



Macon County
Public Health

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
MINUTES
3/23/2021**

Members: Mitchell Bishop, Engineer and Chair; Ross Dodge, General Public and Vice-Chair; Melissa Bell, Pharmacist, Nathan Brenner, Dentist, Teresa Murray, General Public; Jeff Todd, Veterinarian; Paul Higdon, County Commissioner; Gosia Tiger, General Public; Vacant, Physician, Ellen Shope; Nurse Representative; Vacant, General Public

Members Absent: Nathan Brenner, Melissa Bell and Paul Higdon

Staff Present: Kathy McGaha, Melissa Setzer, Jennifer Garrett, Carrie Pazcoguin and Emily Ritter, Dr. Dewhurst, Kyle Jennings, Ashley Woody, Jimmy Villiard and Ellen Holbrooks

Guests: None

Media: None

Public Comment: None

Call to Order: Mitchell Bishop called the meeting to order at 6:22 pm.

Welcome/Intro: Kyle introduced Ashley Woody; she is a new Environmental Health Specialist in Environmental Health. She will mainly focus on Food & Lodging. She is currently in her state training; this training is online this year, which has never been done.

Agenda Approval: Ross Dodge made a motion to approve the agenda. Ellen Shope seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Presentations:

Role of the Medical Director: Dr. Dewhurst spoke about the role of the Medical Director; he stated that in NC all Local Health Departments are required to have a Medical Director. Dr. Dewhurst is the Medical Director for Macon County Health Department; he is also the consultant to the Health Director and Nursing Director. He participates in development and review of protocols, standing orders for clinical and nursing staff. He participates in clinic planning meetings, ensures clinical compliance standards are met, ensures compliance regarding records documentation, reviews and address complaints regarding appropriateness of medical care, oversees policies for the clinic and the Macon County Jail, reviews and has input into clinician job descriptions. Dr. Dewhurst also over sees the PA's and nursing students, as well as seeing patients for several different services, including primary care, employee health and others. Mrs. Garrett and Mrs. McGaha stated that Dr. Dewhurst has been a tremendous asset during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the Meningococcal outbreak a

couple years ago. Mrs. McGaha stated that Dr. Dewhurst was the source of research for COVID-19 when the pandemic hit. Mr. Villiard stated that they all appreciate him with all the knowledge and experience he brings to the Health Department.

Ross Dodge asked if there had been any emergencies in the COVID vaccine line and the mental health of the people getting the vaccine. Dr. Dewhurst stated that luckily they have not had anything major issues, only slight problems like a drop in blood pressure, those are normally seen and transported to the Emergency Department by EMS. Mrs. Garrett answered the question about mental health. She stated that people have been relieved to get the vaccine. Dr. Dewhurst made comment that they have received many words stating that MCPH has done an excellent job.

Mrs. McGaha stated that there is a lot of organization that has went into this from getting the vaccine in, to having the staff and getting it done. There are several different county departments involved including, Macon County Public Health, Emergency Management, The National Guard, Building inspections, Sherriff's Dept. Maintenance, Drake Enterprise, etc.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Ross Dodge made a motion to accept the minutes. Ellen Shope seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Animal Control Grant Update: Ellen Holbrooks with Animal Services presented examples of the items that has been purchase and will be purchased with funds from the Petco Grant they received. They started with \$5,000, with that they have purchased adoption vest for the animals when they are walked and those vest were \$147.00. We have purchase a catio, which is too large to display at this meeting, so are working on purchasing another one smaller. The final item they would like to purchase is sound proofing insulation boards for the kennels. They have decided to go with the 2 inch because it will decrease the noise by 75%. The estimated price is \$2,880.00 and \$560.00 for shipping. These panels can be installed using glue that will last approximately 10 years or they have the option of having maintenance install the panels, which would last much longer. After the soundproofing is purchased, they will have to make up the difference of \$26.00, which they have from money that was donated to the shelter. Ellen Shope asked Mrs. Holbrooks if the soundproofing was for the animals or the workers. Mrs. Holbrooks stated that it was for both but mainly for the dogs. When one dog starts barking they all start barking and it is extremely loud. By adding the soundproofing, it will reduce stress for the dogs and be a better experience for the public interested in adopting. Mrs. Holbrooks stated that they are trying to get the community involved more and show the shelter in a more positive environment. They are also working on another grant from Highlands.

COVID-19 Update: Reports are sent out daily to all board members from Jimmy Villiard. As of this meeting, MCPH had given out 10,000 1st doses. The vaccine call center has handled 52,000-53,000 calls. Countywide vaccination count is close to 15,000, this number includes MCPH, Angel Medical, Highlands Cashiers Hospital and, Highlands/Cashiers Plato. Highlands Cashiers Plato has been doing weekly Latino clinics and are doing approx. 200 each time. They are drawing from Jackson County, Macon Count and northern part of Georgia. As of this meeting, there are 32 active COVID-19 cases.

New Business:

Rabies Clinic: Jimmy Villiard, Section Administrator of Animal Services stated that since December, they have had an outbreak of rabies cases. There have been two skunks and five raccoons test positive with in the county. These cases are not in just one particular part of the county they are spread across the count. Last year because of COVID-19 pandemic, they were unable to have any of the rabies clinic. Due to the recent outbreak in rabies cases, they have set up three rabies clinics to be held on two separate weekends for dogs, and cats to receive their rabies vaccine. Clinics will be held on 3/27/21 at East Franklin Elem. From 9-12, 3/27/21 Mountain View Intermediate School from 1-3 and 4/10/21 at Cartoogechaye Elem. From 10-2. Mr. Villiard recommends the public make sure that all animals are all vaccinated and kept current.

COVID Administration Fee: Carrie Pazcoguin, Finance Officer presented the new fee schedule for the COVID vaccine that has been sent down from the state. She stated that the patient is never billed for the vaccine, that this administration fee is only billed to the insurance companies. The fee for 1st doses will be increased to \$27.00 and the second dose will be \$39.00. The current one dose vaccine will be \$39.00. MCPH had used the \$14.00 base administration fee as a blanket until these figures were received from the state. These figures are based on Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement paid. Emily Ritter stated that the 2nd dose is higher due to the time it takes to track and administer the vaccine

Ellen Shope made a motion to approve the increase in the COVID vaccine Administration fee. Ross Dodge seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: None

Closed Session: None

Announcements: None

Next Meeting Date: 4/27/2021

Adjournment: Ross Dodge made the Motion to adjourn made by. Dr. Jeff Todd seconded that motion. Motion to adjourn passed unanimously at 7:39 p.m.

Minutes Recorded by: Melissa Setzer, MCPH Administration Assistant