**North Carolina Association of Local Health Directors**

**Association Business Meeting**

**October 17, 2024 – 9:30 am**

**Virtual Meeting (due to Hurricane Helene response)**

**Minutes**

**Meeting Called to Order – Quintana Stewart**

President Quintana Stewart (Orange Co.) opened the meeting at 9:30am. Quintana welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for joining virtually this month.

**Approval of Minutes – Wes Gray**

Minutes were distributed with the packet via email. President Stewart asked for a motion for approval of the minutes.

**Motion:** Motion to approve was made by Past President Lillian Koontz (Davidson Co.) and seconded by Dr. Marilyn Pearson (Johnston Co.). No objections – minutes were approved by consensus.

**Treasurer’s Report – Wes Gray**

The Treasurer’s Report was distributed with the packet via email. President Stewart asked for a motion for approval of the Treasurer’s Report.

**Motion:** Motion to approve was made by Josh Swift (Forsyth Co.) and seconded by Brian Ellerby (Anson Co.). No objections – Treasurer’s Report was approved by consensus.

**NC DHHS Chief Medical Officer / State Health Directors Report – Betsey Tilson, MD**

President Stewart adjusted the agenda to allow Dr. Tilson to speak first.

Dr. Tilson spoke about how proud she was of the public health response to Hurricane Helene and the support given to the counties who were struggling in western NC. Even after the direct hurricane response, another health risk that happens post hurricane is the risk of violence, domestic violence, so it's a really important time to highlight that and some strategies that we are taking at DHHS. Feel free to reach out to me directly, especially if you're feeling like you're in a corner or an awkward thing, or you're not getting a need met, that there's a lot of our emergency management systems are a little bit overwhelmed as well. So just do not be shy to reach out to any of our team, including me if you have a need that's not being met or you don't quite know how to navigate, especially in the middle of this disaster, please feel free to reach out to me directly. We are all here to support you. So please call or text or email me personally.

President Stewart thanked Dr. Tilson for her report. Thanks for speaking with us this morning and sharing those important updates.

**President’s Report – Quintana Stewart**

Do we have any new or retiring health directors on the call? Seeing none, I will just say briefly, it was great seeing so many of you all last month in Cherokee for the fall conference. We did miss quite a few of our colleagues who were dealing with the unexpected rains and flooding in the eastern part of the state, and then this month, we continue to stand in a position to support and help out our colleagues in the western part of the state. So really, I echo a lot of what Dr. Tilson already said. We have really been tested here in 2024 with natural disasters on the public health side, but thanks again to everybody for showing up and for sending staff or going yourself to assist our colleagues in need. And before I turn it over to Patrick, I really want to just take a moment to give Patrick a big shout out. He came back from his paternity leave and immediately stepped into a really strong coordinating role to help them make sure we all have what we needed. Patrick, thank you. We acknowledge the work you did to coordinate with our state partners. Of course, we can't forget about our very own Stacie Saunders, who now supports DPH, but feels like forever a health director in my book. But just thank you all for all the work that you all do, leading some of our response efforts. With that I will turn it over to Patrick.

**Executive Director’s Report – Patrick Brown**

Thank you, Quintana. I'm going to start by introducing Jay Ludlum with Medicaid, who has joined us, and I did not have him on the agenda. Jay, we'll let you share any updates you have, because I think you have some time pressures as well.

**Medicaid Update – Jay Ludlum**

I appreciate it Patrick, and I will not take long since Betsey has already given a department update and even spoke a little bit about our 1115 waiver. I will highlight a couple of things mostly related to the disaster, and that is, we did publish Thursday of last week, a 28-page bulletin of flexibilities that we are offering providers care, management agencies and health plans. If you have not seen that bulletin that has been published through the normal bulletin process, if you were here during Covid, these are very similar flexibilities that we offered during Covid. What we're trying to do is routinize or systematize our disaster flexibilities. To the extent that these flexibilities meet your needs, or don't meet your needs, we would welcome that feedback again, and that way, we can work with the health plans to get them prepared for these flexibilities. We can make adjustments, and sadly, we are getting pretty good at submitting these, and so we just will want to work with our CMS partners to make sure we have authority to do the flexibilities you're looking for. So those 28-pages of flexibilities were published earlier. Then we have also today a back-porch chat, and that is at four o'clock, and that will be designed to effectively talk to providers about those flexibilities that I just mentioned, in addition to some financial flexibilities that the health plans or supports that the health plans and DHHS are able to offer before the legislature comes back and does their actions, and before the FEMA money starts to flow. And then, I think Betsy already talked about the 1115 waiver. Just those negotiations continue on.

**Executive Director’s Report (resumed) – Patrick Brown**

Patrick thanked Jay Ludlum for the update. I will keep it brief so that we can get to other updates. Number one, just a quick housekeeping and request. If you are a health director in the western part of the state and you have expressed interest in being part of the direct to consumer well water testing kit distribution process - If you could stay on after we wrap the meeting, Stacie and I need to get a little bit of feedback on a couple operational things that are in process and are ready to hopefully launch soon. Just two other updates from me, both focused on response. And then hopefully next month we can get back to a little more of our normal, routine business. One is I believe Pam Perry, with Carolina Complete Health is on. I want to thank Pam and give a big, big shout out to them for offering to get supplies out west in any way possible. I know they've made some direct local supply drops to some counties in the west, but more specifically, as the well water disinfecting process has gone on and there were some snags, and getting the necessarily supplies centrally to get those out the door, Pam's team has stepped up and is as willing to try to assist. The first round of well disinfecting kits that are going to go out to local health departments in the west are actually coming, thanks to their support. And then hopefully after that, the state supply will be ready to go. So just a shout out to Pam and their team for their help.

***Pam Perry – Carolina Complete Health***

Thank you so much. Appreciate that. We are thrilled to be able to assist here. We've got the first round of, I believe it's 680 kits that are being delivered on Friday, so tomorrow, and we're going to get those out probably not starting tomorrow, possibly, but definitely next week. And also bleach kits to other counties. So we'll just stay in touch with you in the west about delivery. We are pleased to be a part of the process and happy to help.

Patrick thanked Pam again for coordinating the kits. My only other update is on legislative stuff. We had a health director call yesterday morning. I gave you all the general rundown yesterday. We started outreach directly to the legislature about our asks for inclusion, for public health in the next in the next round of disaster relief legislation. They will be back next week. They're in on the 24th. I'm guessing it'll be a one day, maybe a couple of days. I don't know for sure, but it'll be a brief return. I'm sure they'll be gone by the end of the week. They have not said specifically when they will come back again, but there was already a November session on the calendar that was originally put there for veto overrides, budget, budget, individual budget, items that they wanted to take up. We've gotten some good, good response. So far, we've already had direct engagement with both staff, with staff from both offices, and have heard a couple of positive responses from some individual chairs and leaders as well who are passing our request along. The ask was for $10 million in non-recurring funds to local health departments out west, for surge response. We also included an ask for $500,000 directly to the Association so that we can continue to provide support through maybe a couple of additional staff people, and maybe trying to find a way to cover some overhead for the Alliance, assuming that there may be some opportunities for surge or temp staffing for you all out west, especially if additional funding comes, so that we could do that in a way that would minimize the administration administrative fee. You know, we heard back from Senator Kravitz office already, from in Forsyth area, from Representative Baker's office in Cabarrus County, and a couple others, Representative Lambeth as well. I'll make you all aware if we have back and forth with any of your members in other parts of the state, and if you are in the west and you have time, or someone on your staff has time, to reach out directly and make that ask to your folks, that will go a long way. And the last thing I'll say on that is if you have stories, we know from talking to you all out west, like the top line of what's going on, and we've collected some pretty simultaneously amazing and compelling and heartbreaking stories from you all out west about what your staff are going through and what you're doing. But if you have other things that you think we need to pass along the legislature, please let me know. I'm happy to take any questions about any of that legislative planning or anything else that you all need from us, and just one last reminder, if you didn't hear if you're in the west and you're participating in the well water during the consumer process, please stay on at the end of the meeting.

And sorry, one actually one last thing, if you're on from DPH or DCFW or anywhere else, and you have updates that you need to share with health directors, and don't have we don't have time if we don't have time today, especially since we didn't have our partner report time yesterday. We're hopefully going to get a we're going to get another newsletter out next week. We paused this month's newsletter just because it just wasn't the information that needed to go out at the time, but definitely send me or Bethany an email if you have anything else that we need to get out in a newsletter, or if it's more time sensitive, we can do an email this week. Thank you.

President Stewart thanked Patrick for his report.

**NC DHHS Assistant Secretary for Public Health - Dr. Kelly Kimple**

I hope everybody is doing well this morning again, I will be relatively brief, because Dr. Tilson covered a lot of the amazing work that has been going on. First again, thank you. I mean, this has really just been another shining example of how public health comes together. We continue to do our part and offer support to the western counties, but I also want to thank all of you, because you have offered your staff your support, raised your hand and for that, we really appreciate that we know that public health is continually tested, as Quintana said, and continues to be resilient, so it takes the whole public health team. Thank you so much for what you do. We continue to encounter needs and right now the environmental health world is really pushing us to think outside of the box on how we can get child care, center, schools, restaurants, other establishments to open. In this unprecedented situation we're really looking at infrastructure support in these counties, but also ensuring that we're maintaining public health and safety so we have a deep bench throughout the state from your volunteers, and just continue to appreciate the support that you all are offering. You also should have the links, and again, we will make sure you have everything with regards to the toolkit and the different resources that have been developed. This team has been an amazing powerhouse of guidance, and we have new things that come out every day. Due to the communication challenges, especially at the beginning, that plagued this response, DPS has set up a misinformation website to make sure people knew what was actually going on at the ground level. Feel free to reach out personally to our team, and we are here to support you all. As Patrick mentioned, we are working to align our legislative asks when we're thinking about the potential needs for response and recovery. And so ongoing discussions with our partners, with DHHS, with Governor's office, to try to figure out how we can ensure that there may be some funds available for this response. And then lastly, I also want to thank Durham local health department for hosting a site visit for the Fiscal Research Division to learn more about local public health. We look forward to the Granville-Vance visit coming up, but I think this is an opportunity for folks to understand what happens on the ground, how you all support your communities, how you ensure a healthy and safe population and so thank you all for stepping up and appreciate the support.

President Stewart thanked Dr. Kimple for her report.

**Deputy Director / Section Chief, Local and Community Support, DPH – Stacie Saunders**

Good morning, everybody. It sure would be nice to be with you all in Raleigh today, and I have real business to get to as well. But before I wanted to express my gratitude to you all, and I want to take a second to appreciate all the public health work that is happening right now. I remain sort of in awe of the efforts of public health. For our impacted health departments quickly mobilizing and serving their communities. So thankful. So, so thankful for the support and care that you have shown to your brothers and sisters in local public health. And on a personal note, I just wanted to say I am deeply, deeply appreciative of my local public health friends and colleagues reaching out and making sure that my family and I were safe, and when I was finally able to get cellular service a few days later to respond and text to you all my heart was full. I really do appreciate everybody checking to make sure that we were okay, and to my fellow mountain folks, you are truly amazing. You continue to show up every day in your professional capacity to respond to a very personal event. I've been able to see some of the work that's been happening, not just in my own community, but in some of your communities too. And thank you so much for caring for me as a western North Carolinian, and for all of our neighbors in these times. With that, I've got some real business to talk to you all about concerning the consolidated agreement. So buckle up. This is the exciting part.

You all received the draft Fiscal Year 26 (next year's Consolidated Agreement) via email right after your September Health Directors Association meeting. At that time, I asked you all to review and provide any feedback on that draft by October 14 so that we could discuss the draft today at the October health directors meeting. At that time in September, we had recently learned of the Session Law 2024- 49 that would include the environmental health changes that would impact the consolidated agreement. And I let you all know at that time that DPH was working on that language, but you wouldn't see it in the Fiscal Year 26 but you would see it by the time we met here in October. I have that to share with you, and because the Session Law was effective immediately, an amendment is needed for your current year, Fiscal Year 25 Consolidated Agreement. So fun times! I have two things to share with you today, which is the Fiscal Year 25 Consolidated Agreement amendment and the language for the Fiscal Year 26 Consolidated Agreement.

We are going to start with the amendment for the Fiscal Year 25 Consolidated Agreement. Reasons to Amend - One is to incorporate the changes to comply with the new requirements in Session Law 2024-49 so that's the environmental health piece. Two, at the same time the uniform guidance, the Federal uniform guidance, had some changes that went into effect essentially October one. We'll start with the environmental health piece. Session Law 2024-49 says that all health departments shall enter into an annual agreement with the department to provide environmental services in accordance with chapter 130A in the General Statutes, the annual agreement shall include a requirement for quality assurance for Environmental Health Services. First and foremost, the annual agreement that you enter is the Consolidated Agreement. This second part about the requirement for quality assurance is the part we're adding into the Consolidated Agreement for Fiscal Year 25 as an amendment. And what we're adding is this clause that by January 2025 the DPH Environmental Health Section shall convene a work group of local health department environmental health staff and DPH environmental health staff to begin devising a statewide plan for quality assurance and plans for the following listed programs. The requirement and the amendment for your Fiscal Year 25 Consolidated Agreement will be that we are convening this work group to create the plan.

This is the second piece of that clause, which is the work group will develop templates for use by all local health departments to help create quality assurance in these environmental health programs. In conjunction with AA 874, which already has a QI QA requirement for the term of this agreement, this will meet the requirement pursuant to the law, meaning participation and convening the work group satisfies our requirement for the Session Law right now, that's the language that we're going to add to Fiscal Year 25 as an amendment.

When I get to Fiscal Year 26 you're going to see that modify a little bit. The Federal uniform guidance changes - There are two clauses that will be required. The funding stipulation section of the Fiscal Year 25 Consolidated Agreement also has two changes because Federal Uniform Guidance. One is directly because of the change. The other one is a DHHS change that we had to make to for us to comply fully with Uniform Guidance due to some audit findings. Per the revised Uniform Guidance to CFR 200 if awarded federal pass through funds, the health department, as well as all sub grantees of the health department, must certify the following, whenever 1.) you apply for funds, 2.) request payment, and 3.) submit financial reports. The statement is that I certify, to the best of my knowledge, and believe that the information provided herein is true, complete, …, basically to ensure that you're not committing falsehoods or fraudulent activities.

The second one is a funding stipulation change that builds on the subcontract and subrecipient requirements that are in the Consolidated Agreement for when you as a as a subrecipient of ours, when you further subcontract or create a subrecipient relationship with the funds that you have. You might remember this from last year, we created a lot of definitions about what does that mean. This is building on that, and as a result, this is the DHHS guidance and process for complying fully with Uniform Guidance for our sub recipient subcontracting relationships. In accordance with the revised DHHS guidance effective October 1, to comply with the revised Uniform Guidance, the health department must provide the information listed below. There was discussion around the types of subcontractors and the information required.

Okay, so next steps for, and this is the Fiscal Year 25 amendment. The next steps are the DPH contracts office will finalize, will conduct the final review of the Consolidated Agreement, the final consolidated Fiscal Year 25 amendment is tentatively scheduled to come out to you all around the end of October. Please, please, please, if you have any changes to your legal name, please send them to Adrienne.gilliatt@dhhs.nc.gov as soon as possible, so that we can format the Consolidated Agreement amendment for Fiscal Year 25.

Moving on to the Fiscal Year 26 Consolidated Agreement draft that you all have been reviewing. This includes all the new stipulations I just discussed. Here's the second piece of that following submission to the Environmental Health section. The Health Department shall abide by the plans. Once you make a plan, you're going to follow your plan and any modifications requested by the Environmental Section to the plans in order for registered environment health specialist, specialist interns or registered environmental health associates employed by or contracted to work for the health department, to be eligible for the defense of the Attorney General's office, or to have all or a portion of the judgment or settlement paid by the Department in accordance. This is to comply with that requirement in the Session Law that says you must have a signed agreement, and you must comply to the law in order to have defense by the Attorney General's Office.

*Question from the audience* - So just to clarify, the LHDs will have developed a plan in partnership with DPH. Is that one overall plan, or is that every local health department will have a different plan based on the outcome of the work group that was created in collaboration with DPH?

*Answer:* The plan is that health departments would work with DPH to create some templates and some guides around the plans. The template is one thing, but then you have to create the unique plan for your health department and the environmental health section that has the components that are required.

The security clause, this was the language that I presented to you all back in September. The original version said that the health department **may** utilize security products and that the health department network configuration and security practices must allow for allow communication with the DHHS networks. DPH proposed that the health department **must** utilize the security products, and that the health department network configuration and security practices **must** comply with the federal and state security standards where we've gotten in the final version. And I want to thank particularly, I'm going to shout out Granville-Vance's June Manning for really helping us sort of think through this a little bit. And Lisa, for your team, that the final version with your feedback, the local health department must utilize security products like firewalls of its choosing to maintain network connectivity and security integrity. The health department network configuration and security practices should comply with federal and state security standards and must allow communication with systems within North Carolina DHHS networks. So that's where we've landed, with some really great feedback from some local folks.

Our contracts office will be doing their final review. The final Consolidated Agreement is scheduled to be presented at the November health directors meeting. I'm going to send this presentation out to you all between now and about a week before your November meeting. We really need to know if there's any like, super big feedback or heartburn about some of this so that we can get that quickly put together. These are built on, except for the Uniform Guidance changes, these are built on some feedback we already had from you all. We'll discuss it one last time in November, I will be looking for a vote of support of the language and then your new Consolidated Agreement for Fiscal Year 26 will be formatted using your legal name. So again, if your legal name has changed, I'm going to need you to send that to Adrienne. And then your Consolidated Agreement and your AA’s will start to get to you in February. I think that's it.

President Stewart thanked Stacie for her report.

**NC DCFW Division Director – Yvonne Copeland**

I'm happy to be here with everybody, and I have to echo the sentiment of just really saying thank you with much gratitude to all of you for everything that you are doing for our brothers and sisters in the west and our, I should say, our humans in the west. And you know, just really, really leaning in, I am so impressed by the what public health is doing, what Health and Human Services is doing, and really what public private partnerships are doing. We’ve been working directly with Abbott on formula, and I know there's a lot of those sort of creative things that are happening. So really, just kudos to people you know for stepping up and doing what we do, and we're going to have to keep working.

Wanted to just give three quick, time sensitive updates:

1.) Disaster SNAP, or DSNAP. It actually goes live or operational tomorrow. It begins tomorrow through the 18th through the 24th and people can pre-register today. They've actually been able to pre-register since the 15th. On the 15th, we had 2500 pre-registration applications, and we had 1100 calls. So that's just a great resource. Again, it's for people who do not currently receive SNAP services or benefits. People can go anywhere to apply. And just as important, you can go anywhere to pick up your card or have a card overnight it to you. So please let people know that is available and only for seven days after that, it's no longer there.

2.) WIC update. As it relates to legislative ask, since you were mentioning that, Patrick, we did get a request from Office of State Budget and Management saying, Hey, do you see any local implications of any of these efforts that are going on in your portfolio? We anticipate that there's probably going to be an uptick or increase in WIC enrollees and participants as time goes on, as a result of displacement, job loss, whatever it may be. In terms of WIC, things are just moving along nicely.

3.) The Department is providing formula in a proactive manner to all folks, regardless of WIC participation or not, and we are just doing that every two weeks, ensuring that there is formula in the west working with Feeding the Carolinas. If you have any requests, if you know of anybody contact Feeding the Carolinas, they are our distribution channel. They're leveraging their network to get that formula out in two-week intervals. We had a big shipment, and if it's sitting it's not getting out there. And that's all I have for today.

President Stewart thanked Yvonne for her report.

**Action Items and Workgroups**

***Funding – David Howard***

President Stewart read an email from David Howard (Brunswick Co.). David shares that the AAQ group continues to do good work. They have established a good process. Improvement that both DPH and our Association can agree is going to serve as well as moving us forward. It brings a more organized and more engaging process to both ongoing AAs, as well as any new AAs that are developed. They have tested the process unofficially with AA 117, and 121, and some other AA, so they're confident with it. Doug and others are still tracking our AA 621, and other ARPA AAs. They are working to assure local health departments and DPH fully utilize these funds for services and improve public health capacity. And then finally, there has been some good work around examining local health department financials, i.e. the revenue mix across local health departments. The AA data that Stacie has worked on and the funding workgroup that continue to get some solid financial information from all the health departments across the state, which hopefully will provide a strong foundation for our funding ask on the state level.

***Data and Performance Measures – Wes Gray***

Data and PH did not meet.

***Communications – Bethany Milford***

The comms work group convened yesterday briefly, and is really just an open discussion about existing resources, resources in the pipeline, and so as shared in the chat there is the comms Toolkit by DHHS, and that has been continuously updated with resources. I believe social media graphics are in the pipeline. I saw a few social media graphics actually around DSNAP that were released today. We just came together to kind of exchange resources, identify any needs, as mentioned during this call, needs will be evolving. We're just all working together and communicating. And I've been reaching out to PIOs just to determine any communication needs or areas where support could be helpful.

***Nominations and Bylaws – Lillian Koontz***

Nothing new to report. The slate was approved in October at the Cherokee meeting.

***Education and Awards*** ***– Helene Edwards***

President Stewart reported that Helene wanted to inform the group that the new health director orientation is on for November 19. The location will be in Raleigh in the Eagle Room (640). And the October session has been rescheduled for January 2025, so again, new health director orientation will take place November 19 in Raleigh.

**Region Reports**

Sally Herndon had a quick request while we're talking about regions. We are wanting to work with the regions and the local health departments that support our regional tobacco control managers, and we have, as you all know, dual settlement funding for a few more years. And as we think about sustainability of our work, we would like to be talking with local health directors about what their needs are for sustainability. That's an important resource. So that was something I was going to talk about in the partner work group that didn't meet yesterday, but I'll just give people a heads up so they can be thinking about it. I appreciate it.

**Partner Updates**

***Alliance*** ***– Patrick Brown for Janet Clayton***

No report.

***NCPHA*** ***– Patrick Brown for Dr. Rod Jenkins***

I can give a brief update. I don't know if others, any other NCPHA Executive Committee members are on. This email will go out today, if I can write it or by early next week. NCPHA is going to be announcing a disaster relief fundraising effort specifically for public health professionals in western North Carolina that have been impacted. You know, there's a lot of professional, specific groups out there doing work, but feels like there is a gap. Exact details to be determined. If you're in the west, we will be reaching out to you around what the needs are for, your people and professionals in your area that might not be getting support. We want to get the ball rolling on fundraising and then figure out the details based on what kind of returns we're given. We will share updates there as we have them. As you all see, the message goes out through NCPHA membership, and we'll put it on the listserv as well. If you can spread the word, that would be greatly appreciated.

***NACCHO – Lisa Macon Harrison***

The brief one that NACCHO stands ready to be helpful in any ways that our western North Carolina friends need them to be. If you can think of tangible things you need NACCHO to be doing, just let Patrick or me know, thanks.

***NC IPH*** ***– Amy Joy Lanou***

Amy provided the following updates:

**Advancing Practice**

* With all four hub coordinators now in place in Halifax, Jackson, Cumberland, and Durham counties, we’re excited to strengthen our existing partnerships and forge new connections. Our goal for 2025 is to place 20 students across these counties, collaborating with communities to address their health priorities. To learn more about the important work Master of Public Health students accomplished this past summer, check out the [latest update from our Gillings Communications team](https://sph.unc.edu/sph-news/gillings-students-build-local-public-health-connections-through-new-partnership-hubs/).
* NCIPH is thrilled to welcome our new Pathway Program Manager this week. This role will oversee the expansion of the Pathway Program, which builds on the DPH Fellowship to include internships and practicum opportunities with local health departments to continue building the governmental public health pipeline. Stay tuned for more details, including how we’ll be seeking input on a shared application system.

**Community Assessment & Strategy**

* + NCIPH facilitated the third NC Foundational Capabilities Task Force retreat on 9/16 (summary attached) and advanced the strategic plan for Foundational Capabilities improvements in NC. The Task Force, which includes 10 health director representatives (one from each region), regional workforce development directors, DPH partners/funders, NCPHA reps, and NCIPH staff, will continue to meet quarterly to guide the implementation of a slate of activities. Activities for the coming year include:
    - Executive leadership short course
    - Early career leadership cohort
    - Foundational Public Health Services 101
    - Workshops to streamline reporting requirements and shift from a culture of compliance to a culture of quality improvement
    - Communications champions collaboratives
    - Policy seminars, and more!

**Accreditation**

* + We closed another round of public comment on the proposed standards and activities last Friday, October 11. Our team is working quickly to share what we heard and discuss comments with our Standards & Evidence Board Committee prior to the November Board meeting. Thank you to everyone who shared comments.

***ANCBH*** ***– Merle Greene***

Madam Chair, and to all the health directors, I do have some exciting news this morning. The Association of North Carolina Boards of Health has chosen its pre-award winners, and I'll let you know who they are quickly, and then I'll send a more extensive explanation to each health director through email soon. Our first is the Carl Durham Award, given to a person or group who made significant contributions to public health, and that award will go to the Catawba County Environmental Health team. They did an outstanding job when they noticed high blood lead levels in area children, and they tracked it down to an apple sauce product. They called in NC DHHS and the FDA, and actually had that product removed from grocery store shelves nationwide. Congratulations to the Catawba County Environmental Health team for winning the Carl Durham award for this project. Secondly, our Robert Ed Strother Partnership Award goes to the Alamance County refugee program. The nurse manager is Christy Sykes, RN, and she has partnered very well with local organizations in Alamance County to provide services and information for the refugee population. She's been doing that program for a number of years now. It runs like a well-oiled machine. They say she has many partnerships, and it was worthy of recognition this year. And our third award, which is the outstanding Board of Health Award, actually goes to a consolidated human service agency. It goes to the Guilford County Board of County Commissioners for their support of the health department's new infant mortality reduction program. Infant mortality had been high. Infant mortality rates have been very high in Guilford County. They were higher than the state average. The commissioners made a concerted effort to allow the health department to do some rearranging, bring in new staff, put new funding in into a partnership to address infant mortality in Guilford County. We'll get more information about all those out for you. But we do want to congratulate in front of their peers, Catawba County, Alamance County and Guilford County for these three outstanding accomplishments. And last thing, November 14, is the Association of North Carolina Boards of Health annual meeting, and it will be held on Quintana’s turf, actually, in Hillsborough, North Carolina. We like going there. It's a nice location, and any health director who would like to drop in on ANCBH, just let us know. But it will be on Thursday, November 14, in Hillsborough on Highway 70. And we'll send that out also, and we'll give you a deadline to let us know if you might want to come by and see us just for a few minutes. One last thing. Our governance network meetings have been going very well. Your board members are showing up. The next one is going to be very exciting. It will be held on Monday, November 18 at 7pm so that your board members can dial in. The topic will be on preparedness. It will be presented by Raul Gomez, who was recently deployed to western North Carolina, and he has pictures and updates to talk about preparedness requirements or responsibilities in public health departments. We feel that the topic is very timely. So that's Monday, November 18, at 7pm make sure that your board of health members know about it and are ready to dial in, and we'll send out the link and more information directly to you about that soon also, but go ahead and mark your calendars now. Thank you. We love you all!

***UNC School of Government*** ***– Kirsten Leloudis***

Good morning. Just wanted to share that Jill and I have been getting a handful of questions from folks about kind of novel or just less familiar legal questions that tend to pop up during emergencies, like what we've seen after Helene. We are hosting office hours on November 13, from 1pm to 3pm and they’ll be virtual. You're welcome to come. You're welcome to send staff in your place, and it will really just be an opportunity to drop in, ask questions and get some information about public health laws, especially things related to Helene. Our one ask is that if you have a few seconds and you know there's something you'd like to ask, go ahead and let us know by filling out a link. Send it in the form that will just help ensure that we can get more robust answers to you during those office hours. And also, if we start to see trends, then we will try and develop some resources around those issues. There may also be some things that honestly, Jill and I just don't know, and we'll need to link up with our friends at the state or elsewhere to get you good answers. We have some resources on how to lawfully go about hiring retired local health department or other local government workers to help you during the emergency response. Greatly appreciative for everything everyone across the state is doing right now, and that's all I've got.

***NC SOPHE*** – none

President Stewart asked if there were any other updates from the group. If not, we will end the October meeting and ask for a motion to adjourn.

**Adjourn**

**Motion:** Past President Koontz made a motion to adjourn. Joy Brock (Greene Co.) seconded. No opposition. Meeting was adjourned at 10:58am.