

Cherokee County Health Department BOH Meeting Minutes

Monday March 14, 2016

5:30 p.m. – Health Department Conference Room

Members Present: Alan Keith, Curtis Brown, Mike Davis, Dr. Amanda Gambill, Holly Gutierrez, John Hyer, Chris Dickey, Dr. Mark Gilbert, Dr. Donald Ambler, and CB McKinnon

Absent: Audrey Hughes

Press: Dwight Otwell

Meeting Call to Order: Chairman Alan Keith called the meeting to order

Invocation: Dr. Ambler gave the invocation

Public Present: Scott Lindsey, Ronnie Harris, Nicky ?, Dr. Thomas Clayton, Kay Turner, Virginia Adams, Gayle Horton, Suzanne VanGorder, Patrick Martin, Lena Martin, Vonie Dockery, Julie Stillwell, Candice Baldwin, Holly Christy, Julie West, Maria Ward, Trevor Peterson, Gail Hodge, Nancy Hartsock, Breeze Gibson, Janet Barton, Monte Ward, Brian Graves, Sara Wilson, and Nicky Stalcup.

Public Comment: Ronnie Harris spoke of how she had retired from CCHD in 2014 as the Clinical Supervisor. Said that she had never experienced such tension and bullying in all of her many years at CCHD. She said that previous administration managed well with great contributions to the community but that had ended with the current Director. Ms. Harris then gave the floor to her daughter Nicky who spoke of the great loss of a Child Health Nurse and the Communicable Disease Nurse as well. Ms. Also spoke of the lost productivity due to poor work conditions and lack of accountability from current leadership.

Dr. Thomas Clayton spoke of his professional history with Towanna Roberts and her reputation among the local healthcare community. He spoke highly of his professional interactions with Ms. Roberts over the past years and all of her efforts to ensure the codes and ethics of nursing wherever she went.

Kay Turner a retired Pharmacist and Retired Nurse Suzanne VanGorder also offered their agreement with Dr. Clayton's comments on Towanna Roberts and echoed professional praise for all of her work within the county over many years.

Virginia Adams spoke to her previous experience in supervising Ms. Roberts' and her impeccable record and confidence among her peers. She also spoke of her past experience as a board of health member for 10 years and how there were policies in place to prevent incidents like this from occurring.

Gayle Horton spoke of Towanna's experience with her family through hospice and a serious accident with her son in which Towanna has exceeded expectations to provide care to her patients.

Patrick Martin spoke of the unjustified termination of his wife Lena Martin. He also stated that there were intimidation tactics used in the workplace to make employees fear for their jobs. He voiced his opinion that the current leadership ruled out of fear and were providing safe haven for Ms. Roberts "Minions" while picking on those against her. He also stated that it was his opinion that Chairman Alan Keith should be removed as Chair and voting privilege due to his close relationship with the current Director. He stated that most of the staff were unhappy but were afraid to say anything due to the threat of being fired also.

Nancy Hartsock currently a Nurse Practitioner for the health department stated that she was "embarrassed" by the events currently taking place in the health department and was offended and angered by the "slanderous" email sent by an anonymous coworker to the board of health.

Trevor Peterson an Environmental Health Specialist spoke against the false accusations of the anonymous email sent to the board saying that he and Julie Stillwell had a strictly professional working relationship and that the claims made in the email were entirely false.

Scott Lindsey the county attorney noted that the county would be investigating the source of this email and would continue to pursue a resolution.

Approval of minutes: Members reviewed and approved the minutes for the January 11, 2016 meeting, with the motion to approve being made by Chris Dickey and the second from Curtis Brown. Motion passed unanimously.

2016-2017FY Budget: Nicky Stalcup gave a copy of the 2016-2017 budget with Revenues and Expenses. Motion was made to accept preliminary budget. Motion was made by Curtis Brown with a second from Dr. Donald Ambler. Motion passed unanimously.

2015 Community Health Assessment (CHA): Sara Wilson- Health Educator reported to the board the findings of the 2015 Community Health Assessment to the board along with the proposed priorities for the next 3 year cycle. 1) Chronic Disease Control and Prevention, 2) Access to Healthcare, and 3) Cancer Control and Prevention. Motion was made to accept CHA priorities by Curtis Brown with a second from Dr. Mark Gilbert. Motion passes unanimously.

Health Director Comments

Departmental Reports: Copies of the departmental reports were given to each member for review. Towanna noted there was no unusual information in the reports.

Management Action Plan: Towanna Roberts presented a Powerpoint presentation that included personal history and professional history before sharing the remainder of her Management Action Plan in closed session due to personnel information.

Executive Session: Motion was made by Dr. Donald Ambler with a second by Chris Dickey to go into executive session. Motion passed unanimously. Motion was made to come out of executive session by Curtis Brown with a second by Chris Dickey. Motion passed unanimously.

Open Session:

Motion was made by Curtis Brown to suspend Towanna Roberts with three weeks with pay pending investigation. Second on the motion by Chris Dickey. Four were in favor, motion did not carry.

Motion was made by Mark Gilbert to support the Management Action Plan as presented by Towanna Roberts, second by Dr. Donald Ambler. Discussion by CB McKinnon stated he had no confidence in Mrs. Roberts' ability to carry out the action plan as given. Vote was taken four were in favor, motion did not carry.

Motion was made to adjourn by Mark Gilbert with Curtis Brown recommending a meeting in one month instead of two. Curtis Brown made a motion to adjourn with a meeting in one month, second by John Hyer. Motion passed unanimously.

Next Board Meeting: The next board meeting will be held on Monday, April 11th at 5:30 pm at the Murphy Health Department Conference Room.

Towanna Roberts, RN
Health Director

Curtis Brown
Interim Board Chairman

