

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, November 9, 2004 in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Board of Health Members Present:

John DeCotis, PhD
Thomas Faulkner, MD
Lynette Peterson
Judi-ann Rutherford
Lyn Redwood
Michael Strain, MD
A.G.VanLandingham

Staff Members Present:

Michael Brackett, MD
Merle Crowe
Rick Fehr
Cynthia Grant
Robert Kurbes
Rodney Hilley
Deborah Straight
Dennis Davenport, Attorney

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM September 14, 2004: Motion was made by Mr. VanLandingham to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Peterson. There was no discussion. The minutes were approved as written, with Dr. Faulkner abstaining.

OLD / UNFINISHED BUSINESS / PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no old business or public comment.

NEW BUSINESS:

MCINTOSH TRAIL BOARD VACANCY: Ms. Crowe said that Mr. Gordon Webb, McIntosh Trail chair, had requested the Board of Health approve Mr. Ken Schall to fill the vacancy. Ms. Peterson made a motion to recommend Mr. Schall's appointment, seconded by Mr. VanLandingham. The motion passed unanimously.

INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM: Mr. Fehr brought the board's attention to the *Safe Kids of Fayette* Injury Prevention program. He said that this was not a state-mandated program, and that time spent on Safe Kids was using staff time that could be spent on mandated programs.

Mr. VanLandingham wanted to know if injury prevention events were well attended.

Mr. Fehr deferred to Mr. Kurbes, who had headed up the program since its inception.

Mr. Kurbes said the program was very well received, and was supported by local partnerships with business and other agencies. He said the biggest issue was the level of activity required by the state and national coalition each year: a certain number of car seat checks, etc. He said these requirements were met by maintaining a coalition with other agencies such that the burden was shared among all partners. He said no funding from the health department was

required. He said that remaining in good standing with those other organizations made grant monies available, which was the life-blood of *Safe Kids of Fayette*. He said all partners were willing and anxious to continue this work and that much of the work was done during off-duty hours. He mentioned that staff benefited from this program as well as the community, due to personal satisfaction in helping children.

Mr. VanLandingham made a motion to continue the *Safe Kids* program.

Mr. Fehr clarified that since this was not a state-mandated program that mandated programs must come first. He said that in order to maintain the current level of implementation, additional staff would be necessary.

Ms. Peterson asked how many staff hours a week would be needed to maintain the current level of activity in the *Safe Kids* program.

Mr. Kurbes said that the coordinator was the only staff member with a time requirement of ten hours per week. He said attempts were made to allocate part of the required time at work and part at home. He mentioned that due to the nature of environmental health work, at times this was not possible. He discussed the current project, *Risk Watch*, which was presented in local schools. He said staff had gained experience since working in this program and that it ran much more smoothly now than at first. He said it currently took about two hours per presentation, with four presentations a week scheduled, so about eight hours a week were currently being donated to risk prevention. He said Debbie Straight had assumed the coordinator position, and he was now co-coordinator. He praised her time management skills and mentioned that *Safe Kids of Fayette* had received a performance rating of 100% from the national *Safe Kids* organization, being one of only two organizations in Georgia to receive a perfect score. He said a recent car seat check had been held for Head Start parents, which is a high risk population. He said three staff members participated in that presentation, made during work hours.

Ms. Peterson asked what kind of staffing would be necessary to keep up with this program.

Mr. Kurbes pointed out that Fayette County continued to grow, therefore mandated program demands grew accordingly, leaving less time for *Safe Kids*. He reinforced that this type coalition required constant attention to remain viable, and that without it, momentum would surely be lost.

Mr. VanLandingham asked for figures to justify additional staffing, saying that multiple funding sources might be found with such justification.

Mr. Kurbes said that in order to maintain current levels, support staff would be needed. He said time spent on injury control was being cut more and more to keep up with mandated programs. He said adding an environmentalist would serve the purpose better than adding a secretary.

Dr. Brackett clarified that this was a staffing issue, not a question of funding. He felt that it was important for the board to realize that this request for staff would be to perform a non-mandated function. He pointed out that other communities within the district had not supported injury control like this one, and that *Safe Kids of Fayette* was unique in that respect. He reminded the board that a couple of years ago Environmental Health had given up filling an open position in order to fund a raise for staff members. He said that in doing so, it

was understood that extra demands would be placed on existing staff members. He felt that it was important to properly compensate staff. He pointed out again that mandated programs were taking time once given to injury prevention. He said an environmentalist position was being requested, to help with the mandated programs, so that staff time could be freed up for injury prevention. He commented on the commitment of staff to maintaining this program, saying it was unique in his experience.

Ms. Redwood said she saw tremendous growth for Fayette County, and she wanted to see current high standards maintained. She said she supported the addition of a position, especially in view of expected continued growth. She said no price tag could be attached to injury prevention, especially *Ghost-Out* presentations. She said this issue should be taken up during the next budget planning session.

Dr. DeCotis commended Mr. Kurbes and the program, saying it should certainly be maintained. He agreed that adding a position should be addressed at the next budget time.

Mr. Fehr commented that no decision was necessary today, that staff had wanted to bring the issue before the board for its consideration and direction. He thanked the board for considering this issue. He said further information would be given to the board later.

STAFF REPORTS:

Mr. Fehr said that on Columbus Day he received a call about 3:00 am regarding the dam that broke next to highway 54. He said he was asked to evaluate the situation and indicate if residents of Marnel Mobile Home Park affected by the flood could return to their homes. He said emergency operations put in place in this community were excellent and that containment efforts all went smoothly.

Ms. Grant gave a brief staff report, following up on Mr. Fehr's report. She said Mr. Nelms did a wonderful job of putting together coalitions to handle emergencies in Fayette County. She said a meeting had been held last Thursday with Mr. Nelms, hospital staff, school staff, and other members of the Bioterrorism Task Force to discuss how to handle a mass clinic, such as pandemic flu. She said scenarios such as how to pull from the National Pharmaceutical stockpile in such an event had been discussed.

She said Felecia Jackson LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) had been hired. She said Ms. Jackson had prior experience doing immunizations in Fulton County. She said Ms. Jackson's training was ongoing, both in WIC and auditing of immunization records. She said about 100 audits per year were now necessary. She mentioned that some schools had 300-400 children in one grade, and that auditing had become nearly overwhelming. She spoke for the staff in saying they were quite thankful to have Ms. Jackson on board, and that Ms. Jackson was picking up things very quickly.

She said she had attempted to keep the board up to date regarding the flu vaccine situation. She said that only two counties in District IV had received vaccine as they had ordered from Aventis. She said that all vaccine in the district was pooled and allocated to the highest risk population, which had been determined to be nursing home residents. She mentioned that these people were at risk due to the speed with which flu would spread in nursing homes. She said determination was made that there was enough vaccine to immunize a percentage of residents, but that in Fayette it worked out that all residents would be immunized. She said two nursing homes remained, and residents would receive flu vaccine as soon as permission slips were completed. She said that senior citizen day center attendees would also be

immunized. She said another shipment of vaccine had just been received and once distribution instructions were received from the district office it would be given out after nursing home residents were finished.

Dr. Brackett said Coweta and Fayette were the only counties in the district to receive vaccine shipments. He said the CDC designated long-term care facilities as first tier. He said to the credit of both Fayette and Coweta counties, the decision was made to divide the available vaccine among all the counties in the district, according to demand. He said initial shipments allowed immunization of about 50% of long term care patients. He said it now appeared that all long term care patients and all critical staff in hospitals could receive immunization, due to vaccine being released. He said critical staff would be defined as staff caring for dialysis patients, oncology or transplant wing patients, etc. He said this was important since these staff members could potentially expose eight to ten patients who could die if they got the flu. He said it was possible that enough vaccine would be received to immunize very high-risk patients as well—such as transplant or dialysis patients. He hoped that physician-indicated high-risk patients could be included, with criteria to be determined later. He doubted that there would be enough vaccine to immunize patients on the basis of age: for example, age 65 or over. He said two weeks ago the CDC sent out a memo promising about three million doses per week to be delivered over the next two months. He said about 1500 vaccine doses had been received in the last two weeks, and that he saw a loosening of constraints now. He offered to answer any questions.

Ms. Grant offered congratulations to the staff. She said the situation had been difficult and staff had handled themselves very professionally. She said calls for flu shots were averaging about 150 per day, some of them not very nice. She said articles had been in the paper, but it made no difference. She mentioned that people were concerned due to other counties having vaccine, but that since vaccine is privately purchased there are few constraints on how they administer it.

Mr. VanLandingham asked if the CDC controlled distribution of vaccine.

Dr. Brackett replied that since vaccine was privately purchased, purchasers may sell as they see fit. He said he had received calls from all over the country demanding flu shots. He said following CDC recommendations was much more difficult than giving vaccine on a first-come-first-served basis. He said in view of the lack of vaccine, prevention needed to be pushed: that is, hand washing, avoiding sick people, and so on. He said there should be a push to immunize people with pneumococcal vaccine. He said one of the major causes of death in flu cases was pneumonia, usually bacterial, for which there was a vaccine. He felt that PneumoVax[®] was actually more effective than flu vaccine to prevent death.

There were no other staff reports.

Ms. Redwood commented on the Developmental Task Force meeting this afternoon at 11:00, which was working toward getting a new facility for special needs people in Fayette County. She also mentioned that on November 18th in Tyrone a smoke-free air ordinance would be considered. She invited all to attend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mr. Davenport requested an Executive Session to discuss one legal item. Motion to adjourn to Executive Session was made by Ms. Rutherford, seconded by Mr. VanLandingham. The motion was unanimously approved.

The board reconvened at 8:55 am.

ADJOURMENT:

Motion was made to adjourn by Mr. VanLandingham, seconded by Ms. Redwood. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 am.

Michael Strain, MD, Chair

Merle Crowe, Secretary