

**Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness
Board of Health Meeting**

**Thursday, March 22, 2007
8:30 a.m.**

Minutes – Summary Report

MEMBERS PRESENT: Phoebe Bailey, Ph.D. [Board of Commissioners], Elizabeth Clark, M.D. [Chair of Board of Commissioners], Steven Katkowsky, M.D. [Department Director], Khaatim S. EI [Atlanta Board of Education], Lynne Meadows, RN, MS, [Fulton County Board of Education], Harrison Rogers, M.D. [Grand Jury], Monica Ryan, BS, [City of Atlanta], Samantha Williams, Ph.D. [Atlanta City Council].

Call to Order: The Fulton County Board of Health meeting was called to order, Thursday, February 22, 2007 at 8:45 a.m. 4th Floor, Large Conference Room of the Fulton County Department Of Health and Wellness. Dr. Phoebe Bailey, Chairperson of the Board was the presiding officer.

The minutes were approved as presented.

Monica Ryan

We are in the beginning process for us, we are developing a task force, we solicited membership from representatives all across the state, health directives and others involved in public health. We are going to pull together information on the requirements we are using as North Carolina as one of our models has just recently gone through the process. They have created an accreditation board and their state has provided some funding for the local Boards of Health that are going through this process. We know that we are not there yet. Our process in Georgia may not be the same as the process in North Carolina but it gives us a _____ spot.

Lynne P. Meadows

The National Accreditation of local Board of Health and as I am on the Educational committee, we are a looking into certification for Board Members. How to proceed toward this is the question. We had a test pilot when we were in Nashville as Dr. Bailey was a part of it. We realize we are not sure which direction we would like to take.

Who?

The State of Georgia has no template for the local Boards of Health to utilize for the orientation process. We provide from the state office, a little booklet called “Guides to the Local Boards of Health”, but after looking at it we recognized it is not as complete as it needs to be. So we are also developing a task force that will help us, and I invite all of you to be a part of the process with us, to take a look at what some of the other things we are doing and help us pull together a new orientation process for the task members. That then will help guide them in the work they know they are suppose to be doing under their role as a governing body. In your case as an advisory body and then helping them to support the work of the accreditation process for the local boards of health.

Steven Katkowsky

The Board of Health basically does not have the authority to spend money, enter into contracts and to make day to day operational decisions that's reserved by the County Board of Commissioners. Only the Board of Commissioners can approve and sign a contract.

Phoebe I. Bailey

So for instance, you go before the Board of Commissioners at this whole budget process? In other counties, they would not do that because they would already have that authority with the board of health?

Steven Katkowsky

Right. What happens in many other counties, is there is a required county match to be made to the State. For example: Three million and that's what the county would contribute, then the state granted of aid would essentially make up the rest of their budget exclusive of fee collections, permit fees, etc. Then the board of health would be actually be involved in how does that money actually gets spent. The Board of Commissioners reserves the right to spend that money, to enter into contracts. We can make recommendations, but there only recommendations. Only the Board of Commissioners can sign a contract.

Who?

When we went back to take a look at the way Georgia Code is written and we compared that to what we actually have in the documentation for the guides of the local boards of health, the law clearly says that the goal of the boards, their responsibility is to do a community assessment, to identify what the community needs are, to take a look at their resources that they have to actually address those needs that are in the find. Then to develop a budget and to submit that budget to their county so that the county then can levy appropriate taxes in order to support the work of the public health agency. The way that the guide is currently written, it gives the impression that the first source of funding to the local board of health is actually the **winning** aid from the state. That is was not the way that the **grant** aid was originally designed. It was to be a supplement to the resources that the local board of health was able to generate from the county as well as from their fee revenue. So part of the work that we have to do in developing a new orientation is to help the board of health and **responders** understand what it is the law says, what it is the programs are really suppose to be doing, and that the county's need to do more work in helping to support public health at the local level. We have some counties that basically say there's a line and code that says specifically that the county is suppose to provide facilities and equipment. Well, that is only one of the things their suppose to be providing. Many of the counties have said that's all that we have to do for the local public health agency. And not even thinking about the fact that they need to support the local heath department with additional resources.

Phoebe I. Bailey

So does Fulton County's model come closer to, given that the way that we operate, that the Board of Commissioners allot the budget, is that closer to that motto, the match coming from _____ aid?

Who?

Your Board of Commissioners approves a budget for you, just like to other Board of Commissioners Approves the budget for other the other local boards of health. But it is the local board of healths responsibility to assure that they have communicated effectively to the commissioners so that the appropriate taxes can be levied to support public health and I don't know if that exactly the way it is done.

Steven Katkowsky

In Fulton County the board of commissioners has taken the position to start, that in order to meet the needs of the community, they have to contribute far more than the required match. And by doing that they can also set up their own priority programs. So where the state gives us approximately 17 million dollars a year and the grant made annexes. The county also gives us another 17 million dollars a year. So that's 34 million dollars. Then we collect about 8 Million in fees. So we have a total budget of 42 Million with, of the non fee revenue 50% is from the state, 50% is from the county. That is unheard Of in the state of Georgia. No other county even approaches 17 Million dollars.

Phoebe I. Bailey

What then do they take the right to do given _____?

Steven Katkowsky

They take the right make some of that money categorically.