

STATE HEALTH COUNCIL

May 12, 2021

A meeting of the State Health Council was called to order by Chairman Duane Pool at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 via videoconference.

Members present:

Duane Pool, Bismarck, Chairman
Dennis Wolf, Dickinson, Vice Chairman
Darrold Bertsch, Secretary
James Brosseau, Grand Forks
Genny Dienstmann, Bismarck
Tyler Lannoye, Churchs Ferry
Kristin Roers, Fargo
Torey Sayler, Bismarck

Members absent:

Mike Fedorchak, Bismarck

Staff members present:

Dr. Nizar Wehbi, State Health Officer
Dirk Wilke, Chief of Staff
Brenda Weisz, Fiscal & Operations Section
Kirby Kruger, Disease Control & Forensic Pathology Section
Tim Wiedrich, Health Resources and Response
Kim Mertz, Healthy & Safe Communities
Kalee Werner, Primary Care Office
Joyal Meyer, Newborn Screening Program Director
Nicole Brunelle, Research and Response
Kelly Nagel, Systems and Performance
Kimberly Hruby, Special Health Services
Miranda Oothoudt, Recording Secretary

Minutes

Genny Dienstmann moved the approval of the February 24, 2021 minutes as distributed. Second by Darrold Bertsch and carried.

State Loan Repayment Program Updates

Kalee Werner, Director, presented four behavioral health physician repayment applications. Three awards were available, but due to available funds, Kalee requested that four awards be granted. James Brosseau motioned for Dr. Ines Teuma, Dr. Leah Thompson, Dr. Rachel Marohl, and Dr. Tim Smith to be awarded loan repayment. Second by Tyler Lannoye. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED.

Bertsch, Brosseau, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers and Sayler voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Fedorchak and Wolf were absent.

Kalee Werner then presented the loan repayment applications submitted by dentists. Three awards were available. Darrold Bertsch motioned for Dr. Katrina Goeble, Dr. Evan Entze, and Dr. Kali Anderson to be awarded loan repayment. Second by Kristin Roers. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers and Sayler voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Brosseau, Fedorchak and Wolf were absent.

Loan repayment applications for advanced practice providers had two applications from Lesley Kling and Heather Snell. Funding was available for both. Kristin Roers motioned for both applications be awarded loan repayment. Second by Genny Dienstmann. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers and Sayler voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Brosseau, Fedorchak and Wolf were absent.

Kalee Werner then presented the loan repayment applications submitted by psychologists. There were four applicants and two awards were available. Genny Dienstmann motioned for Dr. Heather McConnell and Dr. Kelly Smith be awarded loan repayment. Second by Darrold Bertsch. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Brosseau, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers and Sayler voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Fedorchak and Wolf were absent.

Loan repayment applications for behavioral health providers were presented. There were 33 applications and seven awards available. Genny Dienstmann motioned for approval of the applications from Tiffany Stucky, Kristen Degrenia, Carly Freeman, Melissa Meigs, Christi Miller, Cassondra Hogan and Chantelle Kuntz. Second by Tyler Lannoye. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers and Sayler voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Brosseau, Fedorchak and Wolf were absent.

The previously approved loan repayment of Rebecca Kuss was then discussed. Kuss had a match provided by Sanford Health, but had since established her own practice. The board questioned whether Sanford would honor the match since it is based on years of service and by leaving, Kuss had not established any years of service. Kristin Roers made a motion that required the applicant to bring forward a new matching letter of intent or one from Sanford saying that they still intend to match. It was also moved that this be done prior to June 30th due to the close of the biennium. Second by Torey Sayler. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers, Sayler and Wolf voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Brosseau and Fedorchak were absent.

Newborn Screen Program

Joyal Meyer, Newborn Screening Program Director for the ND Department of Health, requested approval for the addition of testing for Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) to the newborn screening panel effective September 2, 2021 at an additional cost of \$13 per panel. Kristin motioned that SMA be added to the newborn screening panel. Second by Darrold Bertsch. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers, Sayler and Wolf voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Brosseau and Fedorchak were absent.

Meyer also requested approval of the recommended new members on the Newborn Screening Advisory Committee. Darrold Bertsch moved to approve the new members. Second by Genny Dienstmann. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Dienstmann, Lannoye, Pool, Roers, Sayler and Wolf voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Brosseau and Fedorchak were absent.

Section Update

Tim Wiedrich, Section Chief, presented an overview of the work of Health Resources and Response including vaccination clinics offered to Canadian truckers entering the United States, the current North Dakota COVID numbers, as well as where the state stands with our personal protective equipment (PPE) levels.

Legislative Updates

Dirk Wilke and Brenda Weisz gave a 2021 legislative wrap-up. He reported that the Department of Health tracked 206 bills and testified on 28 bills. Brenda Weisz explained SB 2004, which is the Department's budget bill, and stated that the Department is fully funded for the next biennium.

Dirk spoke on SB 1247, which integrates the ND Department of Health and the ND Department of Human Services, creating the ND Department of Health and Human Services. The main impact of this bill is a benefit to North Dakotas by providing one efficient path to programs and services.

The following section chiefs gave brief overviews on bills affecting their section:

Kirby Kruger, Disease Control and Forensic Pathology

Kim Mertz, Healthy and Safe Communities

Tim Wiedrich, Health Resources and Response

Dirk Wilke, Licensure & Certification

Dirk then introduced Dr. Nizar Wehbi, the new State Health Officer, to the State Health Council. He noted that Dr. Wehbi's official first day was on May 1, 2021, but as soon as it was announced that he was hired, he regularly reached out to staff members, had individual meetings and became invested with the leadership team.

State Health Officer Update

Dr. Wehbi provided a bit of information about his professional background and expressed enthusiasm to join the Department of Health as well as expressed his gratitude to the team for their hard work over the course of the pandemic.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 11, 2021 from 8:30-noon.

The meeting adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

Submitted,

Darrold Bertsch, Secretary