

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, November 14, 2000 at 7:30 a.m. in the public meeting room in the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Board of Health Members Present: Dr. John DeCotis
Carol Fritz
Nancy Neff
Lynette Peterson
Lyn Redwood
Dr. Michael Strain, Chairman
Linda Wells

Staff Members Present: Merle Crowe
Rick Fehr
Gus Morgan
Laurie Cook
Dennis Davenport, Attorney

Dr. Strain called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

On motion made by Linda Wells, seconded by Carol Fritz to approve the minutes for the Board of Health meeting held on October 10, 2000, discussion followed.

Lyn Redwood said she was absent from the October 10th Board of Health meeting but she had sent in a report with questions. She said the questions were not actually referenced so it was somewhat confusing about what the questions were. She asked that her report be made an attachment to the October 10th Board of Health meeting minutes.

The motion carried unanimously.

RICK FEHR: Rick Fehr remarked that the update on the proposal for dealing with the salary and compensation for the environmental health employees had not been listed on the agenda. He said the primary reason for that was his mother had passed away, and he had lost several weeks of work as a result. He said for that reason, and other important reasons, he was not prepared to discuss the issue today.

UPDATE ON LAKE EDITH:

Mr. Fehr said he would like to share with the board a proposal to help reduce sampling costs. He said it was felt that the environmental staff could do the actual collection of samples from the lake, and maintain a proper legal line of evidence in handling of samples to the labs. He said they were awaiting bids from laboratories who would be doing the actual testing.

Chairman Strain asked Mr. Fehr if there were any numbers where Mr. Fehr would be sending these samples. He recalled a question as to the cost and where the samples would be sent.

Mr. Fehr replied that staff was going to seek out other laboratories in this area. He said he had not received any figures yet.

Carol Fritz asked if the Board would get those figures as soon as Mr. Fehr received them and Mr. Fehr replied yes.

Dr. DeCotis clarified that staff would do the sampling; that those samples would be sent off to someone else to do the actual testing, and Mr. Fehr agreed.

Lyn Redwood asked if anyone from the EPA had followed up on this issue.

Mr. Fehr replied no.

Ms. Redwood asked Mr. Fehr if he would like her to do that.

Mr. Fehr responded that he did not feel that would be necessary, but if it would be helpful he would certainly give her a call and let her know.

Mr. Fehr remarked that he hoped that within the next week he would have some cost estimates for actual testing of the collected samples. He said he would get that information to the Board members.

Chairman Strain said he would like the three best estimates faxed or e-mailed to the Board so that they could move forward.

Ms. Redwood asked Mr. Fehr if the University of Georgia in Athens was one of the laboratories that was giving an estimate, and Mr. Fehr replied yes.

UPDATE ON THE FLU VACCINE:

Merle Crowe remarked that Cynthia Grant was in training class and she had given her a report to present to the Board.

Ms. Crowe remarked that the nurse the Health Department had asked to come in to administer the vaccine was unavailable at the last minute. She said given the situation with sporadic shipping of the vaccine, it had turned out for the best because the Health Department would not have been able to schedule her as previously anticipated. She said the Health Department had received an initial shipment of 600 doses of vaccine, and had announced that a limited amount of vaccine was available. She said within six hours, 500 doses were given and the Health Department was effectively out of vaccine. She said the department was attempting to keep citizens informed through newspaper articles, department voice-messaging system information, and signs in the department lobby and on doors. She said that in an attempt to follow CDC and District IV guidelines regarding who should be vaccinated first, a description of high risk categories had been listed in all newspaper articles, voice messages and handouts at the Health Department. She said the request had been made that only those who fit the high risk category come into the Health Department during the first week. She said although difficulties with this type of immunization effort were expected, none were observed. She said in addition to those doses given, forty doses were put aside for the senior citizen center, and another forty doses for Dogwood Forest. She said the County nurse manager dispensed these doses at these sites.

Ms. Crowe further remarked that the total order for this year was 3,000 doses. She said the order was decreased from the original 5,000 doses in anticipation that clients would go to other sources and obtain the vaccine before the Health Department received vaccine. She said it was also impossible to schedule outside clinics with industry and the school system this year, since it was not known when a shipment would arrive or how much would be sent. She said staff felt certain at this point that the Health Department would be able to administer vaccine to the county employees on November 20th as expected.

STAFF REPORTS:

NEW EMPLOYEE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

Rick Fehr remarked that since the last Board of Health meeting a new employee had been hired in Environmental Health. He said he was interviewing for another position today.

Linda Wells asked for which position the new employee was hired.

Mr. Fehr replied he was hired as an Environmental Health Specialist II.

Ms. Wells asked if the gentleman had lived in the area long.

Mr. Fehr responded that he had lived in the metropolitan area for a good while.

UPDATE ON BANK ACCOUNTS: Mr. Fehr said he would like to furnish the Board with further information concerning the Health Department's bank account. He said the Board would be receiving a handout from Ms. Crowe regarding this information. He said during the summer Ms. Crowe, the Administrative Coordinator, had spent a lot of effort soliciting and evaluating bank bids in this area, to determine if interest income and servicing could be improved in the department's checking account. He said the handout was a result of this research. He said the Health Department had realized a \$6,600 increase in interest income, just four months after moving its account to Heritage Bank. He commended Merle Crowe for a great job!

Linda Wells said she had tried to get the Board of Commissioners to implement some type of system such that when an employee saves the county money, or finds the county money, there would be some type of incentive reward. She said this system was not yet in place but the Board was working toward getting it. She said there were many times when employees go above and beyond, which merits a great deal of acknowledgment.

The Board commended Ms. Crowe for her hard work on this project.

LAW SUIT REGARDING SEPTIC PROBLEM: Dr. DeCotis asked Attorney Davenport how the law suit was going, regarding the septic problem in the north end of the county.

Attorney Davenport replied after the decision had been rendered at the hearing level, there had been comments about an appeal being filed. He said he had not seen an appeal filed, and the time for an appeal had run out.

Commissioner Wells remarked that one of the newspapers reported that an appeal had been filed.

Attorney Davenport stated if an appeal had been filed, it would be on the desk of Mr. Grant at the firm. He said Mr. Grant had been handling that particular suit. He said he had not spoken to Mr. Grant in the last several days about this situation. He said if there was something in the newspaper, then this could possibly be true and he would rule that a judge had decided wrongly, based upon certain circumstances. He said that even if an appeal was filed at this point, the odds were very much against someone winning that type of decision.

Linda Wells said the county had an excellent group of attorneys working for it; that every time Mr. Grant goes in on this type of case the county had a tremendous possibility of winning. She said from what she understood, Mr. Grant had done an excellent job. She said this was a tough case and it could have easily gone the other way. She stated that long-term ramifications for the county would have been horrific. She said she was extremely pleased with that result. She asked Attorney Davenport to let Mr. Grant know that the Board of Health was very pleased.

On motion made by Carol Fritz, seconded by Linda Wells to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 a.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Merle Crowe, Administrative Ops. Coord. II
Prepared by: Karen Morley

Dr. Michael Strain, Chairman