



## RURAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMISSION

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NEBRASKA OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

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### MINUTES of the

### Rural Health Advisory Commission

Friday, April 16, 2021

### Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Members Present: Gary Anthone, M.D.; April Dexter, N.P.; Marty Fattig; Jessye Goertz; Michael Greene, M.D.; Lynette Kramer, M.D.; Rebecca Schroeder, Ph.D.; Mike Sitorius, M.D.; Roger Wells, PA-C

Members Not Present: Sheri Dawson, R.N.; Cherlyn Hunt; Ben Iske, D.D.S.; Sandra Torres, M.D.

Staff Present: Margaret Brockman, Tom Rauner, Deb Stoltenberg, Nancy Jo Hansen, and Rachael Wolfe

#### 1. **Call Meeting to Order; Open Meetings Act and Agenda Posted/Available for Download; Adopt Agenda; Approve Minutes from January 29, 2021 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. with the following members present: Gary Anthone, M.D.; April Dexter, N.P.; Marty Fattig; Jessye Goertz; Michael Greene, M.D.; Lynette Kramer, M.D.; Rebecca Schroeder, Ph.D.; Mike Sitorius, M.D.; Roger Wells, PA-C.

Chairman Marty Fattig announced that the meeting notice had been posted to the DHHS website (<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Rural-Health-Advisory-Commission.aspx>) and sent out via email or USPS on April 5, 2021 to: NE Rural Hospital CEOs, NE Certified Rural Health Clinic Directors, NE Local Public Health Departments, NE Community Action Partners, NE Community Health Centers/FQHCs, NE Professional Associations/Organizations, NE State Senators, the Offices of the Governor and Lt. Governor, and other rural interested groups and parties.

The Open Meetings Act and Agenda were available to send to anyone attending the meeting by Zoom. Introductions were made via chat.

Dr. Michael Greene moved to adopt the April 16, 2021 meeting agenda. Jessye Goertz seconded the motion. Motion carried. YES: Anthone, Dexter, Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Kramer, Schroeder, Sitorius, Wells. NO: None. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Dawson, Hunt, Iske, Torres.

April Dexter then moved to approve the January 29, 2021 meeting minutes. Dr. Michael Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. YES: Anthone, Dexter, Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Kramer, Schroeder, Sitorius, Wells. NO: None. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Dawson, Hunt, Iske, Torres.

## **2. Administrative Items**

### *Current Members Update*

As discussed previously, six positions will be up for appointment/reappointment in September: Michael Greene, Cherlyn Hunt, Rebecca Schroeder, Mike Sitorius, Sandra Torres, and Roger Wells. These members will need to submit an application via the website should they wish to continue to serve on the Commission.

### *Other Announcements*

Nebraska Conference on Health Equity will take place on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Nebraska Rural Health Association Conference – Part Two will be on April 28<sup>th</sup> (half day). Next RHAC meeting is scheduled for August 13<sup>th</sup> and it will likely be held in person depending on extending the moratorium regulation for in-person meetings. The Office of Rural Health (ORH) will follow up in July to begin planning either the August or November meeting to be in a rural location.

## **3. Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act Program Updates**

### *Review Shortage Designation Request*

Rachael Wolfe went over a designation request that had been received by the Office of Rural Health. A review of Holt County was requested, under the specialty of Dentistry. After a review of current providers, it was determined that the county does qualify as a shortage area.

Dr. Mike Sitorius moved to approve the designation of Holt County as a shortage area for Dentistry. Jessye Goertz seconded the motion. Motion carried. YES: Anthone, Dexter, Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Kramer, Schroeder, Sitorius, Wells. NO: None. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Dawson, Hunt, Iske, Torres.

### *Guidance for Telehealth Work*

Rachael Wolfe remarked that current temporary guidelines state:

“Per guidance laid out in the CARES Act, for the duration of the state public health emergency, it is acceptable to perform 100 percent telework.” She asked if the Commission would like to extend this provision. They would like to discuss this closer to the end of the pandemic.

### *Approve Revised FTE Wording*

Revising the definition of full time work was discussed at the previous meeting. Proposed wording is as follows:

“Full time work is defined as at least 32 hours scheduled patient time per week, and other duties required to run a practice. Alternate schedules may be allowable upon review by the Rural Health Advisory Commission.”

Dr. Mike Sitorious moved to approve the revised wording and Dr. Michael Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. YES: Anthone, Dexter, Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Kramer, Schroeder, Sitorius, Wells. NO: None. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Dawson, Hunt, Iske, Torres.

#### *Budget*

Rachael Wolfe then presented an updated budget to the Commission, including new possibilities for funding and projected award amounts for new applicants. There are likely to be additional funds available via the federal programs, and the State Legislature is considering additional general funds for the State Loan Repayment program as well. If the budget is increased by the maximum amount - potentially doubling both the State and NHSC SLRP programs - an additional staff member would be useful to help with increased need to market and manage the programs.

#### **4. Closed Session**

Dr. Lynette Kramer moved to go to closed session at 1:59 p.m. Dr. Mike Sitorious seconded the motion. Motion carried. YES: Anthone, Dexter, Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Kramer, Schroeder, Sitorius, Wells. NO: None. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Dawson, Hunt, Iske, Torres.

Marty Fattig announced that the Commission would go into Closed Session at 2:00 p.m. to review loan repayment applications and updates on current recipients.

#### **5. Open Session**

Roger Wells moved to go into Open Session at 2:21 p.m. Dr. Michael Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. YES: Anthone, Dexter, Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Kramer, Schroeder, Sitorius, Wells. NO: None. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Dawson, Hunt, Iske, Torres.

Dr. Mike Sitorious moved to approve the loan repayment applications with estimated loan repayment start dates and loan repayment amounts as indicated or as determined by Office of Rural Health staff, based on issuance of license and/or loan documentation, practice time in the shortage area, and the availability of funds for the state match. Dr. Michael Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. YES: Anthone, Dexter, Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Kramer, Schroeder, Sitorius, Wells. NO: None. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Dawson, Hunt, Iske, Torres.

Name	Actual Practice Date	Expect/Eligible Start Date	Specialty	County (Community) Practice of	Total Loan Repayment (State and Local)
Parsons, Jillian	12/14/2020	9/1/2022	MD (FP)	Cuming (West Point)	\$100,000.00
Christensen, Isabella	11/16/2020	9/1/2022	PA (FP)	Madison (Norfolk)	\$50,000.00
Weber, Matthew	11/1/2019	7/1/2021	DDS (Oral Surgery)	Buffalo (Kearney)	\$180,000.00
Skomer, Molly	4/27/2020	7/1/2021	NP (FP)	Otoe (Syracuse)	\$83,295.34
Heidinger, Kayla	8/24/2020	7/1/2021	MD/DO (FP)	Otoe (Syracuse)	\$180,000.00
Eller, Jordan	6/1/2021	7/1/2021	PA (FP)	Polk (Stromsburg, Shelby)	\$90,000.00
Ready, Steven	10/1/2021	10/1/2021	DDS/DMS (Gen)	Cuming (Wisner)	\$90,000.00
Mathew, Sherryl	12/22/2020	7/1/2021	DDS/DMD (Ped)	Scottsbluff (Scottsbluff)	\$36,000.00
Clark, Desa	9/6/2021	10/1/2021	NP (Psychiatry)	Dodge (Fremont)	\$60,000.00
Grabowski, Stacy	10/15/2020	7/1/2021	PT	Nance (Loup Valley, Genoa)	\$90,000.00
Glesinger, Taylor	3/31/2021	7/1/2021	PA (Gen Int Med)	Box Butte (Box Butte)	\$90,000.00
Nordhues, Darian	2/3/2020	7/1/2021	NP (FP)	Valley (Ord)	\$90,000.00
Koppie, Karen	11/16/2020	7/1/2021	NP (FP)	Dundy (Benkelman)	\$12,000.00
Wordekemper, Zachary	9/1/2022	10/1/2022	MD/DO (FP)	Colfax (Howells)	\$180,000.00

## 6. Rural Health Advisory Commission Recommendations

The Commission discussed strategic planning options. Roger Wells suggested a two hour brainstorming session in the morning, followed by lunch, with a Commission meeting in the afternoon. He remarked that face-to-face meetings and having dedicated time on the topic would be desirable. Dr. Lynette Kramer agreed and mentioned it would be important to have a facilitator as well; someone to steer conversation and come up with a summary

document (option one from the handout). Rachael Wolfe will reach out to Dr. Maya Chilese to determine if their office can facilitate and set up a time for the meeting.

## **7. Review Current Federal & State Legislative Activities Impacting Rural Health**

Marty Fattig and Roger Wells presented on items relevant to Rural Health.

*State Level – items discussed:*

Marty Fattig remarked that the budget would be on final reading next Tuesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Other items:

- 2% provider increase on Medicaid payments over the next two years
- behavioral health/telehealth
- LB 411 all providers of physical health submitting to CyncHealth (formerly called NeHII)

*Federal Level – items discussed:*

- NHSC funding increase
- Federal Sequestration
- RHC provisions/payment caps
- Delaying provider relief fund repayment is being discussed
- Crisis Standard of Care

## **8. Adjourn**

The unanimous decision was made to adjourn at 3:02 p.m., and with no second necessary, the meeting was adjourned.