

The Fayette County Board of Health met on Tuesday, August 12, 2008 in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Board of Health Members Present:

Robert Horgan
Thomas Faulkner, MD
Harold Logsdon
Lyn Redwood, RN, MSN
Lynette Peterson
John DeCotis, PhD

Staff Members Present:

Michael Brackett, MD
Merle Crowe, BA
Rick Fehr
Glenda Bryant
Charles Reneau

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Redwood called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM April 8, 2008: Motion was made by Ms. Peterson to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Horgan. The minutes were unanimously approved.

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Environmental Health: Mr. Fehr said that this was a public meeting as required by law, and that notice of the meeting had been published thirty days ago in the county instrument, the *Fayette County News*. He presented the board with an example of a well ordinance for consideration and possible adoption. He said that due to the drought, irrigation wells had been observed in areas where public water was available. This could create problems, because such wells might violate state regulations that require 100 feet between a well and any sewage system. The basic premise of the ordinance under consideration was that wells must be permitted prior to drilling. State regulations require that state-certified well drillers notify local health departments prior to drilling a well; however, notification was not being received in this county, and there was no local ordinance requiring notification. Implementation of a local ordinance by the Board of Health would grant local oversight of wells. A site visit and a permitting fee would be required if the Board of Health adopted a well ordinance, and it would then be presented to the Board of Commissioners as required by state law.

The board had several requests: that the ordinance be written specific to Fayette County; that typos discovered be corrected; that the county attorney review the proposed ordinance prior to the next presentation to the board. Vice Chair Ms. Redwood asked for public comment or questions; there were none. Motion to table this issue until the next meeting was made by Mr. Logsdon, seconded by Mr. Horgan. The motion passed unanimously. The Public Hearing was then closed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

NEW BUSINESS: Environmental Health (EH) Gray Water Usage and State Ordinances: Mr. Fehr said that a state law had been approved for usage of residential gray water for hand-watering of vegetation (Attachment # 1). Local Boards of Health were requested to

enact the state ordinance locally. The board requested EH staff ensure that the ordinance to be adopted by Fayette County Board of Health would contain a clear definition of *Gray Water*, and that the definition excluded septic, defined as *Black Water*. The board had concern that homeowners might use Black Water to water their yards, and wanted the ordinance to be very clear that such use of Black Water was prohibited.

The current drought led to encouragement of citizens to use shower or washing machine gray water for watering their yards, but in fact until enactment of this ordinance, such use of gray water was illegal, because regulations made no differentiation between gray and black water. All used water was supposed to be disposed of by public or private sewage system. The proposed ordinance would serve as an opportunity to educate the populace, because in reality there was little or no way to enforce it. EH staff had been provided with a brochure for use to educate the public on the definition of, and proper use of, gray water: defined as *any* water except that from toilets or kitchen sinks. Water caught from the roofs of homes was defined as rain water, not gray water. The board requested that definition be added to the Fayette ordinance.

The board expressed concern about the cost to print and distribute the brochure to the public. There was no requirement to distribute that particular brochure; information regarding the new ordinance could be disseminated by a newspaper article instead of using the State brochure. District Four Health Services information officer Hayla Hall would be available to provide an article to the newspaper.

Mr. Logsdon made a motion for EH staff to nail down funding for publishing the state-furnished brochure; to discover if correction of typos in the brochure could be corrected prior to distribution to the public; for the brochure to include a better definition of Black Water; and for a definition of the term Laundry Trays which was a term in the state brochure. The motion was seconded by Mr. Horgan. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS: Emergency Preparedness (EP): Dr. Brackett introduce Mr. Charles as the director Emergency Preparedness Director. He said that Mr. Reneau had held the EP Director position in Augusta, Georgia; he then taught EP for the Federal Government in Anniston, Alabama, and had joined District Four as EP Director, where he has made some excellent improvements.

Mr. Reneau said that last week a Tabletop Exercise had been conducted in Fayette County and District Four. The purpose of the exercise was to test the ability of the county and district to respond to an emergency, using current protocols for the continuity of operations plan and the Annex for Emergency Preparedness. The exercise also tested the central services that would need to be continued in the event pandemic flu should reach Fayette County. The two main objectives incorporated into the exercise were using the WebEOC technology provided by the state to help with command, control, and communication activities in the event of a disaster, as well as testing collaboration between the different agencies in the county to work together in case of that event.

Also tested were the four components to be used in dealing with a pandemic event: social distancing, anti-virals, vaccines, and isolation or quarantine, as current law allows. The objectives were met for Fayette County; in fact, the county actually exceeded the objectives. He said in the command center that it was interesting to observe that responses would come from Fayette County, then be followed by the rest of the district, county by county, based on the responses from Fayette County. He congratulated the

Health Department directors and for the leadership provided for the rest of the district, and said that district staff saw this county as being progressive and capable of appropriate response to disaster.

Major strengths recognized for the CHEART team (County Health Emergency Assistance and Response Team) were the extraordinary teamwork in Fayette County, both within the health department and with community partners. It was seen that everyone was working toward a common goal: providing protection for residents in the community.

Areas for improvement included additional training on the state-supplied software. This was where the major concentration would be for the next eighteen months. This software had been provided by the state at great expense; current plans would be refined to find shortfalls and provide additional training for those shortfalls. Additional training exercises would be conducted in the future. Within thirty days of an exercise an official After Action Plan will be submitted to Ms. Crowe for presentation to the board. The board requested that the report be forwarded to the Fayette County Board of Commissioners, with a letter of acknowledgement of the leadership and hard work shown by staff.

Mr. Reneau said the program was being looked at and that further exercises would be set up, maybe by next June or July. Exercise for the sake of exercise was non-productive; it was felt that weaknesses and needs should be identified prior to setting up any exercise, and the next one would not be a pandemic flu exercise. December through February seemed to be the slowest time for health departments, so further training on the software would probably happen then. Mr. Reneau thanked the board for the opportunity to speak to them.

Staff Reports:

Ms. Crowe: introduced Ms. Glenda Bryant as the new County Nurse Manager. Ms. Bryant said she had immediately recognized that physical health had a high client no-show rate and that was being addressed by allocating two days a week for same-day appointments. Patients would call in the morning and be seen the same day, resulting in a much better kept appointment rate. This change was still in process; perhaps another same-day appointment schedule would be added later, depending on the usage.

Ms. Bryant said most recently she had worked as a Nurse Practitioner in a family practice in Newnan; before that she had worked in the hospital for years; after graduate school she had worked in internal medicine for about ten years; taught in Gordon College for a year or so; worked in cardiology; endocrinology, and now had moved on to public health. She said she was very happy to be here.

Dr. Michael Brackett: mentioned the letters sent to the board regarding state budget cuts. The first letter from the state had been very vague, but the second letter had instructed state-funded entities that budget cuts would be from six--ten percent each year over the next two years. That would impact about 20-25% of the overall budget. About half of Fayette County's budget was fee income, over which the state had no power to curtail spending. The district office decided to go with a ten-percent cut scenario; meaning a real challenge to find budget cuts of that amount.

To achieve the proposed reduction, some marginal facilities within the district would be closed; productivity and staffing ratios would be examined; best practices over the district would be identified; high service flow rates and efficiency would be looked at;

travel would be curtailed, and meetings had been canceled. Alternate ways to communicate must be found, perhaps web-based.

New funding streams would need to be identified. One with excellent potential was High Risk Nutrition. Registered Dieticians (RDs) comprise a vital resource in public health and was under-recognized. RDs advise patients with health issue such as diabetes, obesity, cardiac problems and even asthma; there was a nutritional link to all these diseases. If RDs got referrals from local physicians, they could generate fees to cover their own salaries. Sometimes RD fees were generated in multiples of the RD salary, up to \$200,000 in some cases. District Four had RDs in almost every county in the twelve county region, meaning there was an excellent opportunity to actively pursue this funding stream. Dr. Brackett felt very positively that overcoming this budget cut could be done.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Logsdon, seconded by Mr. Horgan. The motion carried unanimously. The motion was unanimously approved with no further discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 AM.

Michael Strain, MD, Chair

Merle Crowe, Secretary