

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, September 13, 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  
Michael Strain, MD

**Staff Members Present:**

Carolyn Callison  
Merle Crowe  
Rick Fehr  
Rodney Hilley  
Carl Knapp  
Dennis Davenport, Attorney

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Dr. Strain was unavoidably delayed. Dr. DeCotis called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. Dr. Strain entered at 7:37 am.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM July 12, 2005:** Motion was made by Dr. Faulkner to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Peterson. There was no discussion. The minutes were approved as written.

**OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS / PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Environmental Health (EH) Fees:** Mr. Fehr presented the board with information regarding proposed Environmental Health fees. Ms. Rutherford had questions about some commercial on-site permit fees. Mr. Fehr replied that some corrections needed to be made to the proposal. The board requested that Mr. Fehr include current vs. proposed fees when he resubmitted the proposal.

Dr. DeCotis questioned whether increased collections would be used this fiscal year. Mr. Fehr explained that all fees went into Previous Year Program Income, to be expended the following fiscal year. He said he hoped increased fees would fund the addition of a full time EH Specialist and secretary. He said that it would not be possible to give exact figures. Dr. DeCotis hoped that increasing fees would offset state cuts in Grant-in-Aid.

Ms. Peterson asked why commercial onsite sewage permit fees were less than single-family residential permit fees. Mr. Fehr replied that in the past county commissioners had favored setting commercial fees lower than residential fees, but that certainly a case could be made to set residential and commercial permit fees to equal amounts, at the board's discretion.

Ms. Rutherford made a motion that the fee request be tabled until the next meeting so that necessary corrections could be made to the proposal; seconded by Dr. DeCotis. The motion was approved with no further discussion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mr. Terry Whitlock, president of *Special Ops*, said that in January 2004 he had requested that the board look into development disability issues in Fayette County. He

said he had not seen results of the task force after that meeting. He asked if the board could set a deadline to make these results public. He said that the current facility for developmentally disabled adults was at capacity. He said information the school system had provided was that there were currently fifteen (15) students eligible for services due to graduate this year, which made forty-five (45) eligible individuals in Fayette County. He said the West Georgia Region office stated that over 100 individuals were on a waiting list for residential support, respite and day support, employment support and other services. He added that numbers had recently gone up significantly, due to efforts by *Special Ops* to publicize services for which this population qualifies. He said the state had reorganized its Developmental Disabilities departments, consolidating them from seven to five. He said Dr. Steven Hall had been hired to head the Developmental Disabled Services division of the Mental Health Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases division of the Department of Human Resources, and that Dr. Hall would be speaking at a meeting to be held at New Hope Baptist Church North tonight at 7:00 pm. He invited the board to attend the meeting.

He mentioned that *Special Ops* had commissioned its own assessment of the need for services in Fayette County, through the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, GA State University. He said the assessment had been completed this past summer, and offered a copy to staff. He asked that the board complete its assessment, and that the completed assessment be presented to the county commissioners. He felt that Fayette County was not getting its fair share of Federal resources. He encouraged those who had not visited the current facility to do so, and to also visit surrounding county facilities for purposes of comparison. He thanked the board for its time.

Ms. Peterson said Ms. Redwood had been working with the task force and that she was sorry that Ms. Redwood was not able to attend today's meeting. She said Ms. Redwood would have been able to provide information.

Mr. Gordon Furr: Mr. Furr expressed great concern that undersized septic systems were being installed in Fayette county. He also expressed concern that Environmental Health staff should physically count number of bedrooms to verify that they matched the approved number for the septic system. Mr. Furr also said there were problems with sewer lines being set too close to water supply lines and creeks in Tyrone. He said Tyrone's setback was 25 feet, whereas the state requirement was 150 feet. He felt that sewage was getting into the county's water supply. He mentioned one subdivision in particular. Dr. Strain asked if he had discussed this issue with Mr. Fehr, and pointed out that if the city of Tyrone permitted the subdivision in question, the Board of Health had no jurisdiction.

Mr. Fehr said that there seemed to be some discrepancies between setbacks required by Tyrone and those of Fayette County. Dr. Strain wanted to know if setbacks were the jurisdiction of Fayette County Environmental Health or the city of Tyrone. Dr. Strain asked which regulations Environmental Health (EH) followed. Mr. Fehr answered that EH followed state regulations. Ms. Peterson stated that the setback differences were not minor. The board requested that staff check this issue out.

Mr. Furr said maintaining clean air and water was critical to the future of Fayette County and future generations. He felt that clean air and water was much more important than monetary consideration. He pointed out that the city of Fairburn was engaging in extensive building and that runoff came directly to Fayette County through Trickum Creek.

The board requested that the jurisdiction question be placed on the next meeting agenda.

Dr. DeCotis asked if most new construction in Tyrone was on sewer. Mr. Fehr replied that as far as he knew only John Wieland subdivisions were on sewer. Mr. Fehr said he would clear this issue up.

**NEW BUSINESS: Travel Supplement:** Ms. Crowe informed the board that the state had voted to adjust travel reimbursement for employees from 28 cents to 40.5 cents per mile, and that Fayette County had been reimbursing its employees at that rate for some time. She reminded the board that state policy had been to pay employees who met certain criteria a \$50.00 supplement per month, and that the supplement would be defunct September 16<sup>th</sup> when the new travel rate became effective. She added that only one employee in Fayette County Health Department would be affected.

Ms. Crowe also requested that the board approve the 40.5 cent per mile rate retroactive to September 1, 2005, and that health department reimbursement be set equal to the rate paid by Fayette County for future reimbursement. Motion to approve retroactive payment of 40.5 cents per mile to September 1, 2005 and linkage of future reimbursement to Fayette County reimbursement was made by Ms. Rutherford, seconded by Ms. Peterson. The motion carried unanimously with no further discussion.

**HURRICANE KATRINA UPDATE:** Ms. Callison informed the board that Fayette County had been affected by Hurricane Katrina. She said evacuees had shown up with nothing but the clothes they were wearing. She said that at the Town Hall Meeting on September 1<sup>st</sup> it had been decided that the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) would be the point of first contact for evacuees. She said representatives from the Emergency Management Agency, DFCS, Public Health, the school system, Mental Health, various medical services, and various faith and charitable organizations had been at the meeting. She said DFCS had requested cash donations so that victims could purchase food and clothing immediately. She said the generosity of Fayette County citizens was the main reason that opening a shelter had not been necessary. She said as of September 9<sup>th</sup>, 243 families – encompassing 605 individuals—had been served through DFCS. She said monies received and disbursed to these victims amounted to \$37,410.00, and that DFCS was still working closely with these victims to find housing. She said that a property management company had donated six apartments rent-free for six months. She said some of the local churches were adopting these families, taking them into members' homes or offering campers or trailers as living quarters. She mentioned that there had been some concern about overcrowding in apartments where local families had taken in relatives but that DFCS was aware of and working to alleviate these situations.

She mentioned that in addition to handling regularly scheduled appointments, the health department had decided to allow people to walk in for tetanus vaccinations, Hepatitis A or B vaccines, immune globulin, or whatever was considered necessary for people going to the affected areas. She said the CDC had not recommended Hepatitis A or B for those people, but if the person requested those vaccines they were provided. She mentioned that normal documentation requirements were being waived for displaced patients being admitted to the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. She said if patients stated that they had been on WIC they were put on a 30 day pending proof of income.

Ms. Rutherford asked about flu vaccine availability this year. Ms. Callison said it was not known yet if there would be a vaccine shortage, but that there were now four manufacturers versus two last year. She said that the CDC had requested that as of October 11<sup>th</sup> flu vaccine be provided only to those people meeting high-risk criteria: age 65 or older; age 50 or older

with chronic illness; pregnant women; children aged 6—23 months or residents of long-term facilities. She said as of October 24<sup>th</sup>, flu vaccine would be offered to the general public.

**STAFF REPORTS:** Mr. Davenport updated the board on the Swanson Valley Subdivision sewage treatment plant issue. He reminded the board that the homeowner's association had expressed a desire to own and maintain that system. He said the board had asked that he obtain certain information from the association: first, the plan if the current maintenance worker moved out of the subdivision, and second, the plan in the event of system failure. He said the plan in event of failure was a bond, which was in place and effective though the end of the year. He said Mr. Fehr and he had met with the association to make them aware of the responsibility of owning and maintaining such a system. He said Mr. Coffey, President of the Homeowner's Association, told him that as of the August 23<sup>rd</sup> association meeting that the homeowners had decided they did not want to own the system, making maintenance a non-issue. He reminded the board that written consent from the board of health had been necessary for any transfer of ownership of this system, and now that ownership reverted to the original owners, Mr. Seay and Mr. Pierce.

Mr. Davenport proposed that he would notify Mr. Seay and Mr. Pierce in writing that the security bond was slated to expire at the end of December and that the homeowner's association no longer desired to own the system. He would inform them that the Board of Health had not signed off on transfer of the system to the homeowner's association, therefore it remained their responsibility to renew the security bond for calendar year 2006. He said it must be assumed that they would do so; but that a contingency plan needed to be put in place in the event they failed to renew the bond. He said he would make that written notification and copy the board. He felt that he would hear from Mr. Seay or Mr. Pierce and would inform the board of any communication at the November meeting.

Dr. Strain said there were two issues that must be followed up before the next meeting: first, the developmental disability issue—to look at what could be done to work with the state and county commissioners, and secondly to identify the board's responsibilities with respect to septic permitting in Tyrone. He directed Mr. Fehr to work with Tyrone to discover who was responsible for permitting, and to work with Fulton County regarding sewage. He felt that based on experience with Marnelle Park, it probably would be out of even the state's hands. He said where responsibility lies for each of these issues must be identified, and doing the right thing for Fayette County must be the goal.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 am.

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Michael Strain, MD, Chair

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Merle Crowe, Secretary