

Columbus County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting Special Meeting

August 31, 2022 6:00 P.M.

Columbus County Health Department, 304 Jefferson Street, Whiteville NC

Members Present	Pat Ray Dr. Randy Kirby Shane Cartrette Drew Cox Patty Hobbs Dr. Nicole Martin Dr. Amy Sessions
Members Absent	Dr. Brent Lawson, Charles McDowell, Frankye Boone Newkirk, Dr. Christy Perdue
Staff Members Present	Kimberly L. Smith, Yvonne Armstrong, Charlene Bush, Felicia Mack, Patti Nance, Kristie Priest
Guests	

Quorum was present.

I. Call to Order

Pat Ray called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

II. Welcome/Invocation

Pat Ray welcomed everyone to the meeting. Invocation was given by Pat Ray.

III. Approval of Agenda

A motion to accept was made by Drew Cox, seconded by Dr. Randy Kirby and carried by the board.

IV. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

V. Approval of Minutes

Motion to accept was made by Dr. Amy Sessions seconded by Shane Cartrette and carried by the board.

<p>VI. Dental</p>	<p>Kimberly Smith, Health Director stated the following:</p> <p>A. Dental Updates</p> <p>Dr. Breanna Benbow's father passed away, and she left earlier today to attend the services in Maryland tomorrow. She left me with what she wanted to update you all on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Toothmobile forms have been dropped off to all of the schools. The schools are looking good. While they were out, they canvased the different campuses' for locations where the bus could be parked. They plan on going out to the schools in mid to late September, and make it around to every school in the County and City districts. • We are in the process of interviewing a Dental Hygienist. • With the Duke Endowment Grant, we are currently in the implementation phase. We have had good reviews. They are very easy to work with. We are assigned an individual from ECU School of Dentistry who helps out the NC and SC teams. Our coaches told us everything looks good. We had everything submitted on time, and they had very little questions for us. Hopefully tomorrow (September 1st), we will receive the grant application for the full grant. We've received \$6,500.00 with the implementation, but the full grant is whatever amount we request. They are only giving us two weeks to get this grant in; and we've been completing modules every month, which will help us in the process of completing the grant process, along with our wish list of what we need. • An issue the Dental office is having is finding Medicaid dental providers who do sedation. She has had some patients who require more time than the nitrous oxide allows for her to work. If anyone knows of any Medicaid Dental providers that do sedation, please let us know, because the one that did it in Wilmington retired. • The Dental numbers are looking good, and once we get back in the schools, our numbers will pick back up.
<p>VII. Financial Update</p>	<p>Charlene Bush, Budget Director stated the following:</p> <p>A. Financial Statement June, Annual, July <i>(Benchmark 33, Activity 33.6) (Benchmark 39, Activity 39.2)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your packet, you received June and the Annual Financial Report. Are there any questions? • That was the end of the fiscal year.

- For the June Financial report, we finished up at 80% of total revenue received. We used 77% of what was budgeted of local appropriations. Our budgeted expenses were at 79%.
- On July, which is the beginning of the fiscal year, we finished up at revenue being 7%, local appropriations at 5% and expenses were at 6%.

Motion to accept Financial Statement for June was made by Dr. Randy Kirby, seconded by Patty Hobbs, carried by the board.

B. Service Cost Update

(Benchmark 39, Activity 39.2) (Benchmark 33, Activity 33.6)

- Vaxelis was added at \$153.
- Menquadfi was added at \$165.
- Prevnar went from \$260 to \$294.
- Proquad (MMR+Varicella) is \$275.
- Adacel is \$72.
- Infanrix (D-tap) is \$48.

C. Funding Update

(Benchmark 33, Activity 33.6)

- This is money that was not budgeted. When it was time to do the budget, I did not have this money. This was extra funding that came in after the budgeted year. These two COVID-19 amounts, are roll over from where we did not spend it from last year, and we had to wait until the very end for the state to issue us another agreement, in order to roll it over.
- \$392,675 is for enhancing detection. Vaccination funding is \$223,180, is the amount that was rolled over.
- School Nurse funding, we received an additional \$551.00 and Communicable Disease \$273,894 which is a significant amount, because we never receive very much for Communicable Disease.

D. Patient Counts June, Annual, July

(Benchmark 33, Activity 33.6)

- You can find those in your packets. If there are no questions or comments, we will move on.

E. Child Fatality, Environmental Health, Dental

Budget Reviews (Benchmark 33, Activity 33.6)(Benchmark 39, Activity 39.2)

- Child Fatality is the same amount of funding we received last year, \$649.00. She (Mitzi Ward) has to meet these deliverables, and she tries to have some kind of program once a year, to recognize any

	<p>deaths we have had locally and within the state. She usually uses this money for this memorial service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health local county money was \$277,799. Local fees they took in, \$136,000. County appropriated money for mosquito spraying was \$6,000.00. • Dentals Medicaid projection was \$93,000 and local fees at \$2,500. County appropriations is at \$314,177. The Duke Endowment Grant and Children’s Health Grant that was mentioned is \$30,000. The \$30,000 is set aside from our Child Health agreement for dental. This money pays for any child who does not have Medicaid or any type of insurance. • We had some carryover money from Rural Health and it was \$5,360. <p>Shane Cartrette asked who was over the mosquito spraying. Charlene Bush answered it is Brandon Grigsby. Kim Smith added that it’s through our Environmental Health Department. We currently have three people that spray; so if you know of anyone who would like to spray, please send them our way. We are trying to work with the County Manager with bringing in Facility Services and Parks and Rec. The three employees we have, will work all day, spray at night and then back in here first thing in the morning. It used to be handled by Facility Services and somehow, a few years before I came, Environmental Health got it.</p> <p>Charlene gave the following update on the billing with Humana:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We received another \$6,000.00; so that now makes \$11,000.00 we have received for payments from claims back in 2018. I was finally able to get in contact with someone that knew what was happening, and she worked it out so we do not have to write it off.
<p>VIII. Nursing</p>	<p>Patti Nance, Nursing Director gave the following update:</p> <p>A. COVID-19 Update <i>(Benchmark 2, Activity 2.4)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are no longer under the State of Emergency. • In the State: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total cases: 3,120,822 ○ New cases in a week: 20,855 ○ Deaths: 26,335 ○ Vaccines Given <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1st Dose : 77% ▪ 2nd Dose (Fully Vaccinated): 72%

- Boosted: 60%
 - Children Vaccinated: 30%
- In Columbus County:
 - Columbus County Completed COVID test numbers: 107,182
 - Total of 18,772 positive cases in the county.
 - Currently Hospitalized – 0
 - Deaths – 276
 - Isolation – 134
 - Quarantine – 268
- In the county, vaccine wise, we have:
 - 1st Dose: (25,787) 46%
 - 2nd Dose: (24,074) 43%
 - Boosters Given: (11,736) 21%
 - Total given at Health Department : 12,999
- We got notice today about the current vaccine we are giving and using for boosters; it is no longer good for that. We are waiting to receive the Bivalent vaccine. I am not sure when it will be in.
- Current outbreaks in the county are at Columbus Correctional and Shoreland. Shoreland can be closed tomorrow, if we do not have a positive from today.
- Our community risk level is currently at a medium, as well as Bladen and Robeson County's. Horry County, in South Carolina, is at high.
- Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender are at low risk.
- 43 of the 100 counties in North Carolina are at high risk.

Pat Ray asked if the Health Department was still dispensing free COVID-19 test kits. Kim Smith responded that we are. We just put our third order in today; we have plenty.

Pat Ray asked if by the government stopping their delivery of COVID-19 home test kits, will this impact the Health Department. Kim Smith replied not right now. The state is begging us to order these test kits to distribute; but currently we are not affected.

B. Monkeypox Update (*Benchmark 2, Activity 2.4*)

Patti Nance stated the following:

- Globally there is 49,974 cases and 15 deaths.
- In the U.S.A there is 18,417 cases with no deaths.
- North Carolina has 318 cases with no deaths. 99% are male, 1 % female. 67% are African American.
- In Columbus County we do have one case with

somewhere between 15 and 21 contacts. Two of the contacts have been vaccinated. The contacts for this case, are located in Columbus, Brunswick and Bladen counties.

- The two cases that Bladen County has, has contacts that reside in Columbus County.
- Multiple symptoms are being reported:
 - Rash
 - Tired
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Headache
 - Enlarged Lymph Nodes
 - Muscle Aches
 - Itching
 - Rectal Pain
 - Blood in Stool
 - Rectal Bleeding
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Abdominal Pain

Dr. Amy Sessions asked how many vaccines have we given. Patti Nance responded two. Unless they meet the criteria to receive it, we do not give it.

Shane Cartrette asked if it was a one shot deal. Patti Nance answered it's a two shot vaccine given 28 days apart.

Kim Smith added that we had received the vaccine from New Hanover County, they are our hub for our region.

Yvonne lives closest to New Hanover, so she makes the run when we need it. We found out about the case on a Monday, that Tuesday morning Yvonne was picking it up. Patti Nance stated on Thursday we had our suspicions, when contacted by the provider, but it was definite on Monday.

Patti Nance continued:

- 280 males and two females in the state.
- 0-17 in age, there is two
- 18-29 in age, 106
- 30-49 in age, 153
- 50+ in age, 21
- We have to keep up with contacts for three weeks. They've changed how they are doing it; they are to call us and let us know if they start developing symptoms.

C. Childhood Vaccine Update

- We are giving a lot of vaccines. Our new nurse is

	<p>working extremely hard to stay up on who needs what, and when. I'm very pleased with what she's doing. We've been working very hard to get her up and running, and complete her training.</p> <p>D. Staff Updates (<i>Benchmark 37, Activity 37.6</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have one other position open in Pediatrics. We thought we had it filled, but that fell through. • Once someone gets in here, if they've never worked Public Health, it'll take right at two years to get them up and going. • We still have our nurse coming over from Bladen County to help with Well Child visits.
<p>IX. Environmental Health</p>	<p>Kristie Priest, Supervisor stated the following:</p> <p>A. Environmental Health Staff Update (<i>Benchmark 37, Activity 37.6</i>)</p> <p>Kristie Priest introduced the Board of Health to Felicia Mack. Felicia is the new Environmental Health Specialist I. She is a graduate of Fayetteville State and her degree is in Biology. She started with us on August 1st. Felicia has completed one part of her CIT training. She will be leaving on September 12th, for her onsite training in Raleigh. She is doing well and learning a lot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our office has a large quantity of mosquito larvicide. So if you know of anyone or have someone ask about it, please send them by our office to come pick it up. We are now located at 127 West Webster Street, on the first floor. <p>B. Food and Lodging Report (<i>Benchmark 4, Activity 4.2</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Fiscal year we completed 395 Food and Lodging Inspections. This number is lower than normal, and that is because I've been the only person doing inspections. <p>Motion to accept the Food and Lodging Report was made by Patty Hobbs, seconded by Dr. Nicole Martin, carried by the board.</p> <p>B. Well Sampling Report (<i>Benchmark 4, Activity 4.2</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We issued 142 permits, collected 44 bacteria samples, 21 nitrates / chemical samples and three pesticide / petroleum samples. • I would think that this year, the number will be higher, because almost every home loan that closes for an existing home, has to have a water sample. We've already had a lot of request this year. <p>Motion to accept the Well Sampling Report was made by</p>

	<p>Shane Cartrette, seconded by Dr. Amy Sessions, carried by the board.</p> <p>C. Onsite Waste Report (Benchmark 4, Activity 4.2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We issued 287 Improvement Permits, 181 Construction Authorization Permits and 206 Operation Permits. • I included the graph at the bottom to show how much busier we've been for 2020 thru 2021. My expectations is that this graph will be significantly increased for 2022. There are so many people moving to Columbus County. We will be doing a lot more septic permits, and it will be interesting to see how it's changed from last year to this year. <p>Kim Smith stated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know if you saw where the powers that be came together for the Antioch Farm Subdivision, which is supposed to have 48 lots that will be wells and septic tanks. The subdivision that will be coming in at the southern part of the county will need county water and Horry county sewage. • Then we have a campground that is going to start off with six lots in the eastern part of the county. <p>Kristie Priest stated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oakwood Homes in Chadbourn submitted 12 lots, located on Golf Course Road and Campground. We've already completed a portion of those. <p>Motion to accept the Onsite Water Report was made by Dr. Nicole Martin, seconded by Shane Cartrette, carried by the board.</p> <p>D. Child Lead Report (Benchmark 4, Activity 4.2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We performed three lead investigations, and then we offered six for children with elevated lead levels. When the child has an elevated lead level, the parent has the option to have the child tested. The three that were performed were all elevated. I wish all of the parents would have agreed to let us do the investigation. <p>Motion to accept the Child Lead Report was made by Patty Hobbs seconded by Dr. Nicole Martin, carried by the board.</p>
X. Chairman's Forum	Pat Ray, Chairman had no comments.
XI. Director's Forum	<p>Kim Smith, Health Director gave the following updates:</p> <p>A. Bad Debt Write-Off (Benchmark 33, Activity 33.7)</p>

- This year (July 2021 – June 2022) we have \$2,804.66. This is the debt that we are unable to collect.

Motion to accept the Bad Debt Write-Off was made by Dr. Randy Kirby, seconded by Dr. Amy Sessions, carried by the board.

B. Debt Set-Off

(Benchmark 33, Activity 33.7)

- Debt Set-Off is when we notify them that we are going to submit their debt to the State of North Carolina's Department of Revenue, \$50.00 or more, and before you get your refund, we receive what you owe us. Usually when we send this letter out, the individuals will come in and pay it. If they don't, we collect it from their taxes.
- This year, the Debt Set-Off amount was a little less than last year; we were able to recover, \$ 2,407.20. Last year we collected \$ 2,448.34.

Motion to accept the Debt Set-Off was made by Dr. Randy Kirby, seconded by Dr. Amy Sessions, carried by the board.

C. Vital Records Update *(Benchmark 2, Activity 2.1)*

- As you remember at our last meeting, I stated the deadline was coming up for the Vital Records paper system. The governor extended it and today is the last day. We have two physicians here in Columbus County who do not want to participate, and they will be fined. We have turned them over to the state. We've tried to convince them to switch, the software is provided by the state, but they refuse.

Dr. Amy Sessions stated that she has had three to contact her, and have stated that the system is a nightmare. I explained to them that this has nothing to do with the county, it is the state.

Kim Smith continued:

- Brandy Burge, our Deputy Registrar, said the ones that have been doing it, stated that it's in and out, and to the point. We feared our biggest kickback would have been the funeral homes. We have had a couple of the funeral homes that had to go out and purchase computers and fax machines. The penalties range from \$250 to \$1,000. We have tried to work with them, because if they have a patient who dies, they will be fined for submitting a paper death certificate. After trying to convince them, that this is what they need to do, we have turned their

names over to the state for the registrar to reach out to them, and hopefully talk them in to using this system.

- Just today we had a paper death certificate come in, that was dated for July 17th. Physicians and Medical Examiners are supposed to have these completed, and back to us, within five days. From there it goes to the Register of Deeds, and then to Raleigh.

Dr. Amy Sessions asked for the ones who have called her with issues, could Brandy possibly help walk them through it. Kim Smith replied sure; that would be no problem at all. Drew Cox asked if once they get in and figure it out, does it work. Kim Smith replied definitely.

Drew Cox asked if the process was ridiculous. Kim Smith replied she has not done a walkthrough of the system. She added she has sat through the webinars from the state.

Dr. Amy Sessions stated one of the people she had spoken with made the comment that the questions you have to answer were ridiculous.

D. New/Revised Policies (*Benchmark 15, Activity 15.2*)

- These are new or revised policies from June 2nd, 2021 thru August 25th, 2022. If there are any you would like to read or see, let me know I can get a hard copy to you.

E. Chemours Update (*Benchmark 37, Activity 37.6*)

- I have emailed Michael Scott from DEQ. The first time he was very prompt in responding, the second time not so prompt. I've tried my best to get them to come down and do an informational session on GenX and PFO's. I know they are forever chemicals, but their expertise on the subject matter, and being able to answer the public's questions would be great. I feel for the citizens in the Riegelwood area. They have had county water now, since 2017. All of this occurred before that. People are swimming, eating the fish out of that water; and for me that is a concern. Chris Nobles from Public Utilities and I have been to several meetings, and we've attended one with our County Attorney. Our county water consist of wells; but there are folks in that area who have wells located in a small plot of land, but it has a decent population in that area. I have conveyed this information to Mr. Scott, and he stated he would notify his communications section. I explained to him that if I did not receive a response, I would indeed contact Secretary Biser of

DEQ. This was on Tuesday, and I have yet to hear from him. I explained to him that if he would give me a date and time, I would supply the location and PR.

- We have had one well to “ping” a positive for PFO’s and it is a little bit over the limit. I don’t know whose home it is or where it’s at, I just have that information only. From the consent order, they should be getting water from Chemours. Chris Nobles, from Public Utilities, is checking on prices to see how much it would cost to replace all of the pipes that the water goes through down there. What the county did, when the water system was taken over from the Riegelwood Sanitary district, all they had to do was flip a switch. The pipes are the same. He stated that beyond what PFO’s or GenX can and cannot do to those pipes, they need to be replaced due to their age.

Drew Cox stated that he is concerned about the transfer of water from the River Basin into our wells for Bladen and Columbus County. Kim Smith stated the following:

- Chris Smith told me how they test, is that the state notifies them of what wells to test, and what to test them for. They’ve tested for PFO’s and GenX, but none have pinged, and this is on the county wells.

Drew Cox asked if they have to have permission from the state to test for that. Kim Smith stated:

- I think they could have a protocol to test for that, but that would be a question for them.
- Between Chris Nobles and I, we’ve been to every meeting DEQ has conducted from Fayetteville to Wilmington. I explained to Mr. Scott that our citizens are not prone to get in the car and drive 50 miles for a meeting. It would behoove them to have an informational session, down here, for the Bladen and Columbus County residents.
- I will be making a phone call tomorrow to Commissioner Coleman; he stated he would help get the word out.
- Most of Environmental Health records are in paper format. Electronic records did not start until I came here 15 years ago. We do GIS now, where every well and septic system is plotted down.
- For Columbus County, there were 429 who were eligible for sampling, but only 53 agreed to it, out of that number.

Shane Cartrette asked besides of them consuming these forever chemicals, what is the negative impact that they have on people. Kim Smith answered:

- Cancer
- Increases Cholesterol
- Changes in Liver enzymes
- Increased risk of High Blood Pressure for Pregnant Women
- Increased Cholesterol levels reduces immunity response
- Risk of Kidney or Testicular Cancer
- Negatively affecting growth, learning and behavior of infants and children.

Shane Cartrette asked if they knew what amount of these chemicals, would need to be present, to start effecting people. Kim Smith answered:

- The EPA released health advisory levels showing that with GenX chemicals would be 10 parts per million and PFO's is 0.020.
- I happened to be watching 60 Minutes one evening that had a farmer from the Northeast part of the United States. He was utilizing water from the local river to water his crops and feed his cows. His cows ended up testing positive for PFO's and GenX, as well as his land. The EPA came in and told him that he is not allowed to do anything with his cows. He can't eat or sale them, as well as grow anything on that farm. This farm was like a third or fourth generation farm and he was well into his late 60's to 70's. Yet there was a local DuPont plant, located up river from him.

Shane Cartrette stated that he assumes that DuPont, up the river from us, has stopped placing these chemicals in the water. Kim Smith replied:

- No. It's not DuPont anymore, it's Chemours; and DuPont knew what they were selling to Chemours. You've all probably seen the commercials where they are building the wall to help decrease the amount that flows into the river. This wall is supposed to take 99% of it out of the water, of all the chemicals.

Pat Ray asked how far along were they on completing this project. Kim Smith replied somewhere at the beginning of 2023.

- There are people who are conducting studies on humans, and what these chemicals have done. The

	<p>four Health Directors spoke with this individual via a conference call. I brought up how the citizens of Columbus County that live within the Village in Riegelwood, had been exposed to all of these chemicals, up until 2017; and if she wanted to do some extensive research, she should go down to Riegelwood.</p> <p>Shane Cartrette asked if this was a chemical(s) that would eventually flush out, if it were to stop being placed in the water. Drew Cox added, I'm like Kim (Smith) I don't know if this stuff ever goes away.</p> <p>Pat Ray asked Kim Smith what could the Board of Health do to help her address these issues. Kim Smith replied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If I could get DEQ to come down and do an informational / educational session, I'm pretty sure we can get folks to attend, from not only Columbus County, but from Bladen and Pender as well. If they continue to give us the run around, I will contact Secretary Biser. <p>Pat Ray asked Kim Smith to keep the Board posted on this subject matter.</p>
<p>Comments-Board of Health</p>	<p>Kim Smith stated the following to Dr. Amy Sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding the Opioid Team, I asked them about putting a pharmacist on that board, and explained that it would be a great idea to have one. As of right now, we are not going to have one, but I will continue to push for that. <p>Dr. Brent Lawson asked who selected the members. Kim Smith replied: I believe it was the County Manager along with Sid Wilfred. She is the administrator of the grant we received from the Kate B. Reynolds foundation, and they suggested people to the County Commissioners.</p>

Next Meeting Date
October 26, 2022 at 6:00 pm

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted: Kimberly Smith Secretary 10/26/22
 Signature Date