

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, March 13, 2007 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  
Robert Horgan  
Lyn Redwood, RN, MSN  
Lynette Peterson  
Cynthia Plunkett  
Michael Strain, MD

**Staff Members Present:**

Michael Brackett, MD  
Carolyn Callison, RN, BSN  
Merle Crowe, BA  
John Darden  
Rick Fehr  
Rodney Hilley  
Wyndia Wortham  
Dennis Davenport, Attorney

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM November 14, 2006:** Motion was made by Ms. Peterson to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Horgan. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS / PUBLIC COMMENT:** Ms. Crowe updated the board with a PowerPoint presentation. She showed how Fayette County's population increase had affected the staff's workload. She stressed the need for additional space, saying that if the increase in population resulted in a need for more staff that there was no room for the new staff member(s) to work, because all work space was full. She said even the conference room / library had been converted to a makeshift clinic room but that it had no sink or exam table, which limited the services the nurse can provide.

**UPDATE ON ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FEES:** Mr. Fehr revisited the issue of permit fees that were not previously approved for increase by the board of commissioners. Those permits were for new sewage systems or repair of existing sewage systems. He submitted the fees in question for the board of health's approval so that they could be submitted to the Fayette County Board of Commissioners for reconsideration. He said the current fee for permitting a new system was \$275, and for a repair permit it was \$100. He realized that these fees were higher than those charged by surrounding counties, but due to a request by the county manager, Chris Venice, this higher revenue stream should be considered in order to provide services required by state or county law. He mentioned that the last increase was in 1996 and that lack of an increase might mean a decrease in staff or services.

Dr. Brackett commented that rapid growth of the population could mean hard choices: either losing staff or cutting services in the future, and that the proposed fee increases were

reasonable. He recommended going forth with fee increases. Dr. DeCotis felt that it was more reasonable to raise user fees than to raise taxes. He made a motion to approve the fee increase, seconded by Mr. Horgan. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mr. Gordon Furr questioned if septic permits were in force more than one year. Mr. Fehr replied that permits were only effective for one year and that Environmental Health staff did check permit status. He requested that Mr. Furr bring any questionable permits to his attention.

**NEW BUSINESS: Election of officers:** Ms. Redwood nominated Dr. Strain for the position of Chair, seconded by Ms. Peterson. Ms. Peterson nominated Ms. Redwood for Vice Chair, seconded by Mr. Horgan. Both motions passed unanimously.

**PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUDGET:** Ms. Crowe presented the FY 2008 Budget. She covered all Expense and Revenue items (attachment #1). She stressed that current year fees were included in the budget but that the hope was that use of these fees would not be necessary, as had been the usual practice at Fayette County Health Department. Ms. Crowe said insurance cost to employees had increased about 6%. She explained that the Contracted Services line item covered the cost of district support for computer, pharmacy, and personnel services which was shared by all counties in the district. She said that fee collections had gone up, as shown by the Revenue Report given to the board every month.

Ms. Redwood asked about the current supply of flu vaccine. Ms. Callison estimated that there were about 100 doses on hand, and that those doses would expire after March 31<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Redwood commented that demand for flu shots had probably decreased because of shots available at drugstores and other suppliers in the area. Ms. Callison said that less vaccine was on order for next year because of anticipated decrease in demand.

Dr. DeCotis commended the health department for providing flu shots for staff of local schools. He asked if issues with slow payments by PeachCare affected the health department. Ms. Crowe replied that Fayette County Health Department was fortunate to be less dependant on Medicaid payments as many other county health departments. She said that due to the state's decision to put Medicaid patients in CMOs and because of very slow collections from those CMOs, Medicaid fee collections were down about \$30,000 so far this year. She mentioned that was the reason *Prior Year Program Income* (PYPI) was estimated at a lower figure for FY 2008. She emphasized that issues with slow fee collections from Medicaid were being worked on at both county and district levels.

There was no further discussion. Motion was made to approve the budget by Dr. DeCotis, seconded by Mr. Horgan. The motion passed unanimously.

**RESOLUTION:** Dr. Strain called for a motion to address the proposed resolution (attachment #2). Motion to discuss was made by Mr. Horgan, seconded by Dr. Faulkner. Dr. Strain said that the purpose of the resolution was to unify boards of health. He felt that demands on health departments were great and funding was being cut; that there had to be relief or the system would have problems. Ms. Redwood felt that this resolution was great. Dr. Brackett said the original resolution started in Bartow County and had been adopted by many boards of health. He felt that adopting this resolution would draw attention to public health; that

public health was undervalued, and that there appeared to be political will to decrease some of the functions of public health across the board. He thought that both politically and fiscally this was a very good time for boards of health to make their wishes known. He said that the Grant in Aid formula had been in place for decades and was currently under study, and that a new formula was expected in the next six months or so. The board requested to be kept informed on this issue.

Motion was made to accept the resolution and pass it on by Ms. Redwood, seconded by Ms. Peterson. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Staff Reports:** Ms. Callison quoted an article by Ms. Susan Gerrard, director of Arizona Public Health Services. She said that public health was a difficult concept for the average citizen to understand, because nothing seems to happen when it is performing well: promoting good health by safeguarding against disease and keeping food and water safe does not make the headlines. However, Fayette County Health Department recently made the headlines due to the Emergency Mass Dispensing Exercise, which was held on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and that an article about it was slated to be in the local paper. She said the drill dispensed prophylaxis medicine for anthrax exposure to approximately 300 citizens per hour. She said the drill was a challenge and much was learned by health department staff and community partners. She thanked everyone who participated.

She mentioned that for the fifth year physical health had participated in the Hispanic Health Fair at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Peachtree City on March 10<sup>th</sup>. She said that physical health had provided free breast exams and mammogram follow-up, HIV screenings, and Hearing & Vision screenings for both children and adults. Other community partners offered health screenings and education as well.

She mentioned that one senior nurse had recently retired and two more were expected to retire this year. She said that training of replacement nurses was ongoing and that a new nurse was trained and ready to go upon the senior nurse's retirement. She said that more training was in order because the normal training period for an expanded role RN is approximately two years. She clarified that new nurses would have their training prioritized to fill the retiring nurses' duties as quickly as possible. She said another nurse had been hired in anticipation of impending retirements.

She mentioned that the *Visual Healthnet* computer program had gone live recently and the learning curve had slowed productivity somewhat, but expected that the new system would be better in many ways. She mentioned that new sources of revenue were being sought: for example, the *Child Care Consultant Program* for the *Head Start Program*. She mentioned that reimbursement will be \$1500.00 per school year, and that the program had potential to grow in future years. She mentioned a pending MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Kevin Freeman, a counselor with Grace Harbour Counseling Center. Mr. Freeman will be starting an *Adolescent Substance Abuse Day Treatment Program* and he requested physical health provide nursing assessments for those clients. She said that she had worked with Ms. Ayers to assure nursing protocols were followed. Revenue from this endeavor would be small in the beginning, but there was potential to grow for this program too. She said an *Employee Wellness Program* was currently being piloted in Troup County private industry by Joy Maltese, RN. She felt that several large industries in Fayette County could benefit from that program. She said the challenge was to fit these new programs into the existing duties of physical health, given the limited human resources available.

She reminded the board of the *House of Representatives Study Committee Report on Public Health* and said if board members would discuss this report with their state legislator(s) that such advocacy would be much appreciated.

Dr. Stain thought the outreach programs were the way to go and he commended these efforts.

Closed May 11, 2007 for a meeting: Ms. Callison requested permission for the health department to be closed May 11<sup>th</sup> for a mandatory district-wide meeting. Motion to permit closing was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Horgan. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fehr: said that Ms. Peggy Monkus had taken a position with the district office since the last board meeting. He said Ms. Jessica Jones had been hired to replace her, bringing five years experience with Carroll County Health Department.

He said he had received information on a questionable water source from the Fayette County Water Department. The source served two different restaurants in Peachtree City: Panda Express and 5 Guys. He said he had investigated and requested these facilities shut down pending further investigation, which they did. He said the building owner would correct the situation within 30 days but felt that these business owners would push for resolution sooner.

He referred to previous discussion regarding environmental health staff's ability to question soil scientists' reports and said he had provided the board with a copy of a bill which addressed that issue currently under consideration in the state legislature.

Doctor Brackett: commended Fayette County Health Department staff for a job well done in the Mass Dispensing Drill and also commended Ms. Callison for being proactive with her hiring of nurses.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Ms. Redwood. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 am.

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Michael Strain, MD, Chair

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Merle Crowe, Secretary