

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, November 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  
Robert Horgan  
Thomas Faulkner, MD  
Lyn Redwood, RN, MSN  
Lynette Peterson  
Michael Strain, MD

**Staff Members Present:**

Michael Brackett, MD  
Carolyn Callison, RN, BSN  
Merle Crowe, BA  
Rick Fehr  
Rodney Hilley  
Don Comer, Interim County Attorney

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Redwood called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m. Dr. Strain entered at 7:35 AM and Chaired the meeting from that point on.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM July 10, 2007:** Motion was made by Ms. Redwood to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Dr. Faulkner. The minutes were unanimously approved.

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

**Public Comment:** Mr. Gordon Furr thanked Dr. DeCotis for halting the spray system at the school on Jenkins Road. He expressed concern over construction burning in Fayette County. Mr. Fehr said he had forwarded these concerns to the Environmental Protection Division. The board requested to be updated on the result of the EPD investigation.

**NEW BUSINESS: Environmental Health Ordinance:** Mr. Fehr discussed an ordinance being considered by Coweta County, which would require that a property up for approval have a site adequate to support a conventional on-site sewage system. He said the proposed ordinance would increase the potential for the sewage system to function properly for longer periods of time. Such an ordinance would be outside of state requirements and be likely to be upheld as a county standard. He emphasized that Boards of Health could impose stricter standards than those set by the state. He will provide a copy of the proposed ordinance to board members for their review. Dr. Brackett recommended the board consider implementing a similar ordinance. Motion made by Ms. Redwood to obtain a copy of Coweta County's proposed Sewer Ordinance and that the copy be forwarded to the county attorney for review, seconded by Ms. Peterson. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion.

**Dr. Mahle – National Children's Study:** Dr. Bill Mahle, pediatric cardiologist, is based at Emory University and consults with Piedmont Fayette. He said that last April Congress had appropriated funding for the National Children's Study (NCS) which will require funding of \$100 million a year. Dr. Mahle will serve as the physician overseeing the study, which is a congressional budget line item, and is not funded through the National Institute of Health. It is possible that the whole project could be unfunded in the future; it is also possible that the

proposed 100 counties will not be engaged, but once Fayette is funded it is unlikely it would be taken out.

Study protocol requires creation of a Community Advisory Board: firstly to address local issues of importance, and secondly, to encourage local residents to participate. Community meetings will be held to begin choosing local geographic areas to be involved in the study. Dr. Mahle feels that this opportunity might never come again, and that the children's study would probably influence health care for decades to come.

A statistical sampling method was used to choose 100 counties representative of total population within the United States. DeKalb and Fayette counties were included in the 26 counties selected in the first wave of the process; they were chosen to represent populations from urban, suburban, and rural areas; northern and southern areas, and racial distributions. Geographical segmentation is the only way to get a representative sample, and Fayette County would need to be geographically segmented by a statistical model, to be rolled out later in the year. Fayette County needs to enroll 1000 children over a 4-year period. Since about 1000 babies are born in Fayette County each year that means about 250 babies should be enrolled per year. The plan hopes to begin enrolling pregnant mothers by the 18<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy in 2009. A census approach will be taken; workers will go door to door to enroll participants. Obstetricians have been contacted as another way to make families aware of the study. It is hoped that local entities such as health departments will assist in carrying out the study. Georgia entities include Emory University of Pediatrics/the School of Public Health, Morehouse School of Medicine Public Health, and the Patel Memorial Institute.

The study will require at least 2 full-time employees to go door to door to enroll participants, and to track those participants who are selected. Part-time nurses will be needed also, meaning that jobs unique to Fayette County will be created and paid for through this Federally funded project. The key to success will be engaging local people, and involvement of local health department staff and other local providers.

One goal of the study is to ensure that local families understand the process and know that their families will benefit by participating. The premise of the NCS is that many childhood diseases are mediated by the environment: by what the mother is exposed to during pregnancy; her home environment, and perhaps by genetic factors. Study participants would have blood drawn for various tests; their home would be swabbed for environmental toxins; samples of food would be taken; and ultrasounds of the mother would be taken. After the baby's birth, s/he would be evaluated in the newborn nursery and his or her development would be routinely assessed. The home would be reassessed for lead or other heavy metals. This will be an ambitious and expensive study, but the results will generate comprehensive data. There will be definite benefits to participants: ultrasound results, health check results, environmental test results, etc. will be provided. It is felt that better information will be obtained by following the child from pregnancy, rather than beginning with a 5 year old who suffers from autism or diabetes, for example. It is possible that the child might be followed his or her entire life, even if they move.

The board felt that door to door solicitation was woefully inefficient, because there are about 1000 pregnancies per year to about a 130,000 population. Dr. Mahle said Fayette might be better served by first-line telephone calls, although some door to door solicitation might be necessary. Funding is available for advertisements, and health fairs might provide another avenue to familiarize families with the study. He pointed out that since Fayette County fell within the first wave, there is room in the protocol to design some aspects addressing issues unique to

Fayette, without changing necessary national components. Since Dr. Mahle was awarded the contract to administer the study, he offered to take back concerns specific to Fayette County.

Ms. Redwood offered to serve on the community board; she is a founding member of the National Autism Association and sits on the NIH Autism Coordinating Committee. She felt that the study protocol had little mention of autism. Dr. Mahle said that developmental disorders would be a major focus of the study.

Dr. DeCotis felt that developmental disabilities seem to be increasing, and that studies such as this one might help to determine the cause. He appreciated that Fayette County was selected to participate. Dr. Mahle said that Fayette residents tended to be highly educated and he thought that would make it easier to track participants. Ms. Peterson thought Fayette residents would be very interested in toxicity and genetic factors. Ms. Redwood recommended that vaccines administered be tracked and Dr. Mahle said that was a major part of the study.

Dr. Brackett recommended Ms. Redwood to serve on the community service board. He felt that involving health department staff would be vital, and that this study was a rare and excellent opportunity for the health department to be involved with research. He asked the board to consider what role health department staff would have in support of the project. Dr. Mahle recommended town hall meetings to bring the project to the public's attention.

The board recommended that Dr. Mahle employ local public service announcements on the cable channel to inform the public, or insert public service ads in local newspapers: especially those newspapers thrown out for free. Dr. Mahle said obstetricians had agreed to put up posters in their offices. Dr. Brackett recommended that Dr. Mahle contact Hayla Hall, Public Relations for District 4, for further information. More information can be found at the study website: <http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov/>

**VARIANCE REQUEST:** Mr. Nick Fouts explained that he represented *Tiernan and Patrylo*, which renovated the amenities center at Whitewater Creek subdivision. He asked if the board would consider a variance for the pool at the amenities center. The entire complex has been renovated: pool house torn down and rebuilt, pool re-plastered, lights added to the pool house, and so on. When the pool was originally installed with 8 underwater lights about 1986, it met code, but after renovation and re-plastering of the pool, it does not meet current code because no additional underwater lights were added. External lighting has been added to illuminate the water and meet lumen code requirements. Upgrading the underwater lights to meet current code would mean draining it, adding lights, and refilling the pool. Therefore, a variance is requested to grandfather in this pool with the existing underwater lights.

The board requested clarification on current code; Mr. Fehr said that regardless of when a pool was built or renovated, it must meet current code, and all community pools in Fayette County currently do meet code. He was concerned that granting a variance would set a precedent. Mr. Hilley requested that he meet with Mr. Fouts and Environmental Health staff to see if a compromise could be worked out, and the board agreed.

**Staff Reports:** Ms. Callison discussed recent outreach activities: staff members had attended *Muffins with Moms* at Hood Avenue Elementary and Dana Dix, RN, presented information to those moms concerning breast and cervical cancer screening. Staff members also collaborated with Piedmont Physicians and Fayette Senior Services to sponsor the SPARC Health Fair on November 1, 2007. About 2700 flu shots have been administered so far this year, and she asked if the board would let providers know that there was plenty of vaccine left and if they would

refer patients. There were 11 off-site flu clinics scheduled, with 8 finished and 3 to go. No *Flumist* had been ordered this year; there are several different vaccines on hand and it was felt that demand for *Flumist* would be minimal at best, since most flu shots are given to seniors. She covered the various types of flu vaccine in stock: at least 5 different formulations must be administered, and keeping these straight presents a challenge for nursing staff. Ms. Redwood suggested that less vaccine be ordered for next year, because so many places administer flu shots now. Ms. Callison agreed and said that next year less would be ordered.

Ms. Crowe said that next year the November meeting would fall on Veteran's Day, a legal holiday. She asked for the board's pleasure on how to handle that conflict. Dr. Strain suggested that the board change to 4 quarterly meetings a year: January, April, July and October. Dr. Brackett said that most of the District's counties did meet quarterly, which worked out well. He said that the board could call a special meeting at need. Dr. Strain made a motion to meet quarterly, seconded by Ms. Redwood. The motion carried unanimously with no further discussion.

Mr. Fehr said that food service regulations will go into full effect next month. He said that the new regulations will require some late and evening hours for staff, so he asked for the board's approval for flex scheduling for staff. The board gave its approval for staff to work flex hours to meet the new requirements. He mentioned that Environmental Health and the Engineering Department had sponsored a public meeting to educate homeowners on sewage system maintenance, which was well attended and well received. He said that program would continue on an annual basis. He said that the contractor over the new school in Inman called with a concern that the state was not doing inspections, and requested that Environmental Health Staff inspect, which is being done and will continue until the installation is complete. Dr. DeCotis commended staff for support given to the school system.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Redwood, seconded by Ms. Peterson. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 AM.

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Michael Strain, MD, Chair

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Merle Crowe, Secretary