

**THE FIVE HUNDRED SIXTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF HEALTH OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2023**

The Five Hundred Sixty-Fifth meeting of the Baltimore County Board of Health was held March 24 at 9:30 a.m. via WebEx.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Adelsberger, Katie McElroy, Dr. Samuel Havrilak, Judy Kistner, Dr. Barbara McLean and Camille Smith.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Winona Matthews

OTHERS PRESENT, Samantha Allen, Accreditation Coordinator, Della Leister; Deputy Health Officer and Secretary Pro Tem, Lawrence Richardson; Deputy Director, Finance and Administration, Kathy Wynn, Executive Secretary and Renee Youngfellow; Acting Chief, Quality Improvement.

Dr. Havrilak opened the meeting. Should it be necessary to close the meeting, the Chair will conduct a recorded vote on a motion to close. A closing statement will also be prepared that cites the part of the Open Meetings Act that contains the applicable exception, lists the topics to be discussed in the closed session and give the public body's reason for excluding the public.

I. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

To approve the minutes of February 24, 2023. Minutes approved with the following correction: Page one, last paragraph, last sentence of paragraph on page two to read, *Seven are located in high schools, three in middle schools and three in elementary schools in the County.*

Motion: Dr. McLean
Second: Ms. Kistner
Decision: Unanimous Approval

II. BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mr. Richardson provided an overview of the department's FY24 Budget.(see attached Power Point presentation).

This budget will be presented to the County Executive next Friday. There is a 2% increase in our general fund. Last year, the general fund was \$26.5M, this year we are at \$26.9M which is roughly a \$400,000 increase over our adopted budget.

Each year we receive a budget ceiling. We are also provided the opportunity to request anything above that ceiling. Approved in last year's budget was a modular annex/large trailer that we are having permanently installed outside of the Dundalk Health Center. Initially, it was being used for testing for our COVID response. Moving forward, we realized there was limited space at our Dundalk site as it is one of the smaller health centers. This trailer will be used to expand services at that site.

Also last year, additional funding was added to our mobile response crisis team coordinated in partnership with Police and our vendor, Affiliated Santé. Funding was to offset personnel expenses. The majority of our American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding was used for standing up a chronic disease unit, support functions in Finance and Administration and for additional personnel in our Emerging Infectious Disease unit.

Our largest proportional funding goes toward personnel expenses of which there is a slight increase that is part of our 2% increase for this year. Other expenses include, supplies and materials, contractual services, rent and utilities and travel.

Included in the FY24 budget request is bringing back our home health service program with start-up funds of \$178K. This program differs from home health which was cut in 2019. After COVID, we realized the need for us to be on the ground, addressing chronic disease such as diabetes, obesity and hypertension.

In 2021, Baltimore County engaged a consulting firm, Public Works LLC, to do a comprehensive assessment of Baltimore County government to identify opportunities for fiscal savings through efficiency in operations and service delivery. The firm spoke with every department in the County and made some suggestions as to what could be done to find some efficiencies. Suggestions completed or in progress for the department are developing a strategic plan, maintaining the idea of a one HHS and to utilize telehealth.

III. PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION

The Department of Health achieved accreditation. Big thank you to all who participated in any way to help achieve this goal. The Board was a big part of the accreditation process. Accreditation is for five years.

A PHAB requirement is for an attestation to be sent each year that states we are continuing to meet the goals of accreditation. There are four levels on each of the standards. Ones noted as slightly we need to work on. The grading scale is 1) fully demonstrated, 2) largely demonstrated, 3) slightly demonstrated and 4) not demonstrated. We did not receive a grading of not demonstrated in any of the domains that were reviewed.

Greatest strengths:

- strong quality improvement culture
- Well-functioning and longstanding performance management system
- Balanced approach to improvement that looks both at strategic, root cause analysis, and rapid cycle "just do it" improvements
- value our workforce and provide a supportive work environment.

Greatest weaknesses:

- opportunity to expand and further operationalize internal systems to identify, evaluate and address ethical impacts.
- Opportunity to further define process steps, checklists, or standard operating guidelines that demonstrate how the protocols would be accomplished.

During the public health board accreditation interview, we did not have a set standard that states certain standards or emergency operation systems are implemented at certain times. Our leadership team knows when to implement a department wide response. They wanted it written down in a protocol. We are working on those protocols.

IV. DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION BY THE SECRETARY

FY24 Budget

- HHS leadership presents the HHS budget next Friday to the County Executive and County Administrative Officer.

Program Updates

- Animal Services – The cuddle shuttle will be at the SECU arena on Sunday. The Baltimore Blast team is helping to promote animals available for adoption.
- Clinical Services – We are slowly transitioning COVID operations, testing and vaccinations, as a routine clinical service offered by the department.
- Medicaid changed eligibility for dental services opening up more services for adults. Dental services is a critical health need. The challenge is finding enough public health dentists to provide these additional services. Private providers that accept Medicaid can also provide these services. The department has received calls from adults clients and we schedule them as dentists are available. A very short waiting list has been started.
- The department has a large distribution center handled by our operations staff. Much of what is in the center are pharmaceuticals. We have a pharmacist that works with the department on a temporary basis for the COVID clinics. Since they are winding down, we will use that individual to help at the distribution center to ensure that all pharmaceuticals are being handled, ordered and maintained.

Site Visits

- There has been one site visit since our last board meeting, Family Planning at our Eastern Regional Health Center. The written report was very favorable. The only recommendation for improvement is we are serving more than the national average number of men in our family planning clinics but are under what the standard is for serving adolescents. We will work towards determining how to get more adolescents into the clinics.

Personnel

- Dr. O’Dowd continues as Acting Director for Clinical Services.
- Ari Blum has been selected as the Bureau Director of Behavioral Health. He is an internal candidate. Mr. Blum has 25 years of historical skills in mental health grant management and personnel management.
- Our Chief of Community Health Services has taken a different position within the department. Phyllis Hall is covering that position temporarily.

- Dr. Soong is retiring in two weeks. Dr. Soong has been with the department for twenty years.

Facility Issues

- The search continues for a new location for the WIC Reisterstown office.
- The Cockeysville health center capital budget allocation received a year ago will most likely be redistributed for other capital projects in the County. We were unable to find a location for purchase. Funds cannot be used for a lease as they are short term.
- We have recently experienced a number of automobile break-ins at Drumcastle. Staff are reminded to always lock their vehicles, store items out of site, and alert on-site security if they see suspicious activity. Police have done an assessment and we are looking at ways to enhance security in the garage.
- One of the things we worked to accomplish two years ago was to procure a medical mobile van to take to local communities. Due to supply chain issues at the height of COVID, we were not able to purchase. Ms. Leister then looked into the possibility of purchasing a used mobile van. We are happy to announce that we are three or four weeks away from a 2022 medical van that has everything we want and is handicapped accessible. The mobile van will be used for COVID vaccinations, childhood vaccinations, HIV testing and any service we think we can deliver via the mobile van. What we heard at the budget town hall meetings was new Americans are unable to receive access to medical care due to work hours. A design is being worked on for the van, drivers need to be identified and location to secure the mobile unit. A policy will also be drafted.

Trainings and Events

- The final budget town hall meeting is next Wednesday in Councilman Jones district in Randallstown. There has been a strong presence at all of these town hall meetings.. The most recent meeting was held in Towson. There were five speakers related to Animal Services, some were applauding the work being done and others providing ideas.
- The Office of Law is providing first amendment training. We have discussed this topic at a previous board meeting. Law is providing this training to some of our staff who will provide to our staff.
- The department is participating next Wednesday in a regional preparedness drill at Arbutus. Our preparedness coordinator is taking a lead though the drill is a multi-jurisdictional effort.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Future Meetings

The April meeting and meetings moving forward will be in person. A phone in option will still be available.

Dr. Havrilak and Mr. Adelsberger spoke after last month's presentation on school wellness centers. Discussed were concerns regarding possible future cardiac issues with student athletes that go undetected during a wellness exam or a sports physical exam at the centers. Proper awareness, information and informed consent is important. It may prompt someone to seek additional screening. Having appropriate emphasis is a good place to start. Mr. Adelsberger mentioned information distributed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on sudden cardiac arrest that is provided to parents and student athletes. Ms. Leister forwarded the information to Dr. O'Dowd. Ms. Leister will follow up with him.

Dr. Havrilak inquired if Dr. Branch has seen the MSDE document as he would like his thoughts on the document.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Kistner inquired about information recently in the news on Candida auris which is resistant to medication. Ms. Leister will have someone from the department speak on this at the next meeting.


VII. REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN

Dr. Havrilak thanked Ms. Leister for her report. The April 28 meeting will be in person with a phone in option.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 10:43AM.

- Motion:** Ms. Kistner
- Second:** Mr. Adelsberger
- Decision:** Unanimous Approval



 Della J. Leister, RN