

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING**  
**Summary of Meeting**  
**April 21, 2020**

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was held by conference call (Dial in Phone Number 1 (929) 205-6099, Access Code: 971 1027 0525#, Password: 873244) and was called to order by Dr. Joseph Ewing Bornstein, Chairman, at 7:00 a.m. Roll was called and the following attended:

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Doctors Joseph Ewing Bornstein, Chairman, C.M.A. (Max) Rogers IV, Barbara Mitchell, Desiree A. Soter-Pearsall, Michael W. Meshad, Stacey W. Wing and Commissioner Jerry Carl

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bernard H. Eichold II, M.D., Dr.P.H., F.A.C.P., Health 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:** Dr. Rendi Murphree, Director, Bureau of Disease Surveillance & Environmental Services

II. **GUESTS**

a. **Dr. Rendi Murphree, Director, Bureau of Disease Surveillance & Environmental Services**

**Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Update:** Dr. Murphree stated there have been two important changes in surveillance for COVID-19 disease and deaths. One change is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is now asking for confirmed COVID-19 cases and probable COVID-19 cases. The probable category has symptoms of COVID-19 disease: fever or cough or shortness of breath; known exposure within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes with a laboratory case; but does not have laboratory evidence of infection. Mobile County currently has 689 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1 probable case. 81 cases are known to be hospitalized. Among the 690 confirmed and probable cases 28 are classified as died with COVID-19. The Alabama Department of Public Health will discontinue including two different death numbers on their dashboard. They will have total numbers of COVID-19 deaths that will include those that have died with a positive test result for COVID-19 and those who have COVID-19 listed on the death certificate as cause of death. There was a brief discussion.

Dr. Murphree exited the conference call at 7:10 a.m.

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

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

IV. **HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT**

a. **Reports from State Health Officer – February 2020, March 2020 and Special/Called Meeting April 2, 2020** (Attachment B): Dr. Eichold presented to the Board for their information, a summary report for the months of February 2020, March 2020 and Special/Called Meeting April 2, 2020 from the State Health Officer sent monthly to county Boards of Health describing actions taken by the State Committee of Public Health.

b. **Spring General Staff Meeting & Training (The Bright Spot) – May 8, 2020:** Dr. Eichold informed the Board that the spring general staff meeting and training event scheduled for Friday, May 8, 2020 at The Bright Spot, 2501 East Interstate 65 Service Road North, Mobile, AL 36617 at 12:00 p.m. has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

c. **COVID-19:** Dr. Eichold informed the Board that the senior leadership of government is talking about a re-entry program for COVID-19. The Medical Society of Mobile County is encouraging the medical scientists to get involved with re-entry guidelines. Hospital capacity for COVID-19 patients continues to exceed demand. A plan chaired by

Dr. Stephanie Crawford is being developed to expand into the Waterfront Rescue Mission if there is a need. There was a brief discussion.

- d. **Dr. Laura Cepeda – Appointed April 11, 2020 Chief Medical Officer:** Dr. Eichold informed the Board that Dr. Laura Cepeda was appointed as Chief Medical Officer for the Mobile County Health Department on April 11, 2020.

V. **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

- a. **\*General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Reports – March 2020** (Attachment C): Mr. Betros presented to the Board the General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Report for the month of March 2020. The month of March was unfavorable by \$57,357 with a favorable year to date of \$594,864. Mr. Betros asked the Board if there were any questions. There was a brief discussion.

**MOTION** was made by Dr. Pearsall and seconded by Dr. Rogers that the General Fund Revenue & Expenditure Report for the month of March 2020 be approved as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. **Property Located at 272 North Broad Street – Alabama Community College Systems:** Mr. Betros informed the Board that the Mobile County Health Department is in the process of finalizing the transfer of a portion of the property located at 272 North Broad Street to Alabama Community College Systems for use by Bishop State Community College in the amount of \$255,000.
- c. **Staffing and Budget:** Mr. Betros informed the Board that additional fund and cost center has been set up for COVID-19 to track expenses. The Mobile County Health Department is exempt from the Family First Coronavirus Act as a healthcare agency. The law allows two weeks of emergency paid leave for employees for childcare and employees who are sick with COVID-19. The Mobile County Health Department has cut back staff working on site and some are working from home. Some employees are on stand-by, who cannot telework. Currently no employees have been furloughed or laid off. We are looking closely to see at what point the agency may need to furlough or lay-off. The agency had budgeted for a 2.5% cost of living increase for May 1, 2020 which will be delayed.

VI. **FAMILY HEALTH CLINICAL SERVICES**

- a. **FOPHCC Governing Council Minutes – March 2020** (Attachment D): Ms. Warren presented to the Board, for their information, a copy of the minutes for the FOPHCC Governing Council Meeting held in March 2020.
- b. **Primary Care Clinic Productivity Report – March 2020:** Ms. Warren stated that primary care clinic productivity numbers for March 2020 were 6,659 visits for 4,949 unduplicated patients.
- c. **Family Health COVID-19 Response:** Ms. Warren informed the Board that the Family Health COVID-19 response was based on knowing that the staff would be impacted by the school closings and in an effort to conserve personal protective equipment (PPE). On Wednesday, March 18, 2020 Mobile County Health Department closed all clinics except the following: Urgent Care, Keeler; Newburn Health Center, well babies (patients 1 year old or younger); and Women's Center, OB services and family planning. Temperature monitoring was set up outside all open facilities. A medical triage line was set up. A pharmacy refill line was set up. A COVID-19 information line was set up. Staff who are not working in clinical sites or working on one of the call-in lines are teleworking from home. As staff were rotated to work at various clinical sites, we ensured that staff assigned to clean sites remained only in clean sites. The Eight Mile Health Center was opened yesterday for well visits for patients between 2-5 years of age. We are working with the Purchasing and Finance Department to obtain as much PPE as possible in order to open as many of our operations as possible while practicing safe social distancing. PPE has been the rate limiting factor.
- d. **HRSA grant awards received related to COVID-19 response (\$126,149 for FY 2020 Coronavirus Supplemental Funding for Health Centers and \$1.8 Million for Health Center Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding):** Ms. Warren informed the Board that we have received some

financial assistance from HRSA. We received four separate funding mechanisms from HRSA. The first was for Coronavirus Supplement Funding for Health Centers in the amount of \$126,149. We received \$1.8 million for Health Center Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (Cares) Act Funding. We received funding through Ryan White in the amount of \$58,528 and a separate funding in the amount of \$36,472. These funds are to be used to help prevent, prepare, and respond to COVID-19. One of the things we have done in response to COVID-19 is to stand up Telehealth. We did a soft launch last week.

**VII. PREVENTION & WELLNESS**

- a. **Influenza and Hepatitis A Update:** Dr. Crawford informed the Board that influenza nationally is low and that there will be no more specialized reporting breakdowns. During the 2019-2020 flu season there were 168 pediatric flu deaths reported. We currently have 35 cases of Hepatitis A with 4 under investigation.

**VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

- a. Dr. Eichold encouraged the Board to continue personal safety measures as we move forward. COVID-19 has not gone away. Cases are increasing in the southern hemisphere. We hope COVID-19 will have a seasonal variation of its transmission. The community has responded in a positive way to this wave, but it will potentially come back. We need to have IgG antibody testing that is specific to COVID-19 to know the true community transmission of the virus. Dr. Eichold asked for the Board to bear with us while we work to limit the spread of the disease and loss of life. There was a brief discussion.

- b. Next meeting May 21, 2020.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** was made by Dr. Mitchell and seconded by Dr. Meshad to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 a.m.