

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
Summary of Meeting
January 19, 2021

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was held by conference call (Dial in Phone Number 1 (301) 715-8592, Access Code: 927 1606 5987#, Password: 673252#) and was called to order Dr. Desiree A. Soter-Pearsall, Secretary, at 7:00 a.m. Roll was called and the following attended:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doctors Barbara Mitchell, Desiree A. Soter-Pearsall, Michael W. Meshad, Stacey W. Wing and Commissioner Merceria L. Ludgood

MEMBERS ABSENT: Doctors Joseph Ewing Bornstein, C.M.A. (Max) Rogers IV and Michael C. Chang

STAFF PRESENT: Bernard H. Eichold II, M.D., Dr.P.H., F.A.C.P., Health Officer; Laura Cepeda, M.D., M.B.A., F.A.C.M.S., F.A.A.D., Chief Medical Officer; Paul M. Betros, Jr., M.B.A, Director, Administrative Services; Kelly Warren, M.S.W., M.P.H., Director, Family Health Clinical Services; Stephanie Crawford, M.P.H., D.H.Sc., Director, Prevention & Wellness; and Valerie White, Transcriber

GUESTS PRESENT: Mr. Steve Chiepalich, Auditor

II. **WELCOME NEW BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS** – Dr. Pearsall announced that Doctor Michael C. Chang is the new Board of Health member.

III. **GUEST – Mr. Steve Chiepalich, Auditor**

a. ***Audit Report** (Attachment A): Mr. Steve Chiepalich, local CPA, prepared the annual audit of the financial operations based on state and federal guidelines for the Mobile County Health Department for fiscal year ending September 30, 2020. Mr. Chiepalich stated there were no serious adverse findings from the audit. Mr. Chiepalich asked the Board if there were any questions. There was a brief discussion.

MOTION was made by Dr. Mitchell and seconded by Dr. Wing that the Mobile County Health Department Annual Audit ending September 30, 2020 be approved as presented by Mr. Steve Chiepalich. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Chiepalich left the meeting at 7:05 a.m.

IV. ***APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 17, 2020** (Attachment B): The minutes for the meeting held on November 17, 2020 were briefly reviewed since the minutes had been distributed to the Board members prior to the meeting.

MOTION was made by Dr. Meshad and seconded by Commissioner Ludgood that the minutes of the meeting held on November 17, 2020 be approved as distributed. The motion passed unanimously.

V. ***ELECTION OF OFFICERS – Dr. Pearsall**

a. Dr. Pearsall stated that Dr. Bornstein, Chairman of the Board has made a recommendation for Dr. Meshad for Dr. Meshad to serve as Chairman of the Board for 2021 and Dr. Chang to serve as Secretary of the Board for 2021. Dr. Pearsall presented to the Board a nomination for Dr. Meshad to serve as Chairman of the Board for 2021.

MOTION was made by Dr. Pearsall and seconded by Dr. Wing to elect Dr. Meshad as Chairman for 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Pearsall presented to the Board a nomination for Dr. Chang to serve as Secretary of the Board for 2021.

MOTION was made by Dr. Pearsall and seconded by Dr. Wing to elect Dr. Chang as Secretary for 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Pearsall turned the meeting over to the newly elected Chairman, Dr. Meshad, at 7:07 a.m.

VI. RECOGNITIONS

- a. Dr. Eichold stated Dr. Bornstein, outgoing Board of Health Chairman for 2020, was not able to attend the meeting today but he will be presented with a plaque in appreciation for his service as Chairman of the Board for 2020.
- b. Dr. Eichold thanked outgoing 2020 Board Member, Dr. Mitchell for her service from 2015 through 2020. She will be awarded a plaque in appreciation for her service to the Board.

VII. HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT

- a. **Report from State Health Officer** (Attachment C): Dr. Eichold presented to the Board for their information, a summary report for the months of October, November and December 2020 from the State Health Officer sent monthly to county Boards of Health describing actions taken by the State Committee of Public Health.
- b. **Informational Items:**
 - **Alabama's Health** (Attachment D): Dr. Eichold presented to the Board, for their information, the December 2020 issue of ALABAMA'S HEALTH, a publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health.
- c. **COVID-19 Vaccination Programs:** Dr. Eichold informed the Board that there have been challenges receiving adequate vaccine from federal partners. The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) website will show an allocation of COVID-19 vaccine, but the COVID-19 vaccine has not been received. There is a significant difference in the allocation of vaccine and doses given on the ADPH website which is due to two factors: the vaccine has not been received at the state; there has been delay in input of COVID-19 vaccine given. The Mobile County Health Department worked over the holiday weekend. On Saturday, almost 1,000 persons were given the COVID-19 vaccine at the cruise terminal. Yesterday over 200 persons were given the COVID-19 vaccine at Stone Street Baptist Church, COVID-19 testing was administered, and influenza vaccinations were also administered. The Mobile Police Department was involved in traffic control. We hope to open more vaccination sites over the next few weeks. We anticipate as vaccine supply increases that the age limit will decrease. We stress that the second dose of the COVID-19 must be administered at the same location as the first for tracing purposes. There was a brief discussion.

VIII. CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

- a. **COVID-19 Hospital Update:** Dr. Cepeda informed the Board that COVID-19 cases have spiked due to multiple gatherings in recent months: Halloween, the Election, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. The hospitals are seeing dramatic increases in hospitalizations. On January 11, 2021 there was a record high day of hospitalizations in Mobile County of 276. We seem to be trending down at the present time. Hospitals are using monoclonal antibody to treat patients with mild COVID-19 on an outpatient basis with success in keeping them from needing to be hospitalized. In Mobile County 500 hundred people were treated with monoclonal antibody and only 3 of those persons needed to be hospitalized. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of monoclonal antibody. Hospitals are communicating and sharing this resource.
- b. **COVID-19 Vaccine Update:** Dr. Cepeda informed the Board that every state has a different COVID-19 vaccination plan based on how the COVID-19 vaccine was rolled out. In Alabama, the COVID-19 vaccine is being rolled out to hospitals and county health departments. Physicians offices, pharmacies and other entities can apply for COVID-19 vaccine. Some entities have applied to receive COVID-19 vaccines although some have chosen not to apply. The ADPH phone number COVID-19 Vaccination Toll Free Number received nine million phone calls and then crashed. There was a brief discussion.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

- a. ***General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Reports – November and December 2020** (Attachment E): Mr. Betros presented to the Board the General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Report for the months of November and December 2020. The month of November was favorable by \$237,646 with a favorable year to date of \$56,450. The month of December was favorable by \$468,899 with a favorable year to date of \$525,350. Mr. Betros stated that the total spent for COVID-19 to date is \$2.7 million. Mr. Betros asked the Board if there were any questions.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ludgood and seconded by Dr. Pearsall that the General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Report for the months of November and December 2020 be approved as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. ***Designation of Depositories Resolution** (Attachment F): Mr. Betros requested the Board’s approval of a Resolution naming the local banking institutions to serve as depositories for 2021. The Resolution also names the individuals authorized to conduct Health Department business and requires two signatures for checks in the amount of \$300,000 or more. There was a brief discussion.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ludgood and seconded by Dr. Wing that the following Resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Mobile County Board of Health to annually appoint banking institutions to serve as depositories for official Mobile County Board of Health funds; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the Mobile County Board of Health designate personnel to conduct business with such institutions in the fiscal operation of the Board;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Health of Mobile County, Alabama appoints the 22nd State Bank (formerly First Exchange Bank); BancorpSouth Bank; Bank of the Ozarks; Synovus – Bank of Tuscaloosa; BBVA USA Bank; Synovus – CB&T Bank; Century Bank; Commonwealth National Bank; Community Bank of Mississippi (formerly Community Bank, Coast); First Federal Bank; Hancock Whitney Bank; IBERIA Bank; Merchants Bank of Alabama; PNC Bank; Regions Bank; Renasant Bank; ServisFirst Bank; State Bank & Trust; SunTrust Bank; Synovus Bank; The First, ANBA; Truist (formerly Branch Bank & Trust); Trustmark National Bank; US Bank; and Wells Fargo Bank as depositories for the official funds of the Board of Health by Bernard H. Eichold II, M.D., Dr.P.H., F.A.C.P., Health Officer, to be authorized depositories for County Health Funds, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Health of Mobile County, Alabama, will abide by all state and federal regulations in regard to collateralization of account funds, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Health of Mobile County, Alabama, hereby designates the following personnel to sign checks and/or savings withdrawals and to transact other business with the above banks necessary to the fiscal operation of the Board of Health, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Health of Mobile County, Alabama, hereby stipulates that payment by checks in the amount of \$300,000.00 or more must be signed by two of the persons herein designated as being authorized to sign:

- Bernard H. Eichold II, M.D., Dr.P.H., F.A.C.P., Health Officer
- Laura Cepeda, M.D., M.B.A., M.B.A., F.A.C.M.S., F.A.A.D., Chief Medical Officer
- Paul M. Betros, Jr., M.B.A., Public Health Director
- Kelly R. Warren, M.S.W., M.P.H., Public Health Director
- Stephanie Crawford, M.P.H., D.H.Sc., Public Health Director

The motion passed unanimously.

- c. Mr. Betros informed the Board that the News Activation Network came to the Mobile County Health Department at the end of a workday. The building was locked, they came in behind and employee who was leaving. Measures are being taken to increase and improve security at Mobile County Health Department sites. There was a brief discussion.

X. FAMILY HEALTH CLINICAL SERVICES

- a. **FOPHCC Governing Council Minutes – November and December 2020** (Attachment G): Ms. Warren presented to the Board, for their information, a copy of the minutes for the FOPHCC Governing Council Meetings held in November and December 2020.
- b. **Primary Care Clinic Productivity Report – November and December 2019:** Ms. Warren stated that primary care clinic productivity numbers for November 2020 were 7,328 visits for 5,825 unduplicated patients and in the month of December 2020 primary care clinic productivity number were 7,555 visits for 5,808 unduplicated patients.
- c. **Know B4U Go 12/19/2020:** Ms. Warren informed the Board that on December 19, 2020 we hosted a second Know B4U Go COVID-19 testing campaign. We conducted rapid COVID-19 testing at the Semmes Health Center, Eight Miler Health Center and Downtown Health Center from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. 900 individuals were tested, of those 70 individuals tested positive.
- d. **COVID-19 Vaccination:** Ms. Warren informed the Board that each of the Mobile County Health Department sites that has generator back-up power and freezer capacity has submitted requests for COVID-19 Moderna Vaccine through the IMMPRINT system. We received notification that we will receive 400 doses at the each of the following sites: Citronelle Health Center, North Mobile Health Center, Semmes Health Center and Southwest Mobile Health Center. We are waiting for the vaccine and hope to receive the vaccine today. We will have meetings today to determine the best distribution plan, Cruise Terminal, or those individual sites.

XI. PREVENTION & WELLNESS

- a. **Influenza Update:** Dr. Crawford informed the Board that influenza total is at 1.4% which is well below the APDH baseline of 3.29%.
- b. **Vaccination Scam Alerts:** Dr. Crawford informed the Board that there have been scam alerts about COVID-19 vaccinations and vaccines. People in the community are receiving phone calls to be put on a wait list and charged fees. Marketers are offering to sell and ship dosages of vaccine for payment. These alerts were sent out by the Department of Justice, Human Health and Services and the Federal Bureau of Investigations.
- c. **Faith Based Community Partnership:** Dr. Crawford informed that Dr. Eichold had already discussed the faith-based community day of service at Stone Street Baptist Church.
- d. **Mardi Gras Update:** Dr. Crawford informed the Board that there have been more cancellations of Mardi Gras balls and parades. We are now being informed that communities and neighborhoods are hosting porch Mardi Gras parades in their neighborhoods. We will have to be watchful of these events as communities and neighborhoods congregate for the potential spread COVID-19.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. **Next meeting, February 16, 2021, Mardi Gras Day:** Dr. Eichold stated the Mobile County Health Department will be involved with COVID-19 vaccination during the Mardi Gras holiday and requested the Board's approval to cancel the next Board of Health meeting scheduled for Mardi Gras day, February 16, 2021.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ludgood and seconded by Dr. Pearsall to cancel the Board of Health meeting on February 16, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION was made by Dr. Meshad and seconded by Dr. Pearsall to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:42 a.m.

Michael W. Meshad, M.D.
Chairman

Michael C. Chang, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Secretary

Approved: March 16, 2021