

# STATE HEALTH COUNCIL

February 24, 2021

A meeting of the State Health Council was called to order by Chairman Duane Pool at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 24, 2021 via videoconference.

## Members present:

Duane Pool, Bismarck, Chairman  
Darrold Bertsch, Secretary  
James Brosseau, Grand Forks  
Genny Dienstmann, Bismarck  
Kristin Roers, Fargo

## Members absent:

Dennis Wolf, Dickinson, Vice Chairman  
Mike Fedorchak, Bismarck  
Tyler Lannoye, Churchs Ferry  
Torey Saylor, Bismarck

## Staff members present:

Dirk Wilke, Interim State Health Officer  
Brenda Weisz, Fiscal & Operations Section  
Kirby Kruger, Disease Control & Forensic Pathology Section  
Dr. Christie Massen, Laboratory Services Section  
Bobbie Will, Primary Care Office  
Dr. Barrie Miller, Forensic Pathologist  
Miranda Oothoudt, Recording Secretary

## Others present:

Dr. Beth Carlson, DVM, ND Department of Agriculture

## Minutes

Chairman Pool asked for an addition to the agenda to allow Bridget Weidner to present a brief statement under agenda item eight, Other Business.

By voice vote, the Council approved the agenda with the addition of allowing Bridget Weidner to present.

James Brosseau moved the approval of the November 18, 2020 minutes as distributed. Second by Genny Dienstmann and carried.

Darrold Bertsch moved the approval of the December 16, 2020 minutes as distributed. Second by Kristin Roers and carried.

### **State Laboratory Testing Update**

Dr. Christie Massen, Section Chief, presented an overview of the work of the North Dakota State Laboratory including what they are doing to ensure accuracy of COVID test results.

### **State and Federal Loan Repayment Program Updates**

Bobbie Will, Director, presented five loan repayment defaults beginning with Jenna Johnson. Kristin Roers motioned for Jenna Johnson to be permitted to continue with the loan repayment program with the change in her employment. Second by Darrold Bertsch. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Brosseau, Dienstmann, Pool, Roers voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Fedorchak, Lannoye, Sayler and Wolf were absent.

The Council requested additional information regarding the application of Karissa Kautzman and tabled the issue.

Darrold Bertsch motioned for Kori Stockie to be permitted to continue with the loan repayment program with the changes in her employment. Second by Genny Dienstmann. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Brosseau, Dienstmann, Pool, Roers voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Fedorchak, Lannoye, Sayler and Wolf - absent.

Genny Dienstmann motioned for Nancy Stute to be permitted to continue with the loan repayment program. Second by James Brosseau. The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Brosseau, Dienstmann, Pool, Roers voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Fedorchak, Lannoye, Sayler and Wolf - absent.

No vote was needed regarding Amanda Uran. With her move from large animal to small animal, her contract will be discontinued.

### **Section Update**

Kirby Kruger, Section Chief, presented an overview of the work Disease Control and Forensic Pathology. He also introduced Dr. Barrie Miller who has recently started with the Department of Health as a Forensic Pathologist.

### **Veterinarian Loan Repayment Awards**

Dr. Beth Carlson, State Board of Animal Health presented the four veterinarian loan repayment applicants. Based off of scoring of the applications by Dr. Carlson and the Council, the Council reviewed and recommended the approval of Kara Mauch, Erin Christ, and Amanda Doll.

James Brosseau moved the approval of the veterinarian loan repayment applications for Kara Mauch, Erin Christ, and Amanda Doll. Second by Genny Dienstmann.

The Chair requested a roll call vote and the MOTION CARRIED. Bertsch, Brosseau, Dienstmann, Pool, Roers voted 'aye.' There were no 'nay' votes. Fedorchak, Lannoye, Sayler and Wolf - absent.

It was the intention of the Council that Dr. Hanson be encouraged to reapply in the next cycle.

### **Legislative Updates**

Dirk Wilke and Brenda Weisz reported on bills affecting the Department of Health. This legislative session, the department has tracked 137 bills, 84 of which are still active. Overall, Brenda Weisz reported some reductions were made to the Department's proposed COVID budget, but it is still sitting in a good position as the appropriations bill enters the House for discussion. For the COVID budget, the Senate has recommended 12.5 new FTEs for the Department rather than 22.50, and a proposed budget of \$95,200,000.

Dirk Wilke discussed several bills relating to marijuana that were introduced this year. Medical marijuana in the form of edibles passed the House and will go to the Senate, the use of medical marijuana for children failed and legalization of adult use marijuana has passed the House and will be debated in the Senate. He reported on the three bills introduced in the legislature relating to the authority of the State Health Officer as well as a bill introduced that would merge the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services.

### **Interim State Health Officer Update**

Dirk Wilke also spoke about the outstanding job that employees of the Department of Health have done during the COVID response.

### **Other Business**

Bridget Weidner and James Brosseau spoke about a subcommittee's finding on long-term care including adding a form to the Department of Health website to simplify the process of filing a complaint on any healthcare facility and making contact information for Health Facilities easier to find online.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 12, 2020 from 8:30-noon.

The meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Submitted,

Darrold Bertsch, Secretary