

**CECIL COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**

**MINUTES**

**June 14, 2022**

**NOTE:** Recording of this meeting is available on the County website [www.ccgov.org](http://www.ccgov.org).

**PRESENT:** Council Members: Council President Robert Meffley, Councilman William Coutz, Councilman Al Miller, Councilwoman Donna Culberson. Council Vice President Gregory was remote. James Massey, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant.

Danielle Hornberger, County Executive.

**Health Official:**

Lauren Levy, Health Officer;

Laurie Humphries, Deputy Health Officer;

Gwen Parrack, Director, Division of Special Populations Services;

Ken Collins, Director of Division of Addiction Services;

Ed Arellano, Deputy Director of Environmental Health Services;

Lindsay Scott, Coordinator of Special Projects Health Services

Jason Bienert , Voices of Hope

Nicole Hathazi, Coordinator for Special Programs

Rachel Cherney, Environmental Health Specialist Programming Supervisor

Karen Clark, RN

Candice Henderson, Administrative Specialist, Crisis Program Supervisor

Members of the press and members of the public.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Meffley called the meeting of the Cecil County Board of Health to order at 4:30 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Health of October 5, 2021 was made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Councilman Miller, and approved unanimously.

**INTRODUCTION**

Lauren Levy, Health Officer, introduced her staff and thanked the Council and Executive for attending this meeting.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES UPDATE**

Ms. Levy reviewed the statistics for COVID-19 that compared Maryland and Cecil County. The County's current 7-day positivity rate is 9.73%, as compared to the State's 8.39%. She stated that there has been a decline in the number of cases, since it spiked in April 2022. She indicated that these statistics do not include those who self-tested. She reviewed statistics on the positivity rate and case rates since March 2022.

She stated that there are two vaccines currently under consideration for the young pediatric population, Pfizer and Moderna. The Health Department has pre-ordered these vaccines but will be suggesting that residents go to their family doctor. She reviewed the current booster recommendations for children, adults and older adults.

Ms. Levy provided an update on monkeypox, an infectious disease caused by the monkeypox virus. She explained that the number of cases is increasing worldwide but there are few cases in the United States and no confirmed cases in Maryland. She explained that the disease is spread by direct contact and through respiratory droplets. Symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes and development of rash.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES UPDATE**

Ed Arellano, Director, and Rachel Cherney, Program Supervisor, stated that this division has a serious staff shortage. As a result, there have been delays in approving sewage systems, building permits, occupancy permits, perc tests, subdivision and plat reviews. Mr. Arellano explained that they have requested assistance from the State Health Department and from retired staff. They explained that new staff would require 3-5 years for staff training. He reported that there were 1,877 permits in 2021 and 906 in the first six months of 2022. He provided additional statistics on requests for information, sewer compliance site visits, system malfunctions, perc test requests, septic system designs and subdivision plat reviews.

Council questions and comments ensued. Mr. Arellano stated that the department is processing water and sewer permits within several days. Council Members asked if they could hire consultants to assist with the inspections. County Executive Hornberger stated that a budget amendment will be proposed to provide additional funds for more staff.

#### **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER UPDATE**

Ms. Nicole Hathazi introduced Jason Bienert from Voices of Hope. She reviewed statistics on the overdose rate, which spiked in 2020, went down in 2021 and continues to decline. She stated that there have been 36 fatal overdoses and 115 non-fatal overdoses in the 2022 to date. She reviewed a map of Cecil County that identified the location of overdoses and showed the difference between overdoses when Narcan was administered.

She discussed a recent trend of users of Xylazine, a veterinary tranquilizer, which is often added to fentanyl to extend the effects. She explained that Xylazine users do not respond to Narcan and that repeated use is associated with skin ulcers and abscesses. Mr. Bienert explained that Xylazine is not illegal to possess and some programs refuse to accept clients with open wounds. The Council commended Voices of Hope for their outstanding successes in the community. Mr. Bienert offers wound care, harm reduction supplies and information on Xylazine in an effort to help users.

Ms. Hathazi discussed the distribution and use of Narcan in the county. She stated that the Health Department and Voices of Hope offer Narcan at no cost. In FY 2022, there have been 985 individuals who have received Narcan and 4,158 doses have been distributed. She stated that Emergency Services and the Detention Center have been distributing Narcan. She also stated that the Health Department is providing training to organizations such as Upper Bay, public schools, and government organizations.

Candice Henderson, Crisis Program Supervisor, reported that the Health Department, in partnership with Voices of Hope, has instituted Cecil Addiction Treatment Coordination Hotline, CATCH, to offer help 24/7. Persons can call CATCH at 443.245.3257 to talk with a peer specialist and access the

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system of care. Councilman Coutz suggested that this group should come back every two months to report on their efforts.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Council President Meffley thanked Lauren Levy and the staff of the Cecil County Health Department for their presentations.

The Board of Health meeting was adjourned by motion made by Councilman Coutz and seconded by Donna Culberson. Council President Meffley concluded the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

Approved:

  
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Robert Meffley  
Council President  
County Council of Cecil County

Attest:

  
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James Massey  
Council Manager