



The Task Force to Strengthen the Health and Promote the Environment of South Carolina

2100 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

SHaPE SC Full Task Force Meeting

June 3, 2021

Minutes

The Task Force to Strengthen the Health and Promote the Environment of South Carolina (SHaPE SC) held its first meeting on **June 3, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.** The meeting was located at Pastides Alumni Center at UofSC, with some members attending virtually via MS Teams.

The meeting was called to order by the director of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), Dr. Edward Simmer, and the following members were in attendance:

Attending in-person:

Bernie Hawkins, Facilitator (SHaPE SC); Graham Adams, PhD; Laura Aldinger; Jeffrey Allen, PhD; Gayle Aycock; Eric Bellamy; Mark Binkley; Rebecca Brannon; Art Braswell; Emily Cedzo; Anna Maria Conner; John Durst; Lee Dutton; Beth Franco; Todd Glover; Sara Goldsby; Charles Gray; Elizabeth Harmon; Rebecca Haynes; Sara Hazzard; Alan Hughes; Bill Lindsey; Joseph McLamb; Jill Miller; Harold Mitchell, Jr.; Connie Munn; Mark Nix; Greg Pearce; Lee Pearson, MS, DrPH; Myra Reece; Ken Rentiers; Kenneth Rogers, MD; Seema Shrivastava-Patel; Edward Simmer, MD, MPH, DFAPA; Gary Spires; Bill Stangler; Gwen Thompson; Katie Titus; Brannon Traxler, MD, MPH; Kim Wilkerson, RN

Attending virtually:

Larry Martin, Chair (SHaPE SC); Thornton Kirby; Judge Amy McCulloch; Patricia Moore-Pastides; Juana Slade

Not in attendance:

Thaddeus J. Bell, MD; Jarrod M. Bruder; Michael Fields; Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr.; Major General William Grimsley (represented by Joseph McLamb); Jeffrey Korte, PhD; Tommy Lavender (represented by Katie Titus); Brenda Murphy, MSN, RN; Kacey Schmitt; Richele Taylor (represented by Rebecca Brannon); Gerald Wilson, MD (represented by Elizabeth Harmon); Lathran Woodard

Also, in attendance were several DHEC support staff, as well as members of the public and media.

Item 1: Call to Order/Welcome

DHEC Director Edward Simmer, MD, welcomed members to the first task force meeting and thanked them for their participation. He started the meeting by providing an orientation to the task force.

During his introduction, Director Simmer briefly reviewed current proposed legislation in the Senate (S. 2) and House (H. 3766) which examine the restructuring of health and environmental services in South Carolina. He provided a summary overview of how the current legislation, specifically S. 2, as amended, proposed to restructure the agency. At the same time, he reminded members that the work of the task force was independent of the current legislation and encouraged members to expand their evaluation of health and environmental services beyond organizational structure to include possible gaps in the services currently being provided and efforts that could be undertaken to improve services, stating:

"Our goal is to figure out what those changes should be, how we can most effectively take care of the people of South Carolina and improve their quality of life....Regardless of what the legislature and the governor finally decide about the structure of health and environmental services in South Carolina, the changes that this panel recommends, we can act on regardless...Wherever those departments end up, in terms of an agency structure, they can still use the recommendations from this panel to improve the services we provide moving forward."

He thanked DHEC staff for helping to organize the task force, Bernie Hawkins for his willingness to service as facilitator for the task force, and Former State Senator Larry Martin for serving as chair of the task force.

Item 2: Opening Remarks

SHaPE SC Chair Larry Martin expressed his appreciation to everyone for agreeing to participate in this process and their commitment of time. He noted the important nature of conducting a thoughtful, external evaluation of DHEC and the health and environmental functions of the state. He also thanked Director Simmer for inviting him to serve as the chair for SHaPE SC.

Item 3: Meet the Facilitator

Bernie Hawkins shared his appreciation to task force members for volunteering their time. He then introduced himself and reviewed the role of task force members in making consensus recommendations on how health and environmental services should be provided. Mr. Hawkins also reviewed the public input process and his role as a facilitator. In this role, Mr. Hawkins said he will support the public input process and be available as a resource for task force members by helping gather, assess, debate, and communicate information to aid the task force in its development and final report of recommendations.

Item 4: Introductions and Icebreaker

Director Simmer asked the task force members to introduce themselves and share **(1)** something about themselves, past or present, that they thought would surprise people, and/or **(2)** what they were looking forward to most this summer, especially as the state begins to come out of the COVID-19 crisis.

Item 5: SHaPE SC Overview and Process

Director Simmer provided an overview of the current model of health and environmental services in South Carolina. He then reviewed the charge of SHaPE SC. The charge includes:

- Evaluating current and potential structures and responsibilities, as well as other core improvements
- Making recommendations to the board, legislature, and governor based on the task force's evaluation

The goal of the task force: improving the quality of life for all South Carolinians by promoting and protecting the health of the public and the environment.

Director Simmer also reviewed the role of the task force's three subcommittees: **(1)** Environmental Protection, **(2)** Health, and **(3)** Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

*(*Note: the name of the third subcommittee has since been changed to Behavioral Health at the request of the subcommittee with the intent of being as inclusive as possible.)*

Item 6: Facilitated Discussion and Report Out

The task force members met in their appointed subcommittees as part of a facilitated dialogue. Subcommittee members were asked to discuss and report out on four questions:

- (1)** What is your vision for the future of health and environmental services in South Carolina?
- (2)** What are some of the current strengths in how health and environmental services in South Carolina are currently structured?
- (3)** What are the core challenges as well as opportunities for improvement when it comes to health and environmental services?
- (4)** How can this task force help positively impact the health of South Carolinians and the environment in which we live, work and play?

Worksheets summarizing each subcommittees' discussions are attached.

Item 7: Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Mr. Hawkins reviewed common themes discussed by the subcommittees during the day's event, including: a passion to improving services, not being satisfied with the mentality of "enough is good enough," avoiding the potential of harm as the result of structural changes, overarching funding and resource concerns, improvements in communications, and the identifications of other core issues.

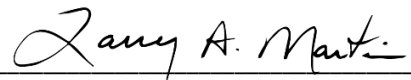
Mr. Hawkins then reviewed next steps, including the selection of subcommittee chairs and project milestones.

Director Simmer thanked members for their work during this first meeting and noted that members identified several key issues during these initial discussions. He also reminded members of the public input process.

Being no further business, Chair Martin provided closing remarks and the meeting was adjourned. Based on post-meeting feedback provided by the members, the next full task force meeting is being planned for the end of July 2021.

A recording of the initial SHaPE SC meeting is available [here](#). The presentation from the meeting is available [here](#).

Recordings of Task Force and Subcommittee meetings can also be found at the SHaPE SC website.



Larry Martin, SHaPE SC Chair
June 30, 2021