



JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

Wednesday, March 13, 2024 - 5:00 p.m.

5th Floor Board Room

PRESENT: Iris Fancher, MD., Weily Soong, MD, and Commissioner Jimmie Stephens

ABSENT: Jeffrey Dobyns, DO, Michele Kong, MD, and Elizabeth Turnipseed, MD

OTHERS

PRESENT: David Hicks, DO, Rodney Holmes, David Maxey, Esq., Allury Lal, MD, Jonathan Stanton, Kim Cason, Bryn Manzella, Senitra Blackburn, and Terrie Hartley

Call to Order

Dr. Fancher, Chair, noted that since a quorum was not present, the Board of Health would be unable to conduct official business.

February 2024 Financial Statements

Dr. Fancher noted the February 2024 Financial Statements were included in the Board package. Rodney Holmes, CPA, Director of Finance, answered questions from the Board.

Health Officer Report

Report from State Health Officer – February 2024

Dr. Hicks informed the Board that a summary report for the month of February 2024 from Dr. Scott Harris, State Health Officer, will be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

Reportable Diseases Update

Dr. Hicks noted increasing reports throughout the country of outbreaks of measles. He reported that recently there have been three individuals residing, or being cared for, in Jefferson County who have been evaluated for suspected measles. All of these have been found to not have measles. The Department has reviewed internal procedures for handling persons presenting to JCDH facilities with suspected measles. Dr. Hicks stated that grant funds will be used to renovate JCDH clinics to have improved isolation rooms.

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has reported outbreaks of syphilis and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections at various correctional facilities around the state. None of these have occurred in Jefferson County. Department staff are likely to be asked to assist ADPH staff with mass testing efforts.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Visit

Dr. Hicks reported that Dr. Mandy Cohen, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), visited the Department on February 22, 2024, to highlight the Department's opioid response efforts that were funded through the CDC's Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) cooperative agreements. Some initiatives that were highlighted included:

1. Provision of opioid overdose response training and naloxone kits to residents and local partner agencies;
2. Establishment of a mail order system for naloxone that allows for statewide distribution of free naloxone;
3. Establishment of a real-time overdose dashboard for the local seven-county region;
4. Production of ALAHOPE online curriculum for substance use for free continuing education; and
5. Establishment of the OD2A Regional Task Force.

Bluestone Coke Consent Decree Update

Today, Dr. Hicks, Jonathan Stanton, Environmental Health Director, and Dr. Vincent Nathan, Health Equity Director, participated in a follow-up meeting of neighborhood officers representing Harriman Park, Collegeville, and Fairmont. JCDH staff were briefed on plans by the neighborhood officers to convene a public input session so that those living in the three neighborhoods can publicly voice their preference for how the settlement funds should be spent. Simultaneously, JCDH will also seek written input from the public, in accordance with the Consent Decree. Responses will be compiled and reviewed to inform the next steps.

Potential Collaboration with Miles College

Dr. Hicks briefed the Board on discussions with Miles College on a potential collaboration to develop community capacity to initiate environmental projects for communities with limited funding and technical expertise. This is in response to known build-environment needs and feedback received by the Department from communities experiencing related challenges. Commissioner Stephens commented that the western part of the county has significant needs due to the flooding of Valley Creek. He recommended that the Department collaborate with elected officials and municipalities.

Health Policy Update

Dr. Hicks provided the Board with an overview of the following bills that have been introduced in the State legislature:

- HB-77 – This bill would require the State Board of Health to add any condition on the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP). This has passed in the House of Representatives.
- HB-158 – This bill would prohibit governmental entities and the State Health Officer from imposing a face mask mandate to prevent the spread of COVID-19 with exceptions for medical, dental, and detention facilities.
- HB-165 – The bill would require written consent from a parent or legal guardian for a minor to receive vaccinations.
- HB-246 – This bill would change the age of medical majority to eighteen for consent to medical treatment and authorize a parent or legal guardian to authorize mental health treatment for minors even upon the minor's refusal.

- HB-280 – This bill would require “research-based” fentanyl prevention and drug poisoning awareness education in grades six through twelve.
- SB-37 – This bill would prohibit smoking of electronic nicotine delivery systems in public areas.
- SB-59 – This bill would require hands-on cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator use instruction for high school students. This has passed in the Senate.
- SB-128 – The bill would abolish the State Board of Health and confer all duties and authorities provided by law to the State Committee of Public Health; revise the membership of the State Committee of Public Health; provide minimum qualifications for the State Health Officer; and provide a mechanism to review and discipline certain actions taken by the State Health Officer.

Public Health Week Activities

Dr. Hicks informed the Board that National Public Health Week is April 1–7, 2024. He will provide remarks at an event at the UAB School of Public Health on April 2 followed by a networking event for students where they can interact with JCDH staff and learn about public health careers. The following day he will provide The State of Public Health in Jefferson County address at the Birmingham Business Alliance. On Friday, April 5, the Department will close early at 3:00 p.m. for the grand opening of the Mark E. Wilson Pavilion.

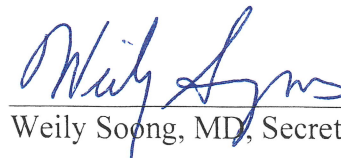
National Association of County and City Health Officials Community of Practice for New Local Health Officials

Dr. Hicks informed the Board that he is participating in the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) program aimed to equip new health officials with the skills, tools, strategies, and networks to succeed. Bi-monthly learning and practice session topics are: Establishing Personal Leadership Skills and Style; Building and Leading a Strategic Health Department; Navigating Your Political Landscape and Partnerships; and Identifying and Managing Resources for an Innovative and Resilient Health Department.

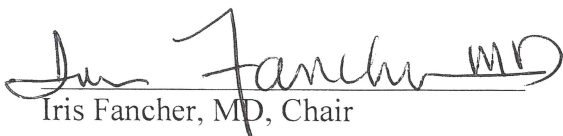
Acting Health Officer Notification

Dr. Hicks informed the Board that he will be on vacation at the end of the month and Dr. Allury Lal, Deputy Health Officer, will serve as Acting Health Officer March 25–29, 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m. The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Fifth Floor Board Room.


Weily Soong, MD, Secretary

Approved:


Iris Fancher, MD, Chair