEMS</u></b></p>		
<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 8, 2022</b></p> <p>The February 8, 2022 BOH minutes were emailed to the BOH prior to the Board meeting and presented for approval.</p>	<p><b>Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza, Chairman</b></p> <p><b>James Gaskill moved to approve the February 8, 2022 minutes as presented, with a second by Christopher Buchanan. The motion was approved unanimously.</b></p>	<p><b>Documents on file</b></p>

**HEALTH DIRECTORS REPORT**

**COVID-19 Update**

Karen Powell stated that health departments are getting back to a place of offering all services. Many great partnerships were made and strengthened during the pandemic. Although some COVID materials are packed up, they are easily accessible in case of a future increase in cases. COVID vaccines are still being administered at both health departments. Testing numbers can be found on the NCDHHS website. The health department is now catching up and looking forward.

**Budget Updates**

The budget proposal will be given at the next meeting in June 14,2022 in Rutherford County. Nancy Marshall and Karen Powell have been looking for areas to cut back and to find ways to increase salaries to keep the great staff and have new staff join the team. The benefits that used to attract potential employees to apply is no longer a selling point and staff is being lost to the area Hospitals.

Nancy and Karen met with the county managers and discussed a 5 year plan for the health district and presented a list of the items that each County pays or supplies in addition to the county appropriations. See documents attached.

**Other Departmental Updates**

Karen Powell is the Region 2 American Rescue Plan Act [ARPA] representative, which consists of McDowell, Rutherford, Mitchell, Henderson, Buncombe, Yancy, Avery and Polk Counties. Region 2 received an ARPA award to focus on the resilience of Public Health Staff. Foothills District will host the money, hire trainers and hire the coordinator for the region. The funds will also provide OSHA and HIPPA training opportunities. A new coordinator for the ARPA award will be starting soon and will be the new communicator from Region 2 to the state.

**Foothills Communication Team:**

A communication team has been created in the district to help bring more awareness to our

**Karen Powell, Health Director**

**Documents on File**

services, social media engagement, and updating the website. They will also make sure to be out at all events possible to educate the community on our services.

The communication team will also be working on fundraiser events for certain programs in the health districts to help buy things for the patients we serve.

**Maternity Contracts are in Negotiation:** Karen Powell is meeting with Rutherford Regional to see if they can arrange maternity services that would benefit everyone. The contract in McDowell will also have to be re-negotiated.

**A Memorandum of Understanding was entered into with Toe River District Health Department:** Karen Powell indicated that Foothills will help to provide pre-natal and post-natal care along with some family planning services.

**Environmental Health:** Jason Masters is on vacation. Wait time are generally down to 2.5 weeks.

**FINANCE REPORT**

**Update on Financial Reports**

Clinic insurance income is well over budget as we are still receiving Covid vaccine revenue. Clinic income is trending under budget for private pay and for Medicaid. We've also received \$112k from the uninsured HRSA program for providing vaccines to the uninsured populations

CMARC & CMHRP revenue for the period was under budget due to the Medicaid transformation which went into effect on July 1, 2021.

County allocations have been received for the period

Environmental Health is on target for the period at 99.8% of budget.

No new grant activity.

The annual Medicaid Cost Settlement [MCS] was submitted in February. MCS was 1.2M for YE 2018, 505K for YE 2019, 574K for YE 2020, and dropped to 93K this year (YE 2021). Contributing factors include Covid-19 pandemic, and the Maternity downturn in Rutherford.

Rental income has been received for the period.

State aid to county funds are on target and have been received.

State funds have been received on schedule and are over budget for the period at 119%.

Most expenses are over budget for the period but within the annual budget.

Overall expenses for this period are running at 109% compared to budget.

Net position for the period is \$68K positive.

**Nancy Marshall, CFO  
Karen Powell, Health  
Director**

**Documents on file**

Fixed Assets include the addition of one Storage Building [\$11,470.00] and one extra wide bariatric exam table [\$2,735.00] and were funded from Covid-19 funds and a McDowell Endowment/Community Foundation of WNC grant that had been received in the prior fiscal year.

The Adjusted Net Position for the period is \$54K positive.

**Budget Amendments**

The Budget amendments were handed out and explained by Nancy Marshall at the meeting.

The budget for Patient Fees is being increased due to the YTD trend largely because of continued Covid vaccine billing.

The budget for Medicaid Cost Settlement is being reduced due to the MCS report completion. When we initially budgeted for this line item we had to estimate because the report isn't completed until February. Unfortunately, we had a significant decline this year due to Covid and the effects of the OB/GYN shakeup in Rutherford County a couple of years ago. We are beginning to see a slight increase this year, so hopefully our Maternity program is on the rebound.

The budget for State Funds is increasing due to additional state funding being released.

The budget for Insurance is being increased due to YTD trends for our Nurse Family Partnership [NFP] program.

The line for Leases is an addition due to new copier lease contracts this year.

The payroll expenses are being increased due to a variety of factors, including a NFP reclass to other lines, a health insurance cost increase, and a position added for new State funding

**See Documents on file**

<p>Professional Fees are increasing due to the NFP reclass and additional funds for the Covid temporary employees.</p> <p>The line for repairs and maintenance is increasing due to the NFP reclass and the paint project at Rutherford.</p> <p>Supplies expenses are increasing due to the NFP reclass and laptops and scanners for the Covid work, along with additional medical supplies.</p> <p>Telephone expenses are trending a little higher than budget YTD, so that line is being increased by 5,600.</p> <p>Travel expenses are also trending higher due to the easing of Covid restrictions and the NFP reclass (which is for required new employee training).</p>	<p><b>Leon Godlock moved to approve the budget amendments as presented, with a second by Chris Allison. The motion was approved unanimously.</b></p>	
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**Presentation of the 2021 Community Health Assessment**

**Miranda Smith, Health Educator and Karen Powell, Health Director**

**Documents on File**

Miranda Smith, Health Educator, and Karen Powell presented findings from the 2021 Community Health Assessment. The assessment is performed every 3 years. Foothills Health District has joined 33 counties and hospital in the Western Region of North Carolina to hire WNC Health Network to prepare a comprehensive Health Assessment.

Locally, our process begins with the collection of data that is completed through a partnership with WNC Healthy Impact, which conducted this assessment from January 2021 through December 2021. In working with WNC Healthy Impact, the CHA Advisory Committee had the opportunity to assist with collecting primary data, which included telephone surveys of 239 residents and 6 key informant surveys completed by community key leaders in Rutherford County and 233 residents and 16 key informant surveys in McDowell County. Team members also accessed the WNC Healthy Impact Secondary Data Workbook including a comprehensive set of secondary data from the NC State Center for Health Statistics, US Census Bureau, CDC’s Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, and other sources, and maps from Community Commons.

All collected data, which is not only specific to the health status of Rutherford County and McDowell, but also demonstrates how it relates to the Western North Carolina region, was then analyzed and prioritized with the input of a preliminary data team. This initial data team from the Foothills Health District chose the top 4 health priorities in each county utilizing a prioritization process based on the Rating/Ranking Key Health Issues (Health Resources in Action) worksheet. These were narrowed down to the top three health priorities for each county again utilizing a process based on the Rating/Ranking Key Health Issues (Health Resources in Action) worksheet. The top three health priorities and data will then be presented to the Community Health Council of Rutherford County and other county stakeholders in McDowell County after CHA submission.



As many groups work on reducing smoking and substance abuse in Rutherford County, the Foothills Health District chose the following priorities for Rutherford County: 1] Food Insecurities, 2] Diabetes, and 3] Obesity. Priorities chosen for McDowell County are: 1] lack of Health Insurance/Access to Care, 2] Unintentional Death and Overdose, and 3] Obesity. However, the District will work on all 6 priorities in both counties.

**CLOSED SESSION**

At 7:51 pm, a Closed Session was requested for discussion of information that is privileged, confidential or not a public record under NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(1) and NC Gen Stat 130A-42; To consult with the Board Attorney and/or specialized Legal Counsel retained by the Board regarding litigation and confidential legal matters pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3); and To consider other matters relative to the work goals and performance evaluation of the District Health Director pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6).

**No Other items of new business or any other action items**

**A motion was made by Dr. Gaskill, seconded by Dr. Buchanan to go into Closed Session for discussion of information that is privileged, confidential or not a public record under NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(1) and NC Gen Stat 130A-42; To consult with the Board Attorney and/or specialized Legal Counsel retained by the Board regarding litigation and confidential legal matters pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3); and To consider other matters relative to the work goals and performance evaluation of the District Health Director pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). The motion passed unanimously. The Board went into closed session at 7:52 pm and all staff other than Karen Powell left the Board room.**

**At 8:39 pm, The Board returned to open session.**

**Closed Session Minutes are maintained by the Board Attorney, Sharon Parker, at her office at Sharon L. Parker, PA at PO Box 983, Marion, NC 28752, Phone 828-652-2441.**

**ADJOURNMENT: At 8:39 pm, Dr. Gaskill made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Leon Godlock and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.**

**SIGNATURES:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Karen Powell, Foothills District Health Director**

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**Dr. Jerald DeLaGarza, Chair of the Foothills Board of Health**

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