

## BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

### Summary of Meeting

March 16, 2021

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was held by conference call (Dial in Phone Number (312) 626-6799, Access Code: 963 1503 8886#, Password: 782329#) and was called to order Dr. Michael W. Meshad, Chairman, at 7:00 a.m. Roll was called and the following attended:

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Doctors Michael W. Meshad, Joseph Ewing Bornstein, Desiree A. Soter-Pearsall, Stacey W. Wing, Michael C. Chang and Commissioner Merceria L. Ludgood

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Doctor C.M.A. (Max) Rogers IV

**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; Ruth Guess, Executive Secretary and Valerie White, Transcriber

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Dr. Rendi Murphree, Bureau of Surveillance and Environmental Services

II. **\*APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 19, 2021** (Attachment A): The minutes for the meeting held on January 19, 2021 were briefly reviewed since the minutes had been distributed to the Board members prior to the meeting.

**MOTION** was made by Dr. Bornstein and seconded by Dr. Pearsall that the minutes of the meeting held on January 19, 2021 be approved as distributed. The motion passed unanimously.

### III. HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT

- a. **Report from State Health Officer** (Attachment B): Dr. Eichold presented to the Board for their information, a summary report for the months of January and February 2021 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:**
  - **Culture** (Attachment C): Dr. Eichold brought the Board's attention to the October-December 2020 issue of the Health Department newsletter, Culture, for their information.
- c. **Virtual Spring General Staff Meeting & Training – Friday, May 7, 2021:** Dr. Eichold informed the Board that Spring General Staff Meeting & Training will be held virtually on Friday, May 7, 2021 and invited the Board to attend, an invitation will be sent by email.
- d. **Legislation:** Dr. Eichold informed the Board that SB240 in the legislature dissolves the Board of Medical Examiners, the State Committee of Public Health, and the State Health Officer. The bill creates a Secretary of Health which is appointed by the Governor. SB240 has passed out of the Senate Health Committee. The bill significantly changes organized medicine and the medical licensure commission. There was a brief discussion. HB168 was also introduced in the legislative session. This piece of legislation provides that the Health Officer of Mobile County cannot issue a health order without being in harmony with the State Health Officer, this procedure is currently followed. There was a brief discussion.
- e. Dr. Eichold stated today is Ms. Valerie White's last Board of Health meeting. Ms. White's last day of work is Thursday. Ms. Ruth Guess will be assuming the duties of Executive Secretary. He thanked Ms. White for her years of service and high-quality work.

#### **IV. CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER**

- a. **COVID-19 Hospital Update:** Dr. Cepeda informed the Board that the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 continue to decline from the peak of 276 on January 11, 2021. There has been a rapid steady decline from that point. Numbers are at an all-time low and hopefully that trend will continue. The hospitals continue to have adequate supply of personal protective equipment, monoclonal antibodies, and convalescent plasma. They have been able to continue with elective and non-elective surgeries. Coordination efforts with the hospitals, the Medical Society of Mobile County and the Mobile County Health Department have been great throughout this pandemic. Weekly discussions continue with the groups.
- b. **COVID-19 Vaccine Update:** Dr. Cepeda informed the Board that vaccine efforts continue at the cruise terminal as well as in the community as well as other strike teams. Dr. Murphree will give an update on the vaccines as well as Ms. Warren. There was a brief discussion.

Dr. Rendi Murphree joined the meeting at 7:10 a.m.

#### **V. GUEST – Dr. Rendi Murphree, Bureau of Disease Surveillance and Environmental Services**

- a. **COVID-19:** Dr. Murphree informed the Board that all indicators for COVID-19 transmission are moving downward. The indicators being monitored are: number of reported cases; number of hospitalizations; number of deaths; and percent positive laboratory tests (number of positive labs divided by the total of laboratory test conducted). An average of less than 50 cases are being reported daily. Hospitalizations are down to under 50 people hospitalized per day with a COVID-19 diagnosis. The percentage of positive cases is less than 5% in the statewide system which as low as it has been since March of 2020. The number of COVID-19 tests performed is down greatly but exceeds the threshold that is expected for the Mobile community size, to reach the benchmark testing is 2,000 tests per week and over 5,000 tests are being performed per week. There was a brief discussion.
- b. **Ebola:** There is an Ebola outbreak in Guinea and the Democratic Republic of the Congo which has prompted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to issue travel restrictions for portions of these countries. There was a brief discussion.

Dr. Rendi Murphree left the meeting at 7:19 a.m.

#### **VI. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

- a. **\*General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Reports – January and February 2021** (Attachment D): Mr. Betros presented to the Board the General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Report for the months of January and February 2021. The month of January was favorable by \$1.2 million with a favorable year to date of \$1.6 million. The month of February was favorable by \$160,751 with a favorable year to date of \$1.8 million. Mr. Betros stated that the total spent for COVID-19 to date is \$3.8 million. Mr. Betros asked the Board if there were any questions.

**MOTION** was made by Dr. Chang and seconded by Dr. Wing that the General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Report for the months of January and February 2021 be approved as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. **Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA):** Mr. Betros informed the Board that a 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was included in the FY 2020-2021 Budget. The COLA will be instituted beginning April 1, 2021.

#### **VII. FAMILY HEALTH CLINICAL SERVICES**

- a. **FOPHCC Governing Council Minutes – January and February 2021** (Attachment E): Ms. Warren presented to the Board, for their information, a copy of the minutes for the FOPHCC Governing Council Meetings held in January and February 2021.

- b. **Primary Care Clinic Productivity Report – January and February 2021:** Ms. Warren stated that primary care clinic productivity numbers for January 2021 were 6,847 visits for 4,992 unduplicated patients and in the month of February 2021 primary care clinic productivity number were 7,105 visits for 5,306 unduplicated patients.
- c. **COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts:** Ms. Warren informed the Board that Family Health Clinical Services has been participating in vaccination efforts in concert with the Prevention and Wellness arm of the agency to get vaccine out to Citronelle, Mount Vernon, Eight Mile and Semmes. There have been first and second dose clinics in those areas. Notification was received last week that Family Health was selected as one of 700 Health Centers in the United States to receive a federal allocation of vaccine. Ms. Warren stated that the paperwork has been submitted and we are awaiting follow-up from HRSA on the amount and type of vaccine we will be issued, and which sites will be receiving the vaccine.
- d. **2020 UDS Report:** Ms. Warren informed the Board that each year as a Federally Qualified Health Center we are required to submit data related to patient population, visit type and diagnoses. The report is called the Uniform Data System Report. Only certain types of visits can be counted: patient must be seen by a provider and the visit must be a primary care visit. There was a 32 percent decline in unduplicated patients for the calendar year of 2020 due to COVID-19. There were 27,749 unduplicated patients and with 71,376 visits. There was a 35 percent decline in actual visits. Of the 71,376 total visits, 67,144 were in clinic visits and 4,232 were virtual visits.
- e. **Team Training:** Ms. Warren informed the Board that Family Health embarked on a Back-to-Basics Team Training from October 2020 to March 2021 which consisted of twenty-one, eight-hour trainings. The focus was to move to value-based care with a better team approach.

#### **VIII. PREVENTION & WELLNESS**

- a. **Influenza Update:** Dr. Crawford informed the Board that the influenza total is at .93% which is well below the APDH baseline of 3.29%.
- b. **ELC 282 Funding:** Dr. Crawford informed the Board that Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging (ELC) 282 is a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which funds infectious disease and outbreak studies throughout all fifty states. An application for the funding and budget has been submitted and approval for \$17.8 million is pending. There was a brief discussion.

#### **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

- a. **\*In-Person Board of Health Meetings and Meeting Venue:** Dr. Eichold stated that when current Governor's order expires on April 9, 2021 we may not be able to continue to meet virtually. Ms. Wendy Bedsole, Executive Director of the Medical Society of Mobile County will make the Medical Society available for in person meetings. A contract would need to be negotiated, the Medical Society would open the building, set up the virtual equipment for those wanting to attend virtually, until in person meetings are required. Dr. Eichold asked the Board if they wanted to return to in person Board of Health meetings and if they would like to change the Board of Health meeting from 7:00 a.m.

After a brief discussion it was decided to poll the Board Members by email and ask the following questions:

1. Do you prefer to meet in-person or virtually?
2. Do you want to continue to meet at 7:00 a.m. or a different time of the day?

- b. Next meeting, April 20, 2021.

X. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** was made by Dr. Meshad and seconded by Dr. Pearsall to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:33 a.m.

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Michael W. Meshad, M.D.  
Chairman

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

Approved: April 20, 2021