

Date: April 23, 2025
COLUMBUS BOARD OF HEALTH
Meeting Minutes
Columbus Health Department Board Room

Presiding: Sylvester McRae, MD – Chairman Attending Board Members: Bantwal Baliga, MD, Isaiah Hugley, Yasmin Cathright Not Present: Devica Alappan, MD, Joy Adegbile, MD, Mayor Skip Henderson Others Present: Dr. Beverley Townsend, Joanne Strickland, AnQuavis Simpson, Tori Endres, LaTrice Johnson, Michelle Crawford, Brandi Nelson, Danielle Saunders, Karye Rayborn, Pamela Kirkland, Sherrie Martin, Nicole Wisham and Andrew Rhea			
Agenda Topic	Discussion	Decision	Responsibility
Call to order	Dr. McRae <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. 	Acknowledged quorum has been established.	None
Approval of Agenda	Dr. McRae <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referred to the April meeting agenda as delivered to all board members. With no questions or discussion from the members, called for a motion to approve the agenda. 	Motioned by Isaiah Hugley to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Yasmin Cathright. Approved by all members present.	None
Discussion and Approval of Minutes	Dr. McRae <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referred to the minutes from March 26, 2025, as delivered to all board members. Dr. McRae asked for a motion to approve the minutes. 	Motioned by Isaiah Hugley to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Dr. Bantwal Baliga. Approved by all members present.	None
Commissioner of Health Report	Dr. Townsend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announced that the district’s minimum salary has been increased to \$15/hour to support employee retention and promote the long-term sustainability of a dedicated workforce. Notified members of her upcoming District Health Director’s meeting on 05/06/2025. She will share pertinent information. 	None	None

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announced the State DPH Dental Health Director is now visiting once a week to support the Dental Program. There is one candidate who appears to be a strong prospect. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. McRae inquired about the total compensation package being offered for entry-level positions, especially in comparison to jobs at places like Burger King, given the increasingly competitive job market we face today. Dr. Townsend said we're not just here for the money. In the past, the retirement package was a big draw, but that has changed. Now, we offer 13 paid holidays, no weekend or holiday work for the most part, a family-like atmosphere, and accrued leave. Dr. McRae asked for an update on upcoming federal changes from Washington, D.C. and requested a follow-up at the next meeting. Dr. Townsend responded that she is sharing updates as they are received. She noted that WIC and Ryan White are the only programs currently fully funded by the federal government. <p>No further comments/Questions</p>		
Financial Report	<p>Joanne Strickland, District Administrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented the financial report as of March 31, 2025. The current budget is \$14,051,047. Line 3 shows total expenses are \$9,506,916.24, which is 68% and is below our target of 75% for 9 months of operation. Line 4 shows the comparison of expenses to last year with an increased variance of \$700,140.73. Line 5 shows total fees and income at \$935,990.26. Lines 6-17 show the breakdown of fund sources and their comparison to the same time last year. Line 18 shows variance at an increase of \$34,693.04. Line 19 shows an increase of \$12,462.39 for admin claiming. Pages 7 and 8 are included as back-up for the original overview and it shows a breakdown by line item of expenses and revenues. Page 9 shows all the programs that are governed by the lead county are on target for nine months of operation. Presented the billing report as of March 31, 2025. Shows the breakdown of clinical and dental programs and the total charges, collections and write-offs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. McRae asked how much of the current mail-based billing could be replaced with internet-based options. Sherrie Martin, District 	The Financial Report and the Billing Report are attached and made a part of these minutes.	None

	<p>Billing Specialist Supervisor, responded that our current systems do not support that capability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. McRae made the recommendation to complete write-offs at the 6-month mark rather than 15-months due to associated costs and the unlikelihood of clients paying after 6 months. <p>No further comments/Questions</p>	Accounting/Billing will update the procedures for write-offs to reflect this change.	Joanne Strickland
Excused Absences	<p>Dr. Adegbile</p> <p>Dr. Alappan</p>	None	None
Old Business	<p>BCCP Program Biopsies</p> <p>Tori Endres, District Nursing Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented the FY2025 WCHD BCCP Patient Referred for Breast Abnormalities report as of March 31, 2025. ○ Dr. McRae asked if there is a solid referral base for Muscogee County patients with breast abnormalities or any cancerous or precancerous conditions. Tori responded that her department is currently working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Dr. Major. ○ Isaiah Hugley inquired about a relationship with the West Central Georgia Cancer Coalition, noting that they provide transportation and some financial support. Dr. Townsend confirmed that a relationship has been established with the organization. 	Tori Endres will follow-up on the status of the MOU for Dr. Majors.	None
New Business	None	None	None
Program Reports	<p>Epidemiology- Brandi Nelson, District Epidemiologist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported notifiable diseases 03/25/2025 to 04/16/2025 • Reported outbreaks 03/25/2025-04/16/2025 <p>Public Information – Pamela Kirkland, Public Information Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported on December 2024-April 2025 Press Releases, Media Stories, Interviews, Social Media Posts. ○ Dr. McRae asked for more details about the car seat grant. Pam Kirkland provided an explanation of the program. 	Program reports are attached and made part of these minutes	None

	<p>Environmental Health - Danielle Saunders, Environmental Health County Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented Environmental Health report of activities covering March 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. McRae asked who is responsible for inspecting or monitoring food vendors that sale on the side of the road or empty parking lots. Danielle Saunders explained that their team operates Monday through Friday, and if they encounter a vendor during that time, they ask to see a permit. If the vendor is unpermitted and refuses to close, they must call special enforcement, as they are not deputized to issue citations or shut vendors down. She added that a system is being developed to allow the health department to close unpermitted vendors directly. <p>Nursing - Michelle Crawford, County Nurse Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented nursing report for July 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025 (FY25), including activities and events. <p>WIC – LaTrice Johnson, Nutrition Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted WIC overview through March 31, 2025, including participant numbers and events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. McRae asked if WIC has seen any positive results in breastfeeding rates through collaboration with both hospitals. LaTrice Johnson responded yes—they have started working with Piedmont and will be meeting soon to begin supporting their NICU. They also plan to attend nursing education classes in May to inform staff about WIC services and are working on enrolling mothers through physicians as well. <p>No further comments/questions</p>		
Adjourned	Dr. McRae adjourned the meeting at 2:00 pm	None	Andrew Rhea
Respectfully submitted by: Andrew Rhea, Administrative Assistant 3			
NEXT BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING			
Date/Time: May 28, 2025 (Budget Meeting)		Place: In-person: Columbus Health Department Board Room	