

# HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

## Chair

Mr. J. Phil Seats, R.Ph., MBA

## Vice Chair

Mr. Fleming El-Amin, County Commissioner



## Board Members

Mr. John Blalock  
Ms. Pamela Corbett, MA  
Mr. John Davenport, Jr., PE  
Dr. James Doub, OD  
Dr. Palmer Edwards, MD  
Dr. Calvert Jeffers, Jr., DVM  
Dr. Charles Massler, DDS  
Ms. Heather Parker  
Dr. Linda L. Petrou, PhD  
Ms. Sharon Pettiford, RN  
Ms. Sharon A. Rimm, LCSW  
Dr. Peter Robie, MD  
Dr. Ricky Sides, DC  
Ms. Claudette Weston  
Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt, Commissioner

## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 1, 2022

### Board Members Present

Mr. John Blalock, Ms. Pamela Corbett, Mr. John Davenport, Dr. Palmer Edwards, Mr. Fleming El-Amin, Dr. Calvert Jeffers, Dr. Charles Massler, Ms. Heather Parker, Dr. Linda Petrou, Ms. Sharon Rimm, Dr. Peter Robie, Mr. J. Phil Seats, Dr. Ricky Sides, Ms. Claudette Weston, Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt

### Board Members Absent

Dr. James Doub, Ms. Sharon Pettiford

### Staff Present

Ms. Shontell Robinson, Ms. Christine Dowdell, Ms. Elizabeth White, Mr. Joshua Swift, Ms. Lorrie Christie, Ms. Tanya Donnell, Ms. Christa Smith, Sherita Cain

### Guests Present

None.

### Call to Order

On Wednesday, June 1, 2022, the Forsyth County Health and Human Services Board held its regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting virtually. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Mr. J. Phil Seats at 5:30 p.m.

### Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed by all.

### Consideration of Board Minutes for April 6, 2022

The minutes from the April 6, 2021 Health and Human Services Bi-monthly Virtual Board Meeting were reviewed. Mr. Seats requested a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Massler made a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Jeffers seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried and the minutes were approved with 15 votes in favor.

## **Deputy County Manager's Comments – Ms. Shontell Robinson**

*(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)*

### **Children and Families Specialty Plan Update**

The chairman of the County Commissioners sent a letter to the state and copied all of the legislators. This is the Foster Care Plan that the state is trying to propose which is to have a statewide-plan for one vendor to manage.

Ms. Dowdell and Ms. Robinson had a meeting with Senator Krawiec, Commissioner Whisenhunt, Partners CEO Rhett Melton, County Manager Dudley Watts, our lobbyist and some other individuals to discuss it, just so they could hear directly from us our perspective on the issue.

Ms. Robinson shared it was a good meeting. She doesn't know if it's going to change anything; however, it was a helpful meeting from an educational standpoint to know why Forsyth County feels the way that it feels. Ms. Robinson shared that she does not want to speak for other counties because they may feel differently for different reasons regarding their county; however, Forsyth County really wants to maintain its relationship with Partners. Ms. Robinson also had a good meeting with Representative Lambeth, Commissioner Martin, and Partners CEO Rhett Melton a few weeks ago. At this point, we do not know what the state is going to do. We're continuing to follow it closely. The six LME MCO's (Local Management Entity-Managed Care Organization) have come together to really try to address the various challenges within the system.

Ms. Robinson stated that she wanted to give an update since work is being done to rectify some of the challenges within it and that she will continue to update the board regarding the process with that particular situation.

### **Cure Violence Update**

Ms. Robinson announced that at some point, the Cure Violence project will transition to Mr. Swift since it is going to be managed by the FC Public Health Department because it is a public health model. The team is in the process of writing an RFP (Request for Proposal) to be published for the community program in hopes of finding an organization to implement this program.

If we're unable to bring on a community partner to maintain the program then the FC Public Health Department will hire individuals directly for implementation. Ms. Robinson shared that they are also working on an RFP for the evaluation component of the Cure Violence program for the purpose of tracking performance outcomes. Ms. Robinson is hopeful that the RFP process will be completed by the next board meeting. The goal is to have it issued, reviewed and up and running by early fall. Ms. Robinson shared that great conversations have taken place with the hospitals in trying to find some solutions in terms of how the community programs will connect with the hospital-based component.

### **Behavioral Health Projects Update**

Ms. Robinson announced that effective June 11<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Denise Price will be the new Behavioral Health Services Director. She will attend the board meetings on a regular basis. Ms. Price will begin giving updates on all things mental health, substance abuse and IDD (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities) services in Forsyth County.

Ms. Robinson also shared that they are working on large projects such as renovating the Highland Ave. Center which is right across from the Health and Human Services complex (DSS and PH) so that it can become a one stop shop for our community. Currently, there is a primary care clinic there that is operated by both Novant Health and Atrium Health. Partners, Day Mark, Behavioral Health, Urgent Care and their outpatient clinic are located there. The plan is to convert downstairs back to a facility-based crisis center, which is what it was originally supposed to be under Cardinal Innovations, but it was changed to outpatient.

Stepping Up staff will move upstairs as well, then some other services will be added to enhance our community. The goal is that there will be no wrong door. The particular service may not be in that building but there should be at least someone who can hand hold individuals to get the service that they need as opposed to just giving them a card to say, call this number. Ms. Price's priorities are to really help connect the dots in our community, to get our residents the services that they need. She will be our lead on that.

Forsyth County will be receiving funds from the state to help operate a facility-based crisis center. Hopefully the funds will be released soon; in the meantime, a spending plan will be assessed. The deadline to expend the funds is December 2024 due to being bound by ARAP (American Rescue Plan Act) guidelines.

### **Opioid Settlement Funding Update**

The first installment was received on 5/31/22 in the amount of \$759,000. Approximately, \$1.5 million is due to Forsyth County this fiscal year. The next steps will actually be part of the Memorandum of Agreement with the state to receive these funds. A stakeholder group is a requirement with specific slots to be filled. It will be arranged by Ms. Price. One of Ms. Price's first priorities will be to have a public input session with the municipality. The budget and ARPA round two will be closed by then as not to confuse the public. At some point, the opioid settlement RFP process will be open.

Dr. Edwards asked regarding Cure Violence if Atrium and Novant will be on the same page or will they be applying once the RFP is published. Ms. Robinson responded, she does not believe they will apply for the RFP. Atrium specifically will have funds coming to them in the amount of \$500,000 as a pass through from the city to implement a hospital-based violence intervention program.

Originally, the thought was to be able to use those funds for the hospitals but to implement the Cure Violence model where individuals would be embedded. The hospitals essentially want to be able to hire their own to work in the way in which they have developed their program.

The Community program will respond to the hospital when there is an incident. They will have their own funds of the \$500,000 for their program and the county funds will be used for the community based program. Forsyth County is committed to working together to ensure that our

residents get the services that they need from both entities and that it's a seamless transition and still a response to the hospitals into the Community effectively.

Mr. Seats asked if we are proposing a preemptive type of program and they are working on a reactive program after the violence has already occurred. Ms. Robinson responded that hospitals would be essentially responding when there is a gunshot victim that arrives in the hospital, which is what Forsyth County was going to be doing in the hospital.

Different types of individuals will be embedded in the hospitals. Currently, they are talking through the hiring process because it is important to hire individuals with lived experience to be able to do the outreach. They also want a clinical component which is important in a hospital environment as well.

The goal is to interact with individuals on the front end in the community. If we don't know about them to catch them on the front end, once they go into the hospital, we can respond and interact with them. That will be their moment of truth if they're lying in the hospital bed and they were shot and recovering, then you would have a Community based outreach worker or a violence interrupter, hopefully helping them to make a different decision. Having a conversation with them about not retaliating when they leave the hospital, maybe this is the moment of truth to change their life as opposed to going back in the streets.

Ms. Robinson welcomed and introduced the new Forsyth County Department of Social Services Director, Ms. Christine M. Dowdell. Ms. Dowdell is the former DSS Director of Chowan County. She has also worked for Mecklenburg and Guilford Counties and has 30 plus years of DSS experience and has also taught undergraduate social work at Wingate University, Johnson C. Smith, and Bennett College. Ms. Robinson expressed that Forsyth County is happy to have her.

### **Director of Social Services Comments – Ms. Christine Dowdell**

*(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)*

Ms. Dowdell introduced the newest Deputy Director, Christa Smith. Ms. Smith  
Ms. Dowdell thanked Ms. Robinson for the nice introduction. Ms. Dowdell shared that she began employment here in February of this year and shared that she has really enjoyed working here. Ms. Dowdell shared that she is very familiar with the area since both her children went to Winston Salem State University.

### **Position Announcements**

Ms. Dowdell announced two promotions within FCDSS; Ms. Sherita Cain was promoted to Division Director of the Family and Children's Division and Ms. Christa Smith was promoted to Deputy Director of Forsyth County Social Services. Ms. Dowdell offered Ms. Smith and Ms. Cain to share a couple of words. Ms. Dowdell was very appreciative and wanted to thank Ms. Weston for the congratulatory card in person.

Ms. Smith shared that she is really excited to have this opportunity and August of 2022 will be her ten-year anniversary. Ms. Smith started her career with FCDSS here as a Child Welfare Social Work Supervisor and most recently served as the Evaluation and Planning Manager. Ms. Smith thanked Ms. Weston for the congratulations card.

Ms. Robinson shared that Ms. Smith did a great deal of work behind the scenes with the Cardinal disengagement. Ms. Robinson was very appreciative.

Ms. Cain shared that she is extremely excited and very familiar with the Family and Children's division since she has worked in this particular division since 2007. She has experience serving as the adoptions supervisor and most recently served as program manager over Adoptions and Foster Care which included Foster Home Licensing and LINKS 18 to 21. She also had the opportunity to work as the district administrator with the Forsyth County Guardian ad Litem program. Ms. Cain also shared that she is extremely excited to continue working for Forsyth County DSS and thanked Ms. Dowdell for the opportunity to serve as the division director.

Ms. Robinson shared that Ms. Cain has the passion, the experience and rigor to lead this division. Ms. Dowdell agreed that they are both go getters and that they really want to excel at their positions. Ms. Dowdell shared that when she needs some information they get it really quick because they know their areas of expertise and this was really important to her especially coming on as a new director in Forsyth County. Ms. Dowdell shared that Liz also has really helped with onboarding and transitioning and she does an excellent job

Ms. Dowdell shared that FCDSS has a great team and it's just really good to work in a county where you feel that energy and you know that people really want to be there and work. She always tells people there's no perfect place, but she feels that there some really good people at FCDSS. Ms. White shared that it is good be able to give Ms. Smith this type of support especially regarding budget and fiscal items.

Ms. Dowdell shared that Ms. White has really been assisting Ms. Smith with some of the responsibility as things are being transitioned to her. It is really a good time to transition during the budget season so she can see how you close out the end of the year and how you start the beginning of a year. Ms. Dowdell also shared that the North Carolina Association of County DSS directors, offers state training for new deputy directors.

### **New Position Requests-Fiscal Year July1, 2022**

Ms. Dowdell discussed the new position that has been requested for Economic Services. The current Division Director is Mia Stockton who manages approximately 224 employees. The goal is to split the division into two divisions, one Food & Nutrition Services and one Medicaid Services. Also, due to the increased funding that we are receiving, a request for an additional fiscal technician has been made to ensure we have staff to handle the different situations that come up.

### **Overview of DSS Services Provided**

#### **Economic Services**

- Food & Nutrition – 66,000 served
- Medicaid – Adults & Children – 105,000 served
- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEWAP) – 2,973 served
- Daycare – 2,200 plus children receiving child-care subsidy
- Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) – 2,476 served
- Program Integrity
- Call Center – 6,500 monthly calls
- Intervention Program 2476 served

- Program Integrity – Handles fraud referrals (providing misleading information in order to obtain benefits)
- Call Center – 6,500 monthly calls

### **Child Support**

Ms. Dowdell shared that the Child Support division is doing a great job.

- April 2022 - \$2,041,393.00 in collections
- There was a Walmart walk-in payment “soft launch”
- Approximately \$24 million collected annually
  - Walmart has soft launched a Walk-in Child Support payment program. The parent can walk in and make a payment on their case.

### **Children's Services Division**

- Child Protective Services (CPS)
  - 4,502 total calls received and we're talking about child abuse, neglect and dependency
  - Neglect Reports- 4,105 or 91%

No one to take care of the child

- Abuse & Neglect Reports- 238 or 5%
- Abuse Reports- 146 or 3%
- Dependency Reports- 13 or 1%

Neglect can be different aspects, inappropriate discipline, lack of supervision, leaving a child in the car on with not having adult supervise them

- Foster Care – 235 children in custody (currently)

Has increased in the past couple of months

- Adoptions – 31 adoptions completed (to date)
- Foster Care Licensing – 37 Foster Homes (currently)

Homes have decreased due to pandemic, recruitment efforts increased

- LINKS – ages 13-21

Additional services are offered as children age out

- Adoptions Assistance – Monthly stipend & Vendor Payments

Homes have decreased due to pandemic, recruitment efforts increased

- Afterhours – Evening, Weekends & Holiday coverage

### **Adult Services Division**

- Adult Protective Services – over 300 (to date)
  - adults have the right to their own self-determination as long as they are competent
  - Over 300 calls have been handles to date
- Guardianship – 205 Adult Wards
- In-Home Aid Services – over 125 served
- Family & Adjustment Services
- Operation Fan Heat Relief – several fans will be given to adults in need
- Work First – offers employment services and an employment lab
- APS Essential Services Found
- Afterhours – Evening, Weekends & Holiday Coverage
- These services are provided to the community 24/7 365 days a year.

### **Financial Support to Community Partners**

- Senior Services/Meals on Wheels
- Senior Services/Adult Daycare
- Senior Life Enrichment Center/Adult Daycare
- Age Friendly Forsyth

FCDSS also contributes to programs that are offered from other Community agencies which includes adult daycare services and Meals on Wheels which are provided out of Senior Services, Senior Life Enrichment Center and Age Friendly Forsyth.

### **FCDSS World Elder Abuse Awareness Month**

Ms. Dowdell shared that June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. On June 8, 2022, FCDSS will display approximately 300 purple pinwheels. This event represents the calls that have been received. The display will be outside in front of the building. At this same event, purple ribbons will be tied around two trees. The Elder Abuse Awareness walk will be held on June 18, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at Triad Park in Kernersville, NC

### **TROSA Grand Opening (Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers)**

TROSA will have a grand opening of the Triad campus on Friday, June 10 at 10:30 a.m. at 1931 Union Cross Road, WS, NC 27107. Activities; special guest speakers, ribbon-cutting, reception and additional information regarding the program.

Gloria Whisenhunt shared that TROSA has a campus in Durham, NC and they came to Forsyth County about two years ago with a desire to expand into Forsyth County. Ms. Whisenhunt expressed her appreciation to TROSA for their patience and for not giving up on Forsyth County. She also shared that their program is for individuals. They will receive training in various areas so when they leave the program they have a job waiting for them. The success rate of the program is 95%. Ms. Whisenhunt is excited to have this program in Forsyth County and she is looking forward to the grand opening.

Ms. Dowdell reported that one of the biggest issues is just a nationwide shortage in the workforce which is causing a lot of vacancies at FCDSS. In an effort to recruit, DSS will host a Career Fair Day on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The career fair attendees will be able to learn more about the services provided by FCDSS and have the opportunity to complete an application while they are there. If they complete an application, an interview will be scheduled for them to return.

Dr. Edwards asked if the 235 kids in DSS custody is an average number. Ms. Cain responded in the past two months there has been an increase in the number of adolescents who have come into foster care. Ms. Cain added as the school year comes to an end, the CPS reports increase from the schools.

Dr. Edwards asked what the time period for 31 adoptions. Ms. Cain responded for this particular fiscal year the agency was tasked with achieving 19 adoptions which was the baseline. As of yesterday, 34 adoptions have been finalized for this fiscal year.

Ms. Dowdell announced, Adoptions Month is November 2022. She hopes to plan a ceremony during this month with the judges and family members. COVID and space will be considered.

Mr. Seats congratulated Ms. Dowdell, Ms. Smith and Ms. Cain on all of the work that is being done and shared that he is glad to have them in the positions they are in and he looks forward to

seeing more of them.

**Director of Public Health Comments – Mr. Joshua Swift**  
(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)

**Monkeypox**

Mr. Swift reports the guidance has been set to all clinicians and Forsyth County regarding monkeypox. They are working with each division of Public Health or Epidemiology branches. The Epi Team has been activated and they are working with the medical directors to provide guidance. Screenings of clients who come into the clinics has begun. A series of questions is asked to see if individuals are at risk for monkeypox. Currently, there are 18 cases in 9 states within the United States. Some of the symptoms are fever, headache, muscle aches and exhaustion and usually in one to three days, a rash appears starting on the face first.

Illness can last two to four weeks in some cases. In Africa where this endemic started, one in ten persons dies from monkeypox. Dr. Lovette Miller, Epidemiologist for FCPH worked for the CDC (Center for Disease & Control) in the past and has reached out to her international contacts for advice. Mr. Swift reported that what they are seeing here in the United States is mild illnesses.

Mr. Swift has been consulting with Dr. Christopher Ohl and they are optimistic but at the same time trying to be realistic and make plans. In order to make sure the staff is prepared, they will be participating in a tabletop exercise plan tomorrow. This type of exercise is when you go through scenarios such as, someone comes in and reports they think they have it, someone reports they were a contact or someone reports they were a confirmed person.

**NACO (National Association of County Officials) 2022 Achievement Award**

Mr. Swift shared that FCPH received a NACO award. It is an achievement award for a Hispanic Liaison project. This group has gotten a lot of attention re: this program and the outreach. Dr. Reina Rodriguez and her team bridged the gap in the Hispanic community during the pandemic. Dr. Rodriguez was invited to the governor's mansion. There is a language hotline and community event information available. They will also host a Saturday health clinic offering immunizations for K-12 students. This announcement has also been shared via Facebook.

Every year, after school starts in the fall, there's a 30-day window where children have to get their vaccines, immunizations or physicals depending on their age and their grade. The goal is to get ahead as the children start their summer break and these clinics are also offered in the fall.

**Forsyth County COVID Update 5/26/22**

Mr. Swift reported that the cases are still at 42% of an increase over the last two weeks and Guilford County is at 34% of an increase. Both counties are in line with what is being seen across the United States as a whole.

That number is cresting. The numbers have not been as steep as the Omicron or the Delta variant but number of cases are still going up week after week about 1000 cases per week. It appears that the numbers will start to level off; however, the latest numbers will show if the count will go back down. There are eleven residents in Forsyth County who are hospitalized.

Every Thursday, the CDC adjusts their community level. Forsyth County was moved into the

medium category. Forsyth County was one of 15 counties in North Carolina that moved into the medium category.

The advice is for everyone to stay up to date on their vaccines, especially those who are at high risk. Individuals should have plans to get tested and/or know where they can get tested in the community or order at home tests. Also, they should speak with their healthcare provider regarding wearing a mask. The positive case count now is nowhere near what the positive case count was as a result of the Omicron and Delta viruses. There has been an uptick and right now Forsyth County is at a 20% positivity rate. These are confirmed cases which doesn't include positive at home tests.

The communicable disease supervisor follows an epidemiologist who reports that the count of positive cases is approximately seven to eight times higher than what is reported. For the breakdown of age and race, (see handout). After Memorial Day, it will take about ten days to know if cases will continue to rise.

### **Boosters**

- Children ages 5 to 11 years who are not immunocompromised should receive a booster shot 5 months after their initial Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination series (total of 3 doses).
- Children ages 5 to 11 years who are moderately or severely immunocompromised should receive a booster 3 months after completing their most recent dose (total of 4 doses).
- CDC recommends that those 12 and older who are immunocompromised and those 50 and older should receive a second booster dose at least 4 months after their first to remain up-to-date.
- Whether it is your first booster, or your second, if you haven't had a vaccine dose since the beginning of December 2021 and you are eligible, now is the time to get one.

The state has developed a webpage where individuals can find information based on their age and the vaccine they received. It can tell you the status of your vaccines/boosters. There are 72% of adults in Forsyth County who have received two doses of the vaccine and no booster which makes their immunity diminish. Thirty four percent of the population has received a booster. Mr. Swift stresses that if it has been 6 to 8 months and you are eligible to get a booster, now is the time to get one.

The race breakdown represents what our community looks like. (see handout) The majority of the cases are between the age range of 25 to 49 years old which is the majority of contacts in the workforce and the parents that attend the community events with their kids. The next age range is the 50 to 64. Being up to date on the vaccines is more important than masking and testing even though masking and testing is highly recommended. Moving forward, the advice is to check for case counts in the areas before you travel just like you check the weather.

Dr. Robie commented that even though the current variant for COVID is quote more benign, he believes the rate of Long COVID is also going up and that's not anything that we should ignore. Some patients express that the current variant is no big deal. He responds to them that COVID is a very real entity. Mr. Swift responded yes, you're correct, Dr. Robie, the one thing that has been missed throughout this pandemic is the 1% overall death rate. Mr. Swift also responded they all will be learning for years to come about Long COVID.

Mr. Swift shared that he was on a call with the contact tracers this morning, talking about people who haven't been able to taste anything for a year and a half or have some other complications. This is why it is even more important for people to stay up to date on their vaccinations which has a protective effect against Long COVID as well.

Dr. Robie asked if a patient walks into the provider's office and they think they have Monkeypox should they be kept in the room, put in a mask, put them in a negative pressure room, if they have one, call the infectious disease consultant at one of the hospitals to ask what to do next. Mr. Swift responded yes. Tammy Bischoff with Atrium Health is a State Epidemiologist who works with Forsyth County Public Health on the Extended Epi Team. Mr. Swift is hopeful that the best case scenario is Forsyth County will not have any cases and worst case scenario there will only be a few; but wants to be prepared.

### **New Business**

#### **HHS Board Operating Procedures -- Shontell Robinson, Deputy County Manager**

Ms. Robinson reported that the HHS board operating procedures are voted on annually and it is required for the Forsyth County Public Health accreditation process. Some minor adjustments were made to the meeting schedule because meetings are held every other month. Also, Attorney Watkins made some clarifying points on membership. Ms. Robinson asked for a vote for the FCPH accreditation records. Dr. Robie made a motion to approve the Board Operating Procedures and Dr. Massler seconded the motion. The motion carried; the HHS Board Operating Procedures were approved with 15 votes in favor.

#### **Proposed Board Resolution --Dr. Peter Robie**

Dr. Robie shared and read the proposed resolution as follows:

#### **RESOLUTION SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS AIMED AT REDUCING YOUTH VIOLENCE**

*WHEREAS* killings arising from youth violence continue to escalate locally and nationally, as most recently played out in Uvalde, Texas, shocking our nation;

*WHEREAS* Sheriff Kimbrough and Police Chief Thompson have developed and are implementing programs aimed at reducing youth violence;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Forsyth County Health and Human Services Board fully supports these efforts; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution be personally communicated to Sheriff Kimbrough and Police Chief Thompson.

Mr. El Amin made a motion to approve the Resolution Supporting Implementation of Programs Aimed at Reducing Youth Violence and Ms. Corbett seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried; the resolution was approved with 14 votes in favor and was adopted this 1st day of June 2022.

## **Remote Meetings -- J. Phil Seats, Chair**

At the last board meeting, Ms. Corbett asked if the board will be able to continue meeting remotely if the Governor's State of Emergency is removed. Ms. Robinson responded the County Commissioners have a policy that allows remote meetings. Ms. Robinson shared that after the meeting she clarified and verified this with our County Attorney, Mr. Gordon Watkins, and the policy that the Commissioners currently have in place does not apply to other boards and committees.

If the governor lifts his State of Emergency; the way it stands now is that any board or committee would have to go back to meeting in person by statute. Attorney Watkins is actually in the process of drafting a policy that would allow boards and committees to meet remotely if they choose to. This option will be presented to the Forsyth County Commissioners in the near future in order to include some other boards and committees who want to continue remote meetings. Ms. Robinson shared that the City of WS just passed the option to continue meeting remotely and we have several joint city/county boards. Also, this board is responsible for hearing appeals as the Board of Health which would require an in person meeting.

Mr. Blalock asked if there is an option for hybrid meetings. Ms. Robinson responded the technology can not be supported at this point but it is something that can continue to be explored.

Dr. Robie shared that he would not feel comfortable going back to in person meetings at this time since the COVID incidents are going up so fast.

Ms. Whisenhunt shared that the fair way to decide is to let each member vote. Mr. Seats agreed and announced that the board will vote tonight. Mr. Seats asked if there were any further comments.

Ms. Corbet echoed Dr. Robie's comments and asked for more clarity regarding Long COVID. Ms. Corbet is concerned that the vaccines may not offer enough protection from the Long COVID. Mr. Swift responded that he would do some research and report back to the board.

Ms. Rimm asked what the attendance has been like with meeting in person vs. remotely. Ms. Robinson shared that the attendance has been the same. Ms. Christie shared the only difference she can see is the Winston Salem State nursing students have not been attending even though they have been invited. Ms. Christie feels the attendance is the same.

Ms. Robinson added that the meeting is advertised to the public with an option to attend by calling in. The public has not attended in person or virtually.

Mr. El Amin shared that as models for health in this community and as advocates for health, this board should set the example when it comes to issues and he doesn't see the rationale for switching the meetings back to in person until the COVID numbers decrease. His recommendation is to continue meetings on the virtual platform.

Mr. Davenport shared that he will support virtual or in person meetings; however, virtual is very convenient for him because he can just log on at home and when the meeting is over he does not have to commute. He also shared that he serves on a number of boards and has attended public meetings in cities throughout the state. This includes boards here in the Triad area and they all meet in person at this point. Many of them have the hybrid option.

Ms. Corbett made a motion for the HHS board to continue to meet remotely. Dr. Robie seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried with 8 votes in favor.

## **Committee Updates**

### **FROST (Forsyth Regional Opioid & Substance Use Team)**

Mr. Blalock reported that the Frost quarterly meeting was held in April. He shared that Amanda Clark continues to do phenomenal work and the community partners are helping to provide services such as TROSA (Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers). They also received several community partnership updates. Mr. Blalock mentioned that there are several services available; however, they are somewhat fragmented and it would be helpful to coordinate those resources.

The question was asked how can we educate people who are outside of the substance abuse and mental health field. For example, Legislators, how can we help them understand the situation and effective ways of managing.

### **Announcement**

Mr. Seats reminded everyone that the election for a Board Chair and Vice Chair will be held at the August meeting. The standing nominating committee is Ms. Whisenhunt and Dr. Jeffers. The board members will be able to make a nomination prior to the meeting or at the meeting.

### **Legislative Update -- Dr. Linda Petrou**

No update at this time.

Mr. Seats thanked the board members and wished everyone a great summer. The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

SR/tmd

**Next Virtual Meeting: August 3, 2022-5:30 p.m.**