

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD



Board Members

Mr. John Blalock
Ms. Pamela Corbett, MA
Mr. John Davenport, Jr., PE
Dr. James Doub, OD
Dr. Palmer Edwards, MD
Dr. Calvert Jeffers, DVM
Dr. Charles Massler, DDS
Ms. Heather Parker
Dr. Linda Petrou, PhD.
Ms. Sharon D. Pettiford, RN
Ms. Sharon A. Rimm, LCSW
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

April 7, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. J. Phil Seats, Chair
Mr. Fleming El-Amin, Vice Chair
Mr. John Blalock
Ms. Pamela Corbett
Mr. John Davenport
Dr. James Doub
Dr. Palmer Edwards
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. Gloria Whisenhunt

PH/DSS STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Shontell Robinson
Mr. Victor Isler
Mr. Joshua Swift
Ms. Lorrie Christie
Ms. Tanya Donnell
Mr. Adam Pendlebury
Ms. Marie Stephens
Ms. Elizabeth White

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ms. Claudette Weston

GUESTS PRESENT

None

Call to Order:

On Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 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 February 3, 2021 HHS Board were reviewed. Mr. Seats asked for a motion to approve. Mr. John Blalock made a motion to approve and Mr. Fleming El-Amin seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

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

- **LME/MCO Disengagement Process:**

- The process is continuing - the kick-off meeting with the transition planning team was held on last Friday. The team consists of Ms. Robinson, Assistant Health Director, Ms. Denise Price, Mr. Victor Isler, a judge, the Sheriff's Office and other community stakeholders and consumers. The purpose of the committee is to ensure there is a seamless process as we transition from Cardinal to Partners Behavioral Health Management. Ms. Robinson noted that this is a lengthy process – currently in the public comment period, which ends May 5th. The public has an opportunity to provide their feedback whether it is positive or negative on the County Commissioners decision to proceed with the disengagement process. Once the comment period is over, they will be posted on the county website for 30 days. A Continuity of Services Plan will then be submitted to the Commissioners for consideration and approval in May with the hope of submitting our package to the DHHS Secretary, Dr. Mandy Cohen, no later than June 30th.

Ms. Robinson made mention of Cardinal's public relations campaign that is going on – they are in news articles and on social media. She thought some of the ads were misleading and feels like scare tactics to scare the IDD population and in her opinion, to scare individuals with mental health issues, already, is dirty practice.

According to several Board members, tactics are being used by Cardinal such as recruiting people to write letters on their behalf and contacting State legislators to try to stop the disengagement process. Ms. Robinson is aware of these tactics and added there have been a lot of untruths in many of the letters – she, herself have been named in some of the letters. Ms. Robinson said they have notified Dr. Cohen of Cardinal's tactics, so she is aware. Ms. Robinson added, Dr. Cohen and our Commissioners will have to decipher from the people who have experiences with Cardinal versus those who do not.

It was asked if it would be helpful for any of the Board members to weigh in with Dr. Cohen. Ms. Robinson responded the public comment period is open to anyone and there is a link on the county website. She added anyone is welcome to comment on the public comments and that would go in the packet to Dr. Cohen. You can speak as a Board member or you can speak as a person who knows about Cardinal, whether positive or negative – it is comment period for everyone.

- **Medicaid Transformation:**

- Ms. Robinson reported that Medicaid Transformation will begin July 1st. There are still a lot of unknowns with the PHPs but we are as prepared as we possibly can be.

Department of Social Services (DSS) Director's Comments: Mr. Isler gave the following updates (see handout on file in the Administrative Binder):

State, Local and Agency Updates:

- March was Social Worker Awareness Month – National Theme was “You are Essential”
- April will be Child Abuse Prevention Month – there will be a proclamation reading
- Presented to the Leadership Circle of Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods on community response to COVID-19, along with Mr. Edwin Marshall, Public Health (PH) Clinic Director
- Met with Forsyth Technical Community College for a NCFast Certification Partnership Planning Meeting where they discussed workforce development and decreasing the onboarding timeframe for new hires for Income Maintenance Workers – would like to see this solidify within the next six to nine months – there is no cost for this
- Had a Medicaid Transformation partnership meeting with Maximus, where they discussed (open enrollment - started March 15, 2021 – DSS gets around 7,500 calls per month relating to general needs; less than 15% are projected to enroll; staff training on triage support; delay in foster care and IDD Tailored Plan until 2023)
- COVID-19 vaccinations for the homebound and adults with limited transportation
- Family First Prevention Act (Federal) and projected loss of foster care reimbursement for IV-E Placements – effective October 2021 (the projected reimbursement loss is \$311,744; there is advocacy for a 3-year phase for County cost)

Bill Updates:

- H 382 – Hospital Ed Care/Medicaid Behavioral Health Services (this bill reimburses hospitals for behavioral health services provided to Medicaid beneficiaries awaiting discharge or transfer from hospital setting to a more appropriate setting)
- S 207 – Various Raise the Age Changes/JJAC Recs. – new reporting (this gives the Department of Juvenile Justice the authority to file a petition or either follow-up with a petition decision or case decision with child welfare with the CPS cases – if they make a report, this is giving them authority to bring that matter into court, if they do not agree with our decision) – this was passed by the Senate
- S 200 – CPS Intake Screening (this bill requires the Dept. of Health and Human Services, DSS to implement a rapid consultation system to provide consultation to counties when making a decision regarding the safety of children)

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) Rollout – April 6, 2021:

- Open to all renters residing in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County with a household income 80% or less of area median income and has been impacted financially by COVID-19. The program provides assistance with rent and utilities
- Priority goes to households with an income of 50% or less of area median income; households that have been unemployed for 90 days or more due to COVID-19 and households with a pending court eviction

Mr. El-Amin asked how many people have already applied to avoid eviction, so far and Mr. Isler responded around 482 applications are in queue.

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):

COVID-19 Updates:

- Total Cases since start of the pandemic: 33,611 (announced first cases on March 1, 2020)
- Cases in last 14 days: 624
- Average cases per day: 45
- Total deaths: 363 since the beginning of the pandemic

COVID-19 Vaccinations:

- Number fully vaccinated in Forsyth County as of April 5, 2021: 82,914 (21.7%)
- Number partially vaccinated in Forsyth County as of April 5, 2021: 120,716 (31.6%)
- Almost a third of the population has had at least one dose

Total Number Weekly COVID-19 Lab Tests and Cases March 21/2020 – March 27, 2021:

- Last March showed very few lab tests and cases – started to increase in lab tests and cases in late November through December into early/mid January – we have now leveled off
- Although the number of tests is not what it was, there is still a decent amount and our percent positive has decreased now – we are below 5% of tests positive

Vaccine Administered by the Health Department:

- 73,587 total doses as of April 6, 2021
- 37,206 completed series (2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer or 1 dose of Johnson & Johnson)
- Mr. Swift thanked staff and volunteers and acknowledged Dr. Charles Massler and Dr. James Doub for helping out at the vaccine clinic
- Novant Health, Baptist and the Health Department are partnering together this Saturday to do a vaccine clinic (the goal at the fairgrounds is for the Health Department and Baptist to do 5,850 doses of Johnson & Johnson and at the same time, Novant Health will be at Hanes Mall and their goal is 2,500) – over the course of one day there will be 8,000-9,000 doses of vaccine available to the public

Mr. Seats asked how the walk-ins were going and Mr. Swift responded it has been interesting – yesterday we had 42 individuals and today it was around 65 individuals. It was widely shared on Facebook and we have been getting a lot of attention. We are trying to get the word out.

State, Local and Agency Updates:

- April 5-11 was National Public Health Week – National Theme was “Building Bridges to Better Health” – had an employee appreciation event to thank staff
- Presented to the NC General Assembly Joint House and Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services regarding Communicable Disease Funding – there has been a lot of attention for the last 3-4 years and there has been a push with the NC Health Director’s Association to have funding for each health department to have enough funding

to cover one FTE for communicable disease staff/a communicable disease nurse. We have four FTEs devoted to communicable disease in Forsyth County – we are very fortunate. Other counties only have one nurse and that is only part of their duties (20% and the other 80%, they are in the clinic). Mr. Swift reported there are 82 communicable diseases that staff work with.

- Participated on a panel, along with Mr. Edwin Marshall, Clinic Director, on United Way's Front Porch Conversation Series on vaccinations in the African American community – trying to promote the vaccine, its safety and efficacy with the United Way and the African American community. Ms. Susan Gale Perry, Deputy Secretary at Health and Human Services is also a member and some other local people.
- COVID-19 simulation model assistance collaborative from UNC-Chapel Hill, NC State and Georgia Tech – they reached out to Forsyth County to do a model. They want to take this model to the State and see if other counties are interested. The three takeaways are NPIs (non pharmaceutical interventions) – the 3Ws (wear a mask, wait six feet, wash hands)
- Ms. Glenda Dancy, Assistant Health Director and Ms. Maura Trimble, Communicable Disease Supervisor presented to the Wake Forest Health Lay Health Worker Advisory Council about their experiences with COVID-19
- Public Health organized a group from Wake Forest Baptist, Novant and the Piedmont Triad Regional Council, along with Senior Services to discuss the homebound people who need the vaccine. After discussion and collaboration, Baptist has offered with their Geriatric Unit, to go out and do the vaccinations over four weeks (from mid-April through mid-May). They are working with the Piedmont Triad Regional Council, who has formed routes because of that timeframe based on the six hour window with the vaccine. Mr. Isler has been working with Rich Hill to get information about who Social Services covers to see if there is any duplication. We are working with Trellis and hopefully can add some of our homeless shelters that we have not touched.

Dr. Peter Robie asked about the home COVID-19 testing kit – is there any information on that. Mr. Swift responded anytime you can get more testing that is more accessible, that is a good thing – the concern is that now when a person is tested, they go to Novant, Baptist or one of the testing events that we help to organize – this is automatically reported to the State. What he has heard with these home testing kits is that it is just you doing them yourself. Dr. Robie added what he tells his patients is if they get a positive result at home, go to a testing site to get it confirmed. Mr. Swift agreed that is great advice and this way we would have a record and can do the contact tracing and investigations.

Dr. Palmer Edwards commented if the initial count of the people who were homebound and might be eligible to get the vaccine was around 200 and it sounds like that data is still being collected – do you have a more recent number of how many people are homebound that Baptist will provide vaccine to during the time span. Mr. Swift responded yes, originally we thought it was 200 – last week the number was reduced to 98. Trellis now has 50-60 individuals to add to that. Baptist has agreed to provide vaccine to 50 patients per week for the next four weeks. Mr. Swift said he has asked Novant if they can assist if we get more people, as well as working with Mobile Integrated Health, which is part of the county. Dr. Edwards thought it seemed like a really low number.

Mr. Blalock asked Mr. Swift that given the numbers he gave (31.6% of population partially vaccinated and 21.7% fully vaccinated) how do we stack up compared to the State level or other counties within the State. Mr. Swift responded he would have to look at that information but when pulling it up, compared to Guilford or another similar sized county - we seem to be in line with other large counties. Mr. Swift added we were behind for our historically marginalized populations early on but with the increased emphasis on outreach and education, we are in line.

New Business:

FY 2021-2022 Budget Requests

- Ms. Elizabeth White, Deputy Director, went over the budget requests for the Department of Social Services (see detailed handout in Administrative Binder).

Increase in Expenditures of \$908,696.00 - due to the following factors: increase in foster care room and board; scanning of records to go to Laserfiche; Laserfiche licensing; Laserfiche professional fees; iiReception online services; training budget back to the pre-COVID level; operating expenses; salary and fringe due to 10 new positions and regular pay for performance raises

Decrease in Revenue of \$159,667.00 – due to the following factors: loss of ROAP Grant; decrease in daycare administration dollars; estimated loss in IV-E funding due to changes in Congregate Residential Care Facilities; revenue; decrease in SSBG funding; increase in revenue due to Laserfiche, scanning and ASL 1st floor build out

- Mr. Adam Pendlebury, Business Manager, went over the budget requests for the Department of Public Health (see detailed handout in Administrative Binder).

Increase in Expenditures of \$1,404,504.00 – due to the following factors: travel and training to match pre-COVID needs; 5 FTEs; inflationary impact to salaries and benefits; overall medical supplies – mostly related to COVID-19; remote working and off-site clinics

Increase in Revenue of \$506,262.00 – due to the following factors: COVID-19 response funds from the State available for next fiscal year; WIC reimbursements; patient payments in Pharmacy anticipated to drop; increased activities in environmental health increasing

Behavioral Health Funding Recommendations

Ms. Robinson told Board members that the county has \$4 million per year that we need to allocate specifically for mental health, substance use as well as our IDD population. We have a Health and Human Services (HHS) Board Subcommittee (comprised of Dr. Linda Petrou, Ms. Pamela Corbett and Ms. Sharon Rimm) that helps us come up with the recommendations. Ms. Robinson went on to say that this year internal staff reviewed the proposals first, scored them and provided feedback to the HHS subcommittee. The internal staff included Ms. Robinson, the budget director, budget analyst, Assistant Health Director Ms. Denise Price and Stepping-Up

Supervisor, Ms. Amber Humble (both Ms. Price and Ms. Humble have an extensive behavioral health background and have worked for LME/MCOs in the past – they are familiar with how the system works). We then met internally with the HHS subcommittee members to review the proposals and discuss them in depth in regard to making a recommendation.

The recommendation is for the full HHS Board to review our recommendations so we can present them to the Board of County Commissioners.

- Ms. Robinson went down the list of organizations and recommendations for Behavioral Health Funding (see detailed handout in Administrative Binder). She explained to the Board members that they would see an Option A and an Option B (these options are to show what funding we would offer, depending on whether or not the proposer also submitted and receives a grant through SAMSHA with the Federal Government).

Organizations requesting funding included: Mental Health Association, Horizons Center-Respite, Monarch-651, Financial Pathways, Horizons Center–Camp Experience, Daymark, Monarch-Behavioral Health Outpatient, Crossnore School, School Health Alliance, Novant Health Forsyth Medical-Foundation, Center Foundation, Family Services, NAMI, YWCA Hawley House, MOJI, CareNet Counseling, Smart Start, Green Tree, DSS, HOPE Counseling and Consulting

After much discussion, it was decided to vote on behavioral health funding separately.

A motion was made to vote on PH and DSS budgets, as presented. Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt made a motion to approve the budgets, as presented and Mr. El-Amin seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve the PH and DSS proposed budgets.

A motion was made to approve the recommended funding for behavioral health, with the exception of the Novant Health Forsyth Medical-Foundation. Ms. Whisenhunt made a motion to approve and Dr. Robie seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve the recommendations for behavioral health funding with the exception of the Novant Health Forsyth Medical-Foundation.

Committee Update – Legislative

None

Adjourn:

Before asking for a motion to adjourn, Mr. Seats announced that the next meeting would be in June. Mr. El-Amin made a motion to adjourn and others seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

SR/lgc

Next Meeting: June 2, 2021 - 5:30pm