

**SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
TUESDAY OCTOBER 29, 2024**

At 2:44 p.m., President Charles Laird called the Somerset County Board of Health meeting to order; on a motion made by Commissioner Craig Mathies, seconded by Commissioner Darryl Webster, and carried by a show of hands in favor by President Charles Laird, Vice President Randy Laird, Commissioner Craig Mathies, Commissioner Eldon Willing, and Commissioner Darryl Webster. Present for the meeting were President Charles Laird, Vice President Randy Laird, Commissioner Craig Mathies, Commissioner Eldon Willing, and Commissioner Darryl Webster.

Also in attendance were County Administrator Ralph D. Taylor, Deputy County Administrator Ernie Leatherbury, and Executive Secretary Kimberly Lopez.

Ms. Danielle Weber, Somerset County Health Officer, and Ms. Christie Taylor, Somerset County Health Department Director of Administrative Services, were now before the Board to present the bi-annual update.

Beginning with program updates, Ms. Weber advised they are currently working through Pathway Certifications and will apply in January. This will be their precursor into accreditation, which will formalize processes, place the department into strategic planning for five years in advance, and potentially open up the department to for other funding opportunities. Ms. Weber then advised that this will lead into a Performance Management System that will be developed and enable the creation of an annual report that will be presented during next October's Board of Health meeting. Ms. Weber then advised that they are working to plan for financial challenges for fiscal years 2026-2029 and have placed hiring on hold for the time being. Ms. Weber also advised that they have finalized their Workforce Development Plan and have assessed their current workforce capacity and needs with the intent to build up their training and development.

An update was then provided on Behavioral Health. Ms. Weber advised of a decrease in overdose deaths from 2023-2024 in preliminary numbers. Harm reduction vending machines have been placed in Crisfield and in Princess Anne, and they are working to have a vending machine placed in Deal Island and on the UMES Campus. A brief discussion was held in regards to the vending machines. Ms. Weber then advised of recent legislation passed that requires Assisted Outpatient Treatment to be stood up in each county; however, she did not have enough information about that to share with the Board at this time.

Under Community Health, colon screening continues to be an issue for the entire Eastern Shore due to limited providers and is still in the timeframe of 18 months out for screenings (even for high risk patients); therefore, the Health Department is working to get Cologuard to assist with the colorectal screening program.

For the Environmental Health update, Ms. Weber advised that wet season will start in January and they are about to send out their letters regarding perk season. Ms. Weber then advised that certain programs within the Prevention planning and Communication Department are hold for the time being due to staff members being out on maternity leave.

Ms. Weber informed the Board that the Wellness Van is up and running, and advised of schedules/locations for vaccinations and reproductive health services for the upcoming months. The Board was also informed of the Marburg Virus that is a viral hemorrhagic fever with a high mortality rate. While this virus has not reached the United States, the CDC is keeping the health departments informed and are monitoring all out-of-country travel.

Commissioner Darryl Webster left the board room.

Ms. Weber continued by advising that we are entering respiratory virus season (RSV, Flu, Covid, etc.) and encouraged vaccinations. She then advised of a increase/ride in Pertussis cases across the state.

Ms. Weber advised that their HERC Grant progressing and the Health Department has a partnership planned with Housing Authority in Crisfield to utilize a room on a weekly basis in order to help link individuals to services.

Commissioner Darryl Webster returned to the meeting.

For the Environmental Health Topic of the Month, Ms. Weber advised they are providing education on pot lucks/safe cooking.

A discussion was held regarding cannabis with Ms. Weber advising they have applied for a cannabis grant through the state that will ultimately assist with prevention activities (such as education for safe storage and avoidance of driving under the influence).

Lastly, Ms. Weber provided an update on the IV Fluid Conservation status due to the effects of Hurricane Helene. She advised that the plant located in North Carolina hopes to be back up to 90-100% by the end of the year.

With no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Craig Mathies and seconded by Vice President Randy Laird to adjourn the Somerset County Commissioners Board

of Health meeting at 2:13 p.m. and enter into Somerset County Commissioners Special Session.

By a vote in favor by President Charles Laird, Vice President Randy Laird, Commissioner Craig Mathies, Commissioner Eldon Willing, and Commissioner Darryl Webster; the motion carried.

Approved by:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:



Kimberly Lopez
Executive Secretary