

**Virginia Department of Health Workgroup on Local Health Department Structure and Financing**

**August 7, 2023 – 1:00pm**

**Mezzanine Conference Room, James Madison Building  
109 Governor Street, Richmond VA 23219**

**Members present:** Ben Barber, President-Elect, Virginia Public Health Association; Katie Boyle, Director of Government Affairs, Virginia Association of Counties (virtual attendance and sitting in for Jim Taylor); Joe Flores, Director of Fiscal Policy, Virginia Municipal League; Robert W. Hicks, Deputy Commissioner of Population Health and Preparedness, Acting Deputy Commissioner of Community Health Services, Virginia Department of Health (VDH); Joe Hilbert, Deputy Commissioner for Governmental & Regulatory Affairs, VDH; Michael Jackson, CFO and Director of Government & Legislative Affairs, Virginia Community Healthcare Association; Dr. Elaine Perry, Director, Richmond and Henrico Health Districts, VDH; Rufus Phillips, CEO, Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics; Dr. Karen Shelton, State Health Commissioner; and Reisa Sloce, Director, Lenowisco and Cumberland Plateau Health Districts, VDH.

NOTE: Ms. Boyle participated virtually from her home in Richmond due to a personal matter. Dr. Shelton participated virtually from her home in Bristol due to a temporary illness.

**Members Absent:** Leah Mills, Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources.

**Others in Attendance:** Michael Capps, Senior Policy Analyst, VDH; Stephanie Gilliam, Assistant Director for Budget Operations, VDH; Alexandra Jansson, Senior Policy Analyst, VDH; Kyu Kang, Associate Health Policy Analyst, Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC); Jeff Lake, Senior Advisor to the Chief Deputy for Community Health Services, VDH; John Ringer, Director of Public Health Planning and Evaluation, VDH; Khalida Willoughby, Health Assessment and Improvement Manager, VDH

**Welcome & Introductions**

Dr. Shelton called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm. She explained the context and background of the workgroup and asked members to introduce themselves and the organizations they represent.

**Election of Chair**

Dr. Shelton appointed Dr. Perry as Chair of the workgroup and asked for any objections; no objections were raised.

**Electronic Participation Policy**

Dr. Perry asked Mr. Hilbert to introduce the workgroup's draft electronic participation policy for consideration. Mr. Hilbert explained that the policy is a model electronic participation policy created by VDH and walked the workgroup through the substantive aspects of the policy.

Mr. Phillips made a motion to approve the policy as presented and Mr. Barber seconded the motion. The policy was adopted unanimously by voice vote.

## **Overview and Planned Approach to Follow-up**

Mr. Hilbert introduced the meeting's prepared slides and expressed a desire for active participation by the workgroup membership in the meeting's policy considerations.

Mr. Phillips requested background on the VDH Steering Committee's rank-order voting system that resulted in the policy option priority consensus described on slide 7. Mr. Hilbert responded by describing the options presented as foundational to other available policy options. Mr. Phillips asked also why JCHC Policy Option 1 was not found among the priority options listed. Dr. Perry responded by reiterating Mr. Hilbert's description of the presented consensus options as being foundational. Mr. Jackson requested information on the steering committee's rank of JCHC Policy Option 3. Mr. Hilbert responded by describing Option 3 as fitting within existing VDH operations.

The workgroup discussed the questions posed on slide 11. Mr. Barber suggested that certain wording in Policy Option 7 be changed from "the CHA/CHIP process" to "a CHA/CHIP process."

Mr. Hilbert asked Mr. Ringer to walk the workgroup through slides 12 through 17. The workgroup discussed the questions posed on slide 18.

Regarding Slide 27, Mr. Barber asked to know what explains the variation in federal grant funding by health district. Mr. Hicks and Dr. Perry responded.

Mr. Hilbert introduced the discussion questions on slide 28.

Mr. Barber asked to know how the general fund allocation model determines the total allocation by locality. Mr. Hicks asked Mr. Lake to respond and extrapolate. Mr. Jackson asked for clarification; Dr. Shelton and Mr. Ringer responded.

Mr. Flores expressed that the existing funding formula seemed to lack appropriate consideration of needs.

Mr. Barber referenced the map on slide 26 to ask about the equitability of federal grant money distribution during and after the period when COVID-19 related federal grants are being distributed and spent. Dr. Perry expressed that because the data is not expressed per capita and other multifactorial concerns, it is challenging to answer questions about equitable distribution of federal funds. Mr. Barber indicated no further questions.

## **Public Comment**

Mike Royster, Senior Vice President, Institute for Public Health Innovation provided comment.

## **Next Steps**

Mr. Hilbert expressed a desire to receive and incorporate feedback from workgroup members and asked for any additional questions or comments.

Mr. Barber requested a visualization of the total co-op budget by locality. Mr. Hicks asked if Mr. Barber would like that data visualized as a trend; Mr. Barber would. Mr. Flores indicated a desire for this data also.

Ms. Boyle expressed that she would like to speak with Mr. Hilbert about submitting feedback from the constituent members of the Virginia Association of Counties.

Mr. Phillips expressed a desire to see summaries of CHA/CHIP plans for a selection of health districts.

Mr. Hicks asked if Ms. Boyle thought that the timeframe of VDH budget forecasts is considered problematic by Virginia Association of Counties members; Ms. Boyle responded in the affirmative.

**Adjourn**

Dr. Perry adjourned the meeting at 3:13 pm.