

## Health Director's Report

May, 2016

- Thanks to the leadership of our Animal Services Director, Bob Marotto, Orange County is on the leading edge to resolve a conflict between national rabies control recommendations and state law. Essentially new national recommendations shorten the recommended quarantine period for a dog or cat exposed to a rabid/potentially rabid animal from 6 months to 4. These new recommendations also allow a rabies booster in exposed/potentially exposed dogs and cats behind on their rabies shots whereas NC State law requires quarantine for those animals. The Health Director's Association is working closely with the Department of Health and Human Services to introduce legislation to adopt these national recommendations by reference so that state law always matches national recommendations. Because this is a short session, it is a bit tricky, but we think there is a good chance this will happen. In the meantime, in consultation with the County Attorney's Office, Orange County has changed our rabies control policy to match the national recommendations.
- We were sad to receive Meredith Stewart's resignation last week. She has done an amazing job both with BOH strategic plan management and managing the Family Success Alliance for the last two years. Her last day working here will be June 3<sup>rd</sup>. She has an amazing opportunity to attend Duke Law School in the fall and we absolutely wish her the best. I've asked Coby Austin to fill Meredith's position in the interim. Many of you had the opportunity to work with Coby when she was interim FAS Division Director, so you know we're in quite capable hands. The position reclassification we requested for this position is included in the Manager's recommended budget, so we hope to post the position at the higher classified level in the next couple weeks. We will post internally first as that is the general county policy and will involve the Governing Council of the Family Success Alliance in the selection process. Coby has already started working with Meredith on a transition plan, so I expect that to be a seamless experience.
- Speaking of the Manager's recommended budget, I forwarded you an email about where we are with that. Essentially, the Manager is recommending 1 additional FTE for the Health Department to focus on Healthy Homes and Community Outreach. She also recommended the \$105,000 increase for the Family Success Alliance. Next stop is the Board of County Commissioners. We have our budget discussion with them on June 14<sup>th</sup>.
- We have been interviewing for the Integrated Behavioral Health Specialist position. Many of the extremely qualified applicants are bi-lingual and we hope to have the selected person in place no later than July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Carla Julian has agreed to run point on our transition to electronic communications (texting and emailing) with patients, in both Dental and Medical. Our goal is to go live with this August 1<sup>st</sup>. I'll keep you posted on our progress as there are many moving parts that could slow this down.
- Finally, I'm pleased to announce that the Orange County Health Department won the second annual "Walk for the Health of it" competition. We beat out both Durham and Alamance Counties. We hope to grow the event again next year and include a few more counties.