

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Board of Health Members Present:

Robert Horgan
Thomas Faulkner, MD
Harold Logsdon
Lyn Redwood, RN, MSN
Lynette Peterson
Michael Strain, MD

Staff Members Present:

Michael Brackett, MD
Merle Crowe, BA
Rick Fehr

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Strain called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM January 8, 2008: Motion was made by Ms. Peterson to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Logsdon. The minutes were unanimously approved.

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Environmental Health Lot Size Update: The board tabled this item for future consideration.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mr. Gordon Furr expressed concern that community sewage systems would eventually fail and Fayette County taxpayers would be required to pay for repair or replacement of the system. He requested that County Commissioners allow the Board of Health oversight of this type system.

Mr. Fehr said that any sewage system to be put in the ground was supposed to be reviewed by EH staff prior to installation and that systems over a certain size also required review by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). One of the major concerns of community sewage systems was the ultimate responsibility in the event of system failure. Mr. Fehr cited a case where the county did assume responsibility for a community system that failed, and said that he had expressed his concern on this issue when he had attended county water system meetings. Since the county would ultimately be responsible for failing systems, it was felt that Fayette County Water system should take care of them from the beginning, and water department personnel had offered to do so. Ms. Redwood wondered if the county ordinance on community sewage systems required a bond to cover repair or replacement costs. Mr. Horgan said that a local ordinance had been discussed in county meetings, but that nothing had yet been passed.

The board thought that homeowners would expect the county to take over their community system if it failed. Mr. Horgan said that developers might put four or five houses out of twenty in a subdivision on a such a system, and put the rest on individual systems. County authorities are considering prohibiting mixed systems in subdivisions.

Mr. Logsdon expressed concern about the Fischer Crossing commercial development being built on the Coweta/Fayette County line, which would be close to Wynn Pond and

Lake McIntosh. He said this will be the first such system in Georgia and that it worked well when new; his concern was what would happen if the system failed. The board felt that it should be proactive when application was made for any community system and requested to review the ordinance under consideration by Fayette County. Mr. Horgan agreed to provide a copy. Dr. Strain stated that the board would review the regulations thus provided, and then seek advice on the situation. There was no other public comment.

NEW BUSINESS: Environmental Health (EH) Well Regulation Hearing: Mr. Fehr said that while there is a state regulation requiring one hundred feet separating a well and a sewage field line, there currently is not a similar Fayette regulation. Local oversight by ordinance would provide greater local control over wells and ensure that regulations are followed. He provided the board with a copy of a local ordinance selected from those currently in place within District Four. Should the board decide to proceed, a public hearing would be necessary prior to adoption of the proposed ordinance. Institution of an ordinance would mean that well drillers would be required to get a permit from EH prior to drilling a well, and that staff would visit the site to ensure that regulations were met.

During site visits, EH staff members currently check for the 100 foot differential between proposed sewage field lines and existing wells, but without a local ordinance they cannot check for compliance before wells are drilled. The board felt that due to the current drought situation more wells would be installed and there should be local oversight. The board was also concerned that wells approved for irrigation might later be used for drinking water during a drought, and that it would be difficult to differentiate between the two types, because current state regulations do not differentiate between wells intended for irrigation or those for human consumption.

Mr. Fehr stated that the board's attorney would need to review any proposed ordinance. The board could determine what would be grandfathered in; for example, there is a state regulation requiring a 50 foot differential between wells and grazing animals. Wells that do not meet that criteria might be grandfathered in at the board's discretion. The board felt that all wells were water supplies, and should be regulated like any other water supply, especially in a drought situation.

State regulations currently require that well drillers file an *Intent to Drill a Well* form with local health departments. However, since January 2008 none have been filed. Mr. Fehr had contacted local drillers to determine if the slowdown was due to wells not being drilled or if these forms were simply not being filed. To date, no responses have been received. Mr. Logsdon made a motion to send the ordinance provided by Mr. Fehr to Attorney Scott Bennett for legal review, then to hold a public hearing; seconded by Ms. Redwood. The board felt that this issue would be further addressed at the July meeting. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS: PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2009 BUDGET:

Ms. Crowe presented the budget, which increased over the previous year by about six percent. The budget included a proposed Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for employees, increased costs for employee insurance and benefits, with no merit salary increases included. The revenue side included use of current year fees to offset rising costs and to cover decreases in state Grant-in-Aid. It also included an increase in County Participating funding of \$25,000. WIC funding was combined with GIA during the first

quarter of FY 2008, accounting for the fluctuation in those budget lines. Use of current year fees would need to be increased if County Participating funding is less than requested.

On the Expense side, the proposed budget included staff salary and benefits, accounting for 81% of expected expenses. There were no anticipated purchases of equipment, with slight increases in these categories: *Repairs & Maintenance*; *Direct Benefits to Clients*, which would be reimbursed by fees collected from clients; *Travel*, which reimburses employees who use personal vehicles on state business; *Contractual Agreements*, which covers Fayette County Health Department's share of the cost to operate the district pharmacy; *Telecommunications*; *Postage*; *Indirect Costs*, which reflects the cost of centralized services provided by the district office for personnel and computer support. There was no increased cost for *Pharmaceuticals*. The category *Other Operating* covered any line item that did not fall under any other category. The board wanted further clarification of the *Miscellaneous* category. Ms. Crowe explained that this line item was a contingency fund for any unexpected large expense.

The board requested further information on travel reimbursement. Ms. Crowe clarified that when staff members were required to travel on state business and used their personal vehicles, they were reimbursed at the Federal rate. Such travel might include nurses who go out to do mandated audits of school immunization records, or staff members who travel to meetings at the district office, or to other training. Dr. Brackett said that the Federal rate of reimbursement was not an accurate reflection of the true cost to the employee, that the cost actually meant a loss to the employee. He pointed out that staff also needed to attend state meetings in order to appropriately perform their jobs.

Motion to approve the budget was made by Ms. Redwood, seconded by Mr. Logsdon. The motion was unanimously approved, with no further discussion.

Staff Reports:

Ms. Crowe updated the board on efforts to fill the County Nurse Manager and RN positions. She said that interviews and background checks had been completed and it was hoped those positions would soon be filled.

Mr. Fehr said that last week a meeting had been held by District Four, local police and other officials to address a kick-off campaign to make the public aware of what they should do in the event of a disaster. He said that staff would be working with local Emergency Services in this effort, gave board members a handout, and said that copies of the handout would be given to the public as well.

He said staff had received a request to consider an ordinance to regulate tattoo parlors, but that Fayette County already had an ordinance that addressed that issue very well, so he thought this issue could be deferred. The board requested a copy of the current Fayette County ordinance. Mr. Fehr said he would provide a copy.

Ms. Redwood said that she had attended the first meeting of the Children's Health Study. She said there were about six public members and more participants were needed. She said that the study would run for several years and data would begin to be collected in the summer of 2009. She asked if the board had any names of potential members to please let her know; especially someone from the Hispanic community, or someone who

interacted with expectant mothers or children. Current members include a school nurse, an educator and an attorney and it was hoped that future members would include people with their finger on the pulse of the community.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Ms. Redwood. The motion carried unanimously. The motion was unanimously approved with no further discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 AM.

Michael Strain, MD, Chair

Merle Crowe, Secretary