

**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GUILFORD COUNTY WELLNESS SUB-COMMITTEE**

September 22, 2015
Greensboro, North Carolina

The Wellness Sub-Committee appointed by the Board of County Commissioners met on September 22, 2015 at 10:30 am in the Blue Room, located on the first floor of the Old Guilford County Courthouse, 301 W. Market Street, Greensboro.

PRESENT: Commissioner Committee members Vice Chairman Jeff Phillips and Commissioner Alan Perdue.

ABSENT: Commissioners Ray Trapp and Carolyn Q. Coleman

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager, Marty Lawing; John Dean, Human Resources Director; Carol Campbell, Human Resources Benefits Manager; Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board; Michael Halford, Budget Director; Yvonne Moebs, Risk Management Director; and Jason Jones, Sr. Budget Analyst.

Wellness Goals

John Dean, Human Resources Director, called the meeting to order at 10:44am. He introduced the topic of wellness goals and reviewed the primary goals identified by the sub-committee during the 8/31/2015 meeting. He noted that the identified wellness goals included: employees becoming proactive about their health and wellbeing, decreasing absenteeism, increasing productivity, enhancing overall employee health, and decreasing health plan costs.

Carol Campbell, Human Resources Benefits Manager, stated that a County goal should include attempting to maintain the current level of benefits and control existing costs versus decreasing costs.

Employee Survey Review and Plan for Deployment

Dean introduced the topic of the employee survey.

Campbell review potential survey questions.

The committee discussed options for questions and the possibility of providing incentives to employees to encourage completion of the survey.

Dean discussed options related to departmental wellness ambassadors and expressed his concerns over directors appointing staff to the committee. He suggested that those staff who are most dedicated to wellness would express their interest, and should be chosen for the role.

Yvonne Moebs, Risk Management Director, suggested including questions on the survey that allow employees to identify which disease management programs would be most beneficial to achieving their wellness goals.

Commissioner Perdue suggested an open-ended comment section at the end of the survey, to encompass questions or concerns that could not be addressed by the survey and spoke to the importance of including age range and length of service questions.

Campbell reviewed length of service drop-down options and stated it would be interesting to ask employees with 5 years or less service why they chose to accept employment with Guilford County government.

Commissioner Perdue suggested re-phrasing the question to what, if any, influence did the quality of the County's health benefits package have on their decision to accept employment with Guilford County.

County Manager Marty Lawing suggested including a question to judge employee interest in an on-site wellness clinic.

Jason Jones, Sr. Budget Analyst stated a scope of clinic services should be developed prior to polling employee interest.

Lawing noted the question on wellness clinics must be worded carefully.

Commissioner Perdue suggested framing survey questions to get the best data versus being concerned over the length of the question. He stated that other surveys contain an introduction that explains the purpose of the survey. Perdue noted that reducing the County's overall health plan expenses should be included in the explanation to help them understand its impact upon the organization.

Moebs suggested informing employees of the total amount paid by the County for health insurance.

Vice Chairman Phillips spoke to the disadvantages of a lengthy survey and noted that this may discourage employee participation. He stated the purpose and goals of the survey should be included in the introduction and the survey should be limited to 10-12 questions. Phillips stated that a follow-up survey with more detailed questions on programs could be created.

Campbell stated that the initial survey should be basic and include broad-based questions. She noted wellness ambassadors could complete surveys with more detailed questions.

Lawing noted that another goal of the wellness program was to sustain an attractive level of benefits, stating that it will become more difficult to maintain current level of insurance.

Campbell discussed options for biometric screenings and how information would be released to the County.

Lawing discussed confidentiality if the screenings and explained County would not receive detailed information, only aggregate data.

Michael Halford, Budget Director, questioned if biometric screenings would become mandatory.

Vice Chairman Phillips suggesting removing “confidential” verbiage from biometric screening question, as aggregate data would be released to the County.

Lawing clarified that Human Resources would receive aggregate data to get baseline information on most common medical conditions in employees such as diabetes or high blood pressure. He stated that they would not receive detailed information on medical conditions.

Halford questioned the differences between visiting a primary care physician versus a minute clinic when seeking treatment for basic medical needs such as flu shots.

The committee discussed options for free flu shot clinics conducted by DHHS-Public Health and other providers within the community.

Campbell questioned the best way to communicate overall health insurance costs and wellness information to employees.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned if employees truly cared about the overall costs of the County’s health insurance plan.

Lawing stated employees cared about healthcare expenses and shared statistics showing 90% of employees utilized generic drugs to decrease costs.

Halford commented that the option to understand overall health care plan costs had not been given to employees. He noted that when information is shared, it should be ongoing and thorough.

Commissioner Perdue suggested ongoing departmental trainings to explain health insurance costs and policies, and the reasons behind decisions made by the Board.

Jones noted that the key is employees feel ownership of the program. He stated that communications should encourage wellness and how staff influence decisions related to the overall plan.

Lawing requested a copy of the final survey reviewed by the committee and sent to employees prior to the next meeting.

Campbell suggested a one-week timeframe for staff completion and noted approximately 20% of the staff may complete the survey.

Commissioner Perdue suggested 10-day timeframe to allow Emergency Services employees who have rotated off schedule to complete the survey upon their return to work.

Campbell stated the survey should be ready to submit to employees on Monday, September 28, 2015.

UHC Incentive Dollars

Campbell stated the County needed to decide how to use the remaining incentive dollars and invoice United Healthcare for this amount prior to 12/31/2015.

Lawing suggested using the incentive dollars to cover the costs of biometric screenings.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned the cost of screenings.

Lawing stated the cost ranges from \$40-\$60 per screening.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned the content of the screening and how it is conducted.

Lawing discussed the process of completing the screening and suggested annual biometric screenings to encompass potential changes in health and/or existing medical conditions, and to encompass new employees.

Moebis questioned how screenings would be contracted to an outside vendor.

Lawing stated a request for proposals (RFP) could be submitted, or the County would work with Wells Fargo representatives to identify potential vendors.

Jones suggested included a nicotine testing option in the screening.

Lawing questioned the cost of adding this test to the biometric screening panel.

Jones stated that biometric screenings in City of Salisbury included a nicotine test, and the cost of screenings for approximately 450 employees was around \$22,000. He stated that these screenings were conducted through Living Well, a local contractor.

Commissioner Phillips questioned funding sources for screenings.

Lawing stated that the County's Internal Services fund balance would be used to cover the costs of screenings.

Commissioner Phillips questioned if the screenings would assist the County in developing potential plans for a wellness clinic.

Lawing responded that the screenings would assist in determining the need for a clinic, but the information from the screening would be of benefit to employees.

Campbell suggested conducting screenings in January to coincide with the desire to accomplish New Year's resolutions.

Moebis discussed the option of receiving lab reports from physicians in lieu of biometric screenings for those employees who complete their annual physicals.

Lawing suggested a 90 day timeframe between the date of the physical and scheduled County biometric screenings, to ensure data is current.

Vice Chairman Phillips expressed concerns about employees fearing termination if biometric screening results are poor, and noted the County should work to dissuade employees of these concerns.

Lawing confirmed that the County will only receive aggregate data and that no detailed information would be received from the screenings.

Campbell spoke to the need for an on-site wellness coordinator.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned the functions of the current United Healthcare representatives.

Campbell stated that an on-site wellness coordinator provides the opportunity for face-to-face interactions with employees, departmental trainings, and could review screening data and provide coaching to employees with specific medical conditions.

Dean reviewed the role of dedicated on-site wellness coordinators in Forsyth County.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned the coordinators coaching role.

Dean discussed the coaching role and explained Forsyth County's wellness program requirements. He noted that compliance with program requirements determined eligibility for premium discounts.

Lawing stated it may be less complex, legally, to discount premiums based upon participation versus compliance.

The committee discussed the options of required versus optional participation in biometric screenings.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned how employees might respond if the County chose to participation as a requirement for decreased premiums.

Commissioner Perdue stated the key to success lies in how the message is conveyed to employees. He discussed utilizing wellness champions to encourage healthy habits, such as the completing an annual biometric screening, and provide information to employees.

Vice Chairman Phillips noted the effects of participation must be beneficial to the employee and would require significant modification of health insurance premiums to encourage participation.

Lawing discussed ideas on how to alter health insurance premiums, decrease costs for employees who participate in biometric screenings while maintaining or lower overall County costs. Lawing suggested increasing employee-only premium expenses by \$50 per month. Employees who participate in annual screenings could have this amount waived or decreased.

Campbell questioned how premium increases would affect employees with covered dependents.

Lawing stated dependents would not be required to complete screenings and noted that employee only premium expenses could be calculated separately from the costs for dependent coverage.

Jones clarified that premiums would increase by \$50 per month, but participation in biometric screenings would decrease employee direct costs.

Lawing suggested the committee brainstorm on premium costs and participation incentives, and bring these ideas to the next committee meeting.

Composition of Wellness Groups

Campbell suggested the committee should receive the results of the wellness survey prior to defining wellness groups.

Communications

Dean discussed potential barriers to County-wide communications and noted the need to work with the Information Services department when sending mass communications.

Employee Incentives for 2016

Campbell discussed potential employee incentive options for 2016 and questioned if the County wanted to continue these incentives.

Lawing noted there was no value in the current online assessment tools.

Dean stated most staff who receive annual physicals will continue to get them, regardless of incentives, as the County pays 100% of the cost.

Commissioner Perdue questioned the number of staff who receive physicals.

Campbell noted 409 retirees received physicals and approximately 1,637 employee incentive activities were conducted by County employees, at a total cost of approximately \$144,000 to the County.

Jones noted that more information will be received from biometric screenings than online assessments.

Vice Chairman Phillips suggested ending the current employee incentives program and transferring the savings to wellness to activities.

Lawing questioned if employee incentives were paid through the Internal Services fund.

Halford clarified that funding for employee incentives comes from the General Fund.

Vice Chairman Phillips shared a constituent complaint regarding wellness incentives for employees and stated funding would be best used in specific wellness activities for the County.

Halford suggested checking prior minutes to determine if Board action is required to adopt the 2016 employee incentive plan.

Vice Chairman Phillips noted the Board should weigh-in on the issue.

Lawing stated there is a need to finalize the incentive plan prior to open enrollment in November 2015.

Vice Chairman Phillips discussed the option for a work session to discuss the incentive plan.

Next Steps

Dean reviewed the next steps for the committee and discussed the upcoming survey and need to finalize the 2016 incentive plan.

Vice Chairman Phillips suggested scheduled a health fair in conjunction with biometric screenings to encourage participation.

Jones discussed City of Salisbury Health Fair held during open enrollment season and spoke to the benefits of employees discussing wellness and health insurance plan options in one setting.

Campbell commented on open enrollment sessions held during the 30-day open enrollment period.

Moebs commented health fairs are a lot of work but very successful in encouraging employee participation in wellness programs.

Vice Chairman Phillips expressed concerns with conducting a fair that would reach employees in Greensboro and High Point.

Lawing stated the need to include employee incentive and insurance plan changes on the October 22, 2015 agenda to provide time for updates prior to open enrollment.

The committee scheduled the next meeting for Friday, October 9, 2015 at 8:30am.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the committee adjourned by unanimous consent at 12:12 pm.

Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board