

July 26, 2012

A special joint meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners and Board of Health was held on Thursday, July 26, 2012 at 6:00 pm to discuss and receive input regarding potential changes in the governance of human service programs at the local level. The meeting was held in the conference room at the Health Department.

Board of Commissioners present:

Charles Ray Peterson, Chairman
James G. "Jimmie" Smith, Vice Chairman
Mark Gillespie
David Gooden
Daniel Dowless
Russell Priest
Delilah Blanks
Billy Ray Pait

Lewis Tatum, absent

Health Board members present:

Rachel Mitchell, Chairperson
Carl DeAndrade
Patti Yoder
Terri Duncan
Dr. Mollie Glenn
Charles Peterson

Board of Commissioners Chairman Charles Ray Peterson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Board of Commissioners Vice Chairman James G. Smith provided the Invocation.

Chairman Peterson presented a power point presentation to begin the discussion. He stressed that the commissioners have not discussed House Bill 438. He stated that the Commissioners wanted to hear from the DSS Board and the Health Board before making any decisions. He advised that the Board of Commissioners will discuss their options after the two meetings.

Chairman Peterson stated that Aimee Wall with the School of Government advised him that there would be a free webinar regarding HB 438 in the near future and he invited everyone to participate. He said that he would let everyone know when the webinar is scheduled.

The Board may consider the following options:

1. Assume direct control of certain local boards by adopting a resolution abolishing the board(s) and transferring their powers and duties to the board of county commissioners;
2. Create a consolidated human services agency (CHSA) governed by a consolidated human services board appointed by the county commissioners;
3. Create a CHSA governed directly by the county commissioners;
4. Keep existing model.

Health Director Wayne Stewart stated that he had discussed HB 438 with various counties and that no other county had pursued any discussion relating to the bill.

Health Board member Carl DeAndrade asked what was the difference in a consolidated Health Service Board (CHSB) and a Consolidated Health Service Agency (CHSA)?

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County Manager Greg Martin stated that a CHSB appointed by the board of county commissioners would serve as an administrative board of a consolidated human services agency. The CHSB could have up to 25 members and would reflect the population makeup of the county. He stated that the current Health Board could be a part of this board.

The CHSA would have the authority to carry out the functions of any combination of commissions, boards, or agencies such as the combination of the health board and Department of Social Services (DSS) board appointed by the board of county commissioners or acting under the authority of the board of county commissioners.

Health Board member Terri Duncan asked the makeup of the Department of Social Services Board. Chairman Peterson advised that two (2) members are appointed by the state; two (2) members are appointed by the Board of Commissioners and (1) one member is appointed by the DSS board. Ms. Duncan stated that there were positive things in merging; however, it would be a challenge. She asked, “ if the boards were combined, how long will it take to become an effective board member. She was pleased to know that there were no time constraints.

Commissioner Delilah Blanks stated that she had been a member of the DSS board for a number of years. The DSS board has no statutory limitations and is comprised of two (2) Caucasians; two (2) African Americans and one (1) Hispanic. Commissioner Blanks stated that she serves as liaison to the Board of Commissioners and quite frequently reports to the Board of Commissioners on issues relating to DSS matters. She further stated that the Board of Commissioners must review budget matters and the DSS board has the statutory authority to hire the Director of Social Services as well as to adopt policies and rules.

Board member Mollie Glenn stated that decisions made by the Health Board were not always popular with the public. Dr. Glenn commended Wayne Stewart for the job he was doing as Director of the Health Department. She further stated that in combining Health Services and Social Services she was concerned that if one service area required more time of Management, then the other services may be neglected. Dr. Glenn felt that good leadership would be necessary to be successful.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:52 pm.

Charles Ray Peterson, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sara S. West, Clerk to the Board