



JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

Wednesday, July 14, 2021 - 5:00 p.m.

**Guy M. Tate Building
Conference Room A/B**

Present: Sylvie Stacy, MD, Hernando Carter, MD, Susan Walley, MD, and Iris Fancher, MD

Absent: Kenny Murray, MD and Commissioner Jimmie Stephens

Others Present: Mark Wilson, MD, David Hicks, DO, Rodney Holmes, Senitra Blackburn, Bryn Manzella, David Maxey, Esq., Rusha Smith, Carolyn Buck, Thomas Thagard, Richard Embrey, MD, Denisa Pridmore, and Terrie Hartley

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Carter, Chair.

Minutes of the June 9, 2021 meeting were approved as distributed.

Freshwater Land Trust

Rusha Smith, Executive Director, Tom Thagard, Chair of Board, Richard Embrey, MD, Board Member, of Freshwater Land Trust (FLT), and Carolyn Buck, Red Rock Trail System, Director, shared an overview of the FLT Trail System and Environmental Protection Project updates. FLT is a non-advocacy, non-profit organization based in Jefferson County and is the first accredited land trust in Alabama. Ms. Smith said the purpose of FLT is to conserve, connect, and care for land and waters, and create green spaces for future generations.

FLT, along with the Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH), created a master plan for the Red Rock Trail System. The Red Rock Trail System is a network of trails, parks, bike lanes, and sidewalks made up of six major corridors that connects several municipalities in Jefferson County. In 2019 JCDH entered a five-year, \$4 million funding agreement with FLT for the purpose of providing public health and environmental protection infrastructure projects to serve the public by creating and enhancing public access to safe and healthy outdoor spaces. Some of the projects funded so far are Bham Strong, Project Litter Gitter, Moon River Canoe Launch, Tarrant Flood Mitigation, Kiwanis Vulcan Trail, and Vulcan Trail Outdoor Gym. Ms. Smith said FLT is currently working on signage to include information about each trail.

June 2021 Financial Statements

Dr. Carter noted that the June 2021 Financial Statements were emailed to Board members prior to the meeting. Rodney Holmes, CPA, Director of Finance, reviewed the financial statements.

Contracts

On the motion of Dr. Stacy, and seconded by Dr. Walley, the following contracts were approved:

A new contract with BGrace Media, LLC (payee) to provide media campaign to get individuals vaccinated due to COVID-19 pandemic for a rate not to exceed \$350,000 from June 1, 2021 through August 1, 2021.

Renewal of a contract with Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC (payee) to provide an Information Technology audit to include HIPAA review for a rate not to exceed \$13,000 from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Renewal of a contract with Cathy D. Jones (payee) to provide administrative services to JCDH for a rate of \$40 per hour; not to exceed \$14,999 from July 2, 2021 through January 1, 2022.

An amendment to extend the terms of the agreement with Neilsen Capouya (payee) to develop reports from the legacy (Greenway) electronic medical record system for a rate of \$50 per hour; not to exceed \$47,600 from June 22, 2021 through September 30, 2021.

A new contract with Republic Services, Inc. (payee) to provide dumpster services for JCDH for a rate of \$1,152.70 per month; \$13,832.40 annually for a three-year period from June 1, 2021 through May 31, 2024.

A new contract with New Solutions Group (payee) to provide landscape services for JCDH at a rate not to exceed \$3,450 from May 20, 2021 through June 20, 2021.

A new contract with QueCentric, LLC (payee) to provide technical expertise and consulting for the development of a statewide blueprint/framework for expansion of the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's office case management system to other coroner's offices around the state for a rate not to exceed \$5,250 from March 1, 2021 through August 31, 2021.

An amendment to a contract with MedsPLUS Consulting, LLC (payee) to extend the term of agreement to provide COVID-19 vaccination services during the COVID-19 pandemic for an amount not to exceed \$170,000 from March 30, 2021 through June 30, 2021.

An amendment to a contract with the Greater Birmingham Transportation Services, LLC; d/b/a Birmingham Yellow Cab (payee) to extend the term of agreement to provide transportation services to COVID-19 vaccination sites for JCDH. The amount will be \$5 for the first mile/\$2 mile thereafter. Once the destination is reached a fee of \$24 per hour is charged if the driver must wait on the passenger. The term of agreement is March 17, 2021 through August 31, 2021.

An amendment to a contract with the Alabama Department of Public Health (payor) to extend the term of the grant for JCDH Cities Readiness Initiative activities at the local level for an amount not to exceed \$86,000 from May 21, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

An amendment to a contract with the Alabama Department of Public Health (payor) to extend the term of the grant for JCDH All Hazards at the local level for an amount not to exceed \$301,931 from May 21, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Request for Advisory Opinion Regarding Support of Community COVID-19 Testing and Vaccination Services

Dr. Wilson noted that JCDH has held COVID-19 vaccination clinics and has worked with community partners that have provided outreach, homebound vaccinations, and smaller pop up vaccination sites. Although these organizations are receiving some reimbursement they are not reimbursed for logistics and other expenses. The following resolution is asking for the Board's approval to seek an advisory opinion from the Alabama Attorney General on whether or not JCDH can reimburse our partners for these expenses.

On the motion of Dr. Stacy, and seconded by Dr. Fancher, the following resolution was approved with the following amendments. The title will be changed to "Approval of Request for Advisory Opinion Regarding Support of Community COVID-19 Testing and Vaccination Services" and the last paragraph in italic should include "testing or vaccination".

WHEREAS, the Jefferson County Board of Health (the "Board") is charged with the duty to supervise the enforcement of the health laws of the state in Jefferson County; and,

WHEREAS, the Board's duties include selection of a county health officer, investigating outbreaks of disease, investigating and abating public health nuisances, rulemaking, and exercising supervision over the sanitary conditions in public places within Jefferson County (Ala. Code § 22-3-2); and,

WHEREAS, the Board and its operating arm, the Jefferson County Department of Health, under the leadership of the Jefferson County Health Officer, and in tandem with its community partners, have been spearheading the battle to abate, stop the spread of, and control the reportable disease known as COVID-19 in the county since declaration of a state public health emergency in March, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, the development of tests and vaccines to combat the spread of the disease and to protect human health and life have provided significant help in combating COVID-19, research and analysis of data on the testing and vaccination efforts indicate that after an initial surge in distribution of the vaccine, the rate of vaccination has flattened and new modalities of distribution are needed to insure access and acceptance of the vaccine to vulnerable and remote populations within the county; and,

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that a successful model for distributing the vaccine to these vulnerable and remote populations within the county is a coordinated system of community vaccination sites (outside of a physician office, pharmacy, or other healthcare facility) and in-home programs; and,

WHEREAS, for this system to be effective, the Board recognizes a need to use its funds, resources, contacts, and expertise to better organize the distribution of vaccines to county residents through logistical and tertiary support, including training of logistical and organizational staff, cost of employee travel to community vaccination sites or homebound residents' homes, traffic control, security, or other reasonable administrative overhead costs associated with the planning and oversight of the community and homebound vaccination efforts, as well as provision of certain non-medical physical supplies, such as tents, tables, chairs, timers, recordkeeping forms, signage, hand sanitizer, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, being mindful of restrictions in the Constitution of the State of Alabama restricting the expenditure of public funds to benefit private interests unless such expenditures serve a public purpose:

THEREFORE, IN LIGHT OF THE FOREGOING, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT: Finding the provision of direct and indirect logistical and tertiary support to medical providers willing to provide COVID-19 testing and vaccination services to vulnerable populations serves an important public purpose and one in keeping with the public health mission of the Board, the Board hereby approves submission, by General Counsel, of the following question for an advisory opinion to be issued by the Attorney General of the State of Alabama:

“May the Board agree to provide logistical support to medical service providers providing testing or administering vaccines at remote community testing or vaccination sites or at the homes of homebound patients as part of its mission to encourage public health and ensure the safety of vulnerable populations?”

Report of the Health Officer

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Wilson reported that 44.3% of Jefferson County’s overall population has had at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Thirty-six percent of the overall population has been fully vaccinated. Jefferson County is the third highest in the state of those that have received at least one dose of the vaccine and ranked fifth among those that are fully vaccinated.

JCDH Vaccination Effort

Dr. Wilson said JCDH held mass vaccination clinics and has tried several different methods to get people vaccinated but the demand is not there. We partnered with United Way of Central Alabama to offer vaccine to homebound residents but there has not been a lot of interest. In light of this, JCDH is working to return to normal operations. Dental Health staff have been assisting with vaccination efforts since the beginning of the pandemic but are now working to reopen our Dental clinics. Options are being considered on how to continue with vaccination efforts without having to pull our clinical staff. JCDH still has vaccine available and will hold a vaccination clinic at the Guy M. Tate building once a week.

Dr. Wilson stated that two weeks ago Jefferson County was seeing an average of thirteen new cases per day but the numbers have continued to rise and doubled in one week. Dr. Wilson held an elected officials call on July 6 to discuss the rise in COVID-19 cases. JCDH’s message to the public is that people need to get vaccinated.

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget Presentation

Dr. Wilson noted that the fiscal year 2021-2022 budget will be presented to the Board at the August meeting. He said funds have been added to the budget for the Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program.

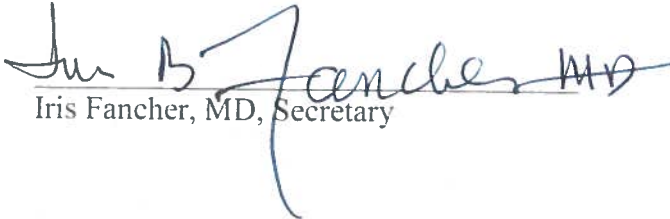
County Emergency Medical Services

Dr. Wilson reported that Commissioner Stephens has formed an action committee and Jefferson County hired a consultant to help find solutions to an ambulance shortage across the county. He said JCDH will be involved in these efforts in some capacity.

Dr. Walley's Announcement

Dr. Walley announced that she has accepted a position in Washington, D.C. and July is her last Board meeting. Dr. Wilson presented Dr. Walley with a plaque in appreciation for her service with the Board of Health.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 11, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. An announcement will be made prior to the meeting of the exact meeting location. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.


Iris Fancher, MD, Secretary

Approved:



Hernando Carter, MD, Chair