

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, March 8, 2005 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:

Merle Crowe
Rick Fehr
Cynthia Grant
Rodney Hilley
Carl Knapp
Wyndia Wortham
Dennis Davenport, Attorney

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Strain called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM November 9, 2004: Motion was made by Ms. Rutherford to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. VanLandingham. There was no discussion. The minutes were approved as written.

OLD / UNFINISHED BUSINESS / PUBLIC COMMENT:

Election of Officers: Motion was made to reinstate the current slate of officers by Mr. VanLandingham, seconded by Ms. Rutherford. The motion carried unanimously.

Swanson Valley Homeowners Association President: Attorney Dennis Davenport updated the board on this issue. He said that he had twice contacted Mr. Seay, partner to Mr. Pierce, regarding responsibility for the sewer system. He said he received a fax from Mr. Seay, stating that the Homeowner's Association wanted to take over the sewer system, thus absolving him from responsibility. He said Mr. Pierce had obtained a bond for this year, renewable yearly, at a cost of approximately \$2,000-2,500. He then contacted Swanson Valley Homeowner's Association (SVHA) Mr. Coffey, to help him understand that if the Board of Health approved the transfer, both responsibility and liability for the sewer system would be borne by the SVHA, and that an instrument similar to the current bond should be put in place to accept liability. He said as long as the SVHA was willing to absorb this cost, the Board of Health would probably approve the transfer. He said that written consent was necessary for the transfer. He said Mr. Coffey requested attendance of a knowledgeable person at a SVHA meeting, to explain the issue more fully, and said he would be willing to do so. He said that if the Association was willing to accept transfer of the sewage system, with attendant responsibility and liability, the board was protected in the event of a system failure. He expressed concern that there would not be a viable alternative in the event of a future massive system failure. He said an alternate area had been identified, but there was no guarantee that it would work in the future. He said tying into a sewer line about a mile away was the best alternative. He said doing that would involve construction of lift stations, due to the area geography, and that consent from the city

of Tyrone would be necessary. He said there were no county ordinances banning transfer to SVHA, and that backfilling the identified alternative area with more soil to make it a better alternative probably would not work. He emphasized that the system was currently working fine, and would probably continue to do so. He said that the board had time to resolve this issue in the best fashion possible, due to the current year bond.

Ms. Redwood felt that this issue was frustrating, because the state approved this type system, which was incompatible with the Tyrone area, and that such a system had been forced upon homeowners by the developer. She said when the system eventually did fail, responsibility would then fall on the city of Tyrone and Fayette County. She wanted to see a mechanism in place to protect homeowners.

Mr. Steve Coffey said he had been water commissioner for Fulton County and understood how the system works. He explained that the developer, Mr. Gaddy, had received approval for 74 bedrooms, but that homes had been built with 4 bedrooms instead of 3, thus using up the allotment and resulting in 4 lots that cannot be built upon. He said the developer had tried every way to get approval to build on these vacant lots. He said Mr. Gaddy wanted to purchase the existing system in order to raise homeowner fees to an unbearable level; which was unacceptable. He mentioned that on numerous occasions Mr. Gaddy had approached the Health Department, but had not been able to find a system that would work on his vacant lots.

He mentioned that the current septic system worked very well, and that one of the homeowners was able to repair it at need. He said they had new backup components for the system on hand. He felt that the city of Tyrone did not wish to extend sewer to Swanson Subdivision. He said Swanson Subdivision sat higher than surrounding subdivisions and that the system worked fine and was currently in process of being upgraded. He said he understood the responsibility of the Health Department after consulting with Mr. Davenport. He mentioned that it would be difficult and expensive to find another bonding agent after this year. He said he was trying to buy insurance to insure the septic system, for the same purpose.

Mr. Davenport explained that the system had been transferred to the Swanson Homeowner's Association in 1993, but that the Board of Health had not become aware of it until the middle of last year, when the system developed a small leak and the history of the system was called into question. It was then discovered that such a transfer was not legal without written consent of the Board of Health. He clarified that the SVHA had accepted transfer of the system, but that without written approval they had not accepted liability. He said legally the system was still in the hands of Mr. Seay and Pierce. He warned the board that if they chose to undo the transfer transaction and return the system to Mr. Seay and Pierce, a third party (Mr. Gaddy, the developer) might offer a big price to get control of the system, much against the wishes of the homeowners. He pointed out that permitting of the 4 lots in question would still have to come before the Board of Health.

Ms. Redwood recommended that Mr. Davenport attend the next Homeowner's Association meeting, explain the issue, and report back to the Board of Health. The board requested that an Environmentalist also attend the meeting.

MCINTOSH TRAIL APPOINTMENT: Ms. Crowe informed the board that McIntosh Trail had requested approval to re-appoint Ms. Terry Willis, whose appointment will expire June 30, 2005. Motion was made to approve this appointment by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Ms. Rutherford. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

PRESENTATION OF THE BUDGET: Ms. Crowe presented the proposed budget. She said many of the items were based on a projection from 7 months usage in FY 2005. She listed the items requested and gave a brief explanation each item:

Direct Salaries And Fringe Benefits, \$1,114,669, which increased by \$75,898 due to personnel changes in FY 2005. Included are the addition of a Licensed Practical Nurse and a Licensed Nutritionist. **Equipment**, \$12,000; **Supplies And Materials**, \$50,000. These include clinic, laboratory, cleaning and office supplies used in the overall operation of the health department. **Pharmaceuticals**, \$120,000. These funds purchase travel vaccines, pneumococcal vaccine, and pharmaceuticals not provided by the State formulary, such as Hepatitis A and B vaccines. The cost of these vaccines are recovered from patients. **Repairs & Maintenance**, \$34,100; this line item includes medical waste disposal; computer, copy machine and postage meter maintenance. **Printing**, \$1,000; these funds pay for printing forms and educational materials not provided by the state. This item decreased by \$1,000 from FY 2005. **Direct Benefits To Clients**, \$2,500; this line item covers expenditures for tests such as lead screening, and also are recovered from patients. **Other Operating**, \$35,000; goes to provide items such as cabling, registration fees for meetings, payment for computer services provided by the district office, and other expenses that do not fall into specific categories. **Travel**, \$10,000; travel reimbursement is \$.28 per mile. **Telecommunications**, \$6,500; these funds support the telephone and fax system. **Postage**, \$9,950; this item increased due to current HIPPA requirements; postcards can no longer be mailed, but must be enclosed in an envelope at the higher rate. **Intra/Inter Agency**, \$8,600; these funds pay for pharmaceuticals and personnel services provided by District Four Health Services and are pro-rated among the 12 counties according to usage.

PROPOSED REVENUE SOURCES: **Grant-In-Aid**, \$309,157; this is funding received from the State Department of Human Resources. The figure is legislated and allocated through a Master Agreement. It is anticipated that the health department will receive a 2.5% decrease in Grant-in-Aid in FY 2006, in addition to the 5 % decrease in FY 2005. **WIC**, \$38,194. **Prior Year Program Fees**, \$25,000; these are fees collected in FY 2005 and rolled over to FY 2006. **Environmental Health Fees**, \$81,414; these are current year fees earned by Environmental Health. It is regrettable that the necessity arose to put in Current Year Fees, and use of these fees are hoped to be unnecessary. **County Participating**, \$361,152; this is money we are requesting as the county match, which is nearly a 20% increase over last year's funding of \$301,215. The increase is partly due to funding cuts from other sources, increased travel vaccine costs (which are recovered from patients), increased general vaccine costs, and mandated salary costs, including the 2% increase in salaries mandated by the state for 6 months of the Fiscal Year.

Ms. Grant pointed out that this figure included the salary and benefits cost of the Licensed Nutritionist (LD) position added FY 2005. Licensed Dieticians are required to fully recover their salaries and fringes by performing billable services, so the salary and benefits costs of the LD will be recovered from patient services.

Dr. DeCotis asked about the lack of the Hourly Labor line item. Ms. Crowe replied that the Environmental Health part-time secretary was expected to retire, and it was hoped that Environmental Health would function adequately without her. He commented that the requested increase was modest, in light of the services preformed by staff.

Ms. Crowe noted that it was interesting that 6 nurses had almost 40,000 patient contacts over the past year. She said that the LPN on staff spent part of her time auditing child care facilities and schools, as required by law, thus severely limiting her availability to perform patient services, but enabling the RN to have more in clinic time.

Ms. Redwood commented that those numbers were incredible. She questioned the increase in the salary line item. Ms. Crowe responded that the increase was due to state mandated salary increases of 2%, for 6 months of the year, not all year.

Dr. DeCotis asked if Environmental Fees went up. Mr. Fehr replied that one developer paid a number of permitting fees in advance of need, which accounted for some \$10,000.

Ms. Redwood asked if Environmental Health needed another staff member, and if they would be able to maintain current standards with existing staff. Ms. Crowe replied that it had been hoped to add another Environmentalist and a full-time secretary, but that adding those positions pushed the budget up by another \$60,000 and it was felt that was too large a request. She said it was hoped Environmental Health would be able to maintain their current standards. Mr. Fehr commented that the Injury Control Program would probably be cut back severely, due to lack of time for current staff to maintain it.

Ms. Redwood asked if information could be added to the submitted budget, explaining the need for additional staff, at submission to the board of Commissioners; Ms. Crowe replied it certainly could be. Mr. VanLandingham said the situation had already been discussed and that the Commissioners were aware of the need. He said the current budget should stand as written. Ms. Rutherford said that nothing prohibited requesting another position during the year, when the need became apparent.

Dr. Stain asked how the Grant-In-Aid formula was determined. Ms. Wortham explained that this particular formula had been developed in 1992 and was currently under state committee review. She said it was based on population, size, need, and in some cases on additional agreement. She said the current formula would be used until the ongoing study was complete. She said the current formula might even go back to 1967. Dr. Strain commented that Fayette County was a far different entity now than in 1992, and certainly since 1967. Ms. Wortham said that was the reason for the review, and that when she had more information she would pass it along. Dr. Strain requested Ms. Wortham provide the name of the committee conducting the review. She said she would.

Motion was made to approve the budget as written by Ms. Rutherford, seconded by Mr. VanLandingham. There was no further discussion. The budget was approved unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

Mr. Fehr provided the board a copy of a recent Fayette Neighbor newspaper article, which covered the Food Inspection Program.

Ms. Grant updated the board on her local board memberships. She said this was the way to maintain the Health Department's involvement in the community. She said there was an ongoing effort spearheaded by Judge Schell to start a CASA within this judicial district. She said the CASA person was a court-appointed advocate for the child in custody cases, and that the advocate was independent of DFCS or any other state agency.

She said a Teen Court was also being discussed, which would be run by teenagers and an alternative to DJJ-type programs. She said teens which came before the regular court could be referred to the Teen Court, to be judged by their peers, and that they might be sentenced to Public Service hours, etc. She said a committee member had had previous extremely positive experience with this type program.

She said she was also on the Sexual Assault Committee, that Sexual Assault Protocols were expected soon, and that she would bring the protocol to the board for approval. She said SAIN nurses would be specially trained to properly maintain chain of custody in the event of a sexual assault.

She said Fayette FACTOR was now doing its 3-year strategic plan, with the focus on the existing drug problem in Fayette County. She said 85-90% of child abuse in this county had some connection to drug abuse, particularly methamphetamine, and it was a big problem. She said children were getting drugs from addicted parents and if drugs were not in the home they were in the school and therefore did affect children and their families.

She mentioned that she was also involved with DART, which was working to build a needed adolescent treatment facility here. She said when the Day Program Vistas opened, it had been expected to have 20 children within 2-3 months; but that within a month there was a waiting list. She said there needed to be a long-term treatment facility, since day treatment did not work for everybody and that this facility sought to help meet that need.

She mentioned that there was to be a Hispanic Health fair March 19, 2005 at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Peachtree City. She said this would be the third year, and that last year over 800 people attended. She said many Hearing Vision and Dental exams were performed on adults and children. She said 35-38 clinical breast exams were performed and referrals were given. She mentioned that this fair brought in people who would not normally come to the health department, and that once folks were seen at health fairs they knew there were 2 secretaries who speak Spanish employed at the health department and this encouraged them to come in. She said these secretaries were a true blessing.

Ms. Redwood mentioned the free clinic that was preparing to open. Ms. Grant said she was on that board too, and that plans were to identify what the health department does so that the 2 entities would work in tandem. She said the health department would be involved in their setup and the free clinic would bridge a gap between working poor who have no insurance and the lack of a primary care services at the health department. She said the hospital would provide lab and xray services; that there is a dentist lined up; podiatrists; a chiropractor, and others who are volunteering their time and equipment. She mentioned that there were 2 sites being looked at now. Mr. VanLandingham said he had spoken with a DART board member yesterday and that they were close to having a presentation ready for the Board of Commissioners.

DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEMS: Ms. Redwood asked if community drip irrigation septic systems came before the Board of Health, and if research could be done on these type systems. Mr. Fehr replied that all systems came before the health department. He said he was not aware of

any other community drip irrigation system than Swanson Valley. Mr. Coffey wanted to know if Tyrone approved septic systems; Ms. Redwood said they did not.

Ms. Redwood also commented that a developer in Tyrone had attempted to run a water line to his property through an existing subdivision area of septic field line. She said that in this situation the developer was not aware of the septic lines, and asked if he could be made aware that Environmental Health staff was available to address this issue.

She also expressed concern about a particular system that seemed to have a higher than usual failure rate, and the time spent by staff to address this issue. She wondered if there was a tracking system in place for these failures, and if a moratorium would be a good idea. Mr. Fehr said a lawsuit was currently in process over this very issue, and negotiations were taking place to reach a resolution. Mr. Hilley said failures were being tracked and that system specifications were being reviewed with an eye to changing them in the near future.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Rutherford, seconded by Ms. Peterson. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 am.

Michael Strain, MD, Chair

Merle Crowe, Secretary