

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, April 9, 2013 in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Board of Health Members Present:

David Barlow
Thomas Faulkner, MD
Don Haddix
Lynette Peterson
Michael Strain, MD

Staff Members Present:

Glenda Bryant, RN, MN, FNP
Merle Crowe, BA, CCFO
Dennis Davenport, Attorney
Jeff Kilgore
Robert Kurbes

District Members Present:

Alpha Bryan, MD
Duane Fields
Debbi Heard
Wendy LeVan, RN, BSN
Pam Rock
Brigid Smith
Barbara Stephens

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Strain called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 8, 2013: Motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Barlow. The minutes were approved with Mr. Haddix abstaining due to his absence last meeting.

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no old business or public comment.

PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2014 BUDGET: Ms. Brigid Smith presented the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Budget. She focused on the page that compared FY 2013 to FY 2014. There was a 10% decrease to expenses, or \$129,000, from the FY 2013 Budget. Salary and benefits costs comprise some 74% of overall expenses. This budget does not include any salary or cost of living (COLA) increases. It includes \$8,000 to replace ten computers, all of which were over seven years old. Mr. Haddix recommended replacement of computers before seven years, as he felt that keeping computers that long was detrimental. The *Other Operating* line item was also reduced from the previous year. Overall, expenses in the FY 2014 Budget were down, due mainly to expenses related to staff attrition.

Ms. Peterson asked if the budget could include salary increases for staff, since there had not been a COLA in several years. She asked how many unfilled vacancies there were, and how Fayette salaries compared with other counties. She felt that at least a 2% COLA should be added to the budget. Ms. Peterson felt that failing to reward staff could lead to trained staff leaving to accept positions in other counties. Public Health (PH) competes with hospitals, insurance companies, nursing homes, etc. for nurses and trained staff, and PH salaries remain much lower than salaries in those types of private practice. However, Dr. Bryan said that Fayette County salaries were in line with other counties in District 4.

Mr. Haddix was concerned that employees would leave if not adequately compensated. He mentioned that in Peachtree City annual employee bonuses were given rather than salary increases, because salary increases affected future budgets and bonuses affected only the year of award. Attorney Dennis Davenport said that bonuses could not legally be given using taxpayer funds. Mr. Davenport said he would research this issue and send his findings to board members by email about a month before the next board meeting. Dr. Strain said that if bonuses were paid out of revenue generated by staff, rather than from taxpayer funding, that might solve the legal question. He felt that any bonus should be based on productivity of the employee, and asked that productivity data over the past few years be considered.

In response to the COLA question, Dr. Bryan said that COLAs needed to be voted on by the legislature, and that none had been approved for several years; nor had a COLA been approved by any board of health in District 4. She was concerned about the impact a COLA for one county might have on the entire district. As for unfilled vacancies, Dr. Bryan said that there were no plans to fill the position in Environmental Health (EH) left open due to Mr. Fehr's retirement. She said that at one time Fayette EH had been overstaffed, but that staffing was currently at the correct level for both EH and Physical Health (PH). She mentioned that one Fayette BOH member wanted to begin a series of meetings with BOH Chairs to address some concerns, and she hoped that would happen. Mr. Barlow said that Fayette County had taken action to eliminate unfilled positions on their books as well. He felt that leaving unfilled positions open led to deficit spending; that was not good fiscal policy.

STAFF REPORTS: Women, Infants and Children (WIC): Ms. Pam Rock, Regional WIC Manager for Fayette County WIC, reviewed WIC caseload statistics for Fayette County for both October and November (attachment #1). She said that the four Dietetic Interns that had worked with WIC in the past few months had been a big help. She said WIC had been in their new building over a year now, and that most clients had found them with no problem. Dr. Bryan asked if first trimester enrollment figures were down due to the co-location of the WIC clinic; Ms. Rock said she would research that question and provide those figures.

Nursing Report: Ms. Glenda Bryant discussed a handout of clinical visits for the previous quarter (attachment #2), which included WIC visits and the numbers of clients seen each month and for the quarter of FY 2013. Ms. Bryant said that staff had really stepped up to take on additional responsibilities when positions were vacated, and that these

reports showed clearly that staff remained very productive. Ms. Bryant said that admin staff had worked diligently to collect any payments due. Several changes had been put in place: when the client called to make their appointment they were given estimated prices while on the phone; the client would also be reminded of any outstanding balances at that time. Ms. Crowe said that any time a patient's record was accessed, admin staff received an alert by the computer of any written-off balances, and the patient would then be asked to make a payment. These actions had made a tremendous difference to reduce uncollected outstanding fees. Mr. Haddix requested data showing the total amount of year end written-off fees for the past few fiscal years, and Ms. Bryant said she would provide that data.

Dr. Strain mentioned that travel immunization fee revenue could be increased if staff actively promoted that service. The board felt that the health department should not be perceived as the clinic of last resort; that the health department had much to offer and services should be advertised to the public. Ms. Bryant explained that she had been in process of promoting all services for quite some time: she had visited local travel agencies and physicians' offices; ads had been placed in the local paper; ads had been placed in the Fayette Women magazine; ads had run in local movie theaters; staff attended local health fairs, and she served on local committees to promote health department services. Mr. Haddix recommended that she contact Charlie Nelson, publisher of the *Fayette/Coweta Directory*. He felt that ads in that directory would best showcase the HD's services.

Environmental Health: Jeff Kilgore reported that EH revenue had increased and was now comparable to those levels of FY 2008. He felt that a corner had been turned and said that seasonal work was picking up: pool inspection requests were up and septic system failure inspections were coming in; building permit requests also had recently increased. He mentioned that an intern from the Georgia College would be working in EH beginning at the end of May.

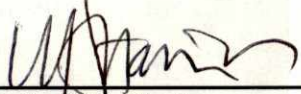
Financial: District Administrator Ms. Brigid Smith reviewed the current fiscal standing of Fayette County Health Department (FCHD). She said that although fee revenue was down for the year, expenses were also down and that offset most of the revenue loss. She felt that overall FCHD was much better off at this time than it had been for the past few years, that the budget looked much better.

District 4/Public Health: Dr. Alpha Bryan discussed interviews with the six candidates for the District 4 Medical Director position. She said that eight of the twelve boards of health were represented, and thanked Ms. Peterson for her participation in the interview process. Three of the candidates were interviewed via *Skype*: one in Germany, one in New Zealand, and the last in Florida; she said it was a wonderful use of technology. Unfortunately, only three of the candidates made the final cut, and none of those were selected. So the process was going to begin again: employment ads would be run, new candidates would be selected for interview, and board members would be asked to sit in on the interview. This time, however, Dr. Bryan thought it would be best to do telephone interviews before board members were asked to give their time to face-to-face interviews. Ms. Peterson said it was very disappointing that none of the

candidates were selected, but that lessons had been learned for future interviewing. She thanked Dr. Bryan for the time she had donated to this effort and she hoped the next round would be successful. Mr. Haddix wondered if the salary offered, compared to salaries in private practice, might have limited the applicant pool. He felt that could have been a limiting factor, and that if the salary offered could be increased a much larger candidate pool might be generated.

Dr. Bryan reminded the board of the upcoming Georgia Public Health Association (GPHA) conference, and said that Mr. Barlow was planning to attend for the Board of Health Member training. She also mentioned that Fayette County had lost its place as Number One in the *University of Wisconsin County Health Ranking* for Georgia; Forsyth County took the number one position and Fayette County fell to number two. She quoted Mr. Tyler Norris, who said that a person's zip code could be more important than his/her DNA code, because of variables like those used in ranking for each county. A few variables were: level of poverty; level of education; amount of substance abuse in the county; medical factors such as levels of high blood pressure, and if the area is a "food desert." Food desert areas are defined as those with few close and available were fresh food and grocery stores. These factors, and others, determine a county's ranking. Information on how counties are ranked can be found at: www.countyhealthrankings.org

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Barlow. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 AM.



Michael Strain, MD Chair



Submitted by: Merle Crowe, BA, CCFO