Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title:	A resolution identifying the skills and qualities needed for Nashville's next Director of the Metro Public Health Department.		
Sponsors:	Erin Evans, Russ Bradford, Burkley Allen, Brandon Taylor, Terry Vo, Brenda Gadd, Delishia Porterfield, Sandy Ewing		
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10/1/2024	1	Metropolitan Council	withdrawn	
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A resolution identifying the skills and qualities needed for Nashville's next Director of the Metro Public Health Department.

WHEREAS, the mission of Metropolitan Public Health Department ("MPHD") is to protect, improve, and sustain the health and well-being of all people in Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, since 2021, over 700 people have died annually from drug overdoses in Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, since 2022, 228 people have been fatally shot in Nashville and Davidson County, including six students, faculty, and staff members during the March 2023 Covenant School shooting; and

WHEREAS, in order to effectively address the crisis of community violence, MPHD relies on the important work of partner organizations including Raphah Institute, The F.I.N.D Design, Why We Can't Wait, as well as all member organizations of "The Village", a community of over 150 grassroots non-profit organizations actively working to improve the lives of residents through education, economic opportunity, housing, restorative justice, and health care; and

WHEREAS, in addition to federally designated public health crises like opioids and gun violence, on September 17, 2024, the Metropolitan Council adopted a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis in Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, complex problems require innovative data-driven solutions, and MPHD plays a crucial role in protecting the health and well-being of our community; and

WHEREAS the Director of Health is a vital leadership position within MPHD and the Metropolitan Government, and requires a skilled and experienced individual who is not only enthusiastic about the needs of the community but also has the skill to guide its operations and initiatives and build external partnerships; and

WHEREAS, on June 13, 2024, current Director of Health Dr. Gill C. Wright, III, announced that he would not seek an extension of his contract, which was approved by Resolution No. RS2021-1090; and

WHEREAS, during public comment at the August 8, 2024, meeting of the Metropolitan Board of Health, members were asked to conduct a thorough and transparent search process for what will be Nashville's third Director of Health in five years; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council expects that the Board of Health will solicit and consider feedback from resident stakeholders as practicable during the selection process to ensure that the next Director of Health aligns with the community's priorities; and

WHEREAS, the application process closes on October 2, 2024, and, pursuant to Section 10.105 of the Metropolitan Charter, the Metropolitan Council must approve the chosen candidate's employment contract compensation by resolution; and

WHEREAS, in addition to meeting the requirements of the published position profile, the Metropolitan Council desires that the next Director of Health possess the following competencies:

- Model competencies outlined in Public Health 3.0, which is a new framework for public health proposed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Take the lead role in building a comprehensive Public Health 3.0-informed departmental strategic plan that references local, state, and national data and national best practices including one that is responsive to public health emergencies and current and emerging public health challenges;
- Assess MPHD's grant funded programs and ensure their effectiveness by prioritizing the execution of evidence-based and other promising, nationally recommended, and/or high-impact grant activities, including for the over $23M received in direct and state opioid settlement funds, as well as the over $3M received in community safety funding;
- Ensure the expert staff at the Health Department are recognized and used to their fullest potential;
- Enable staff to develop their knowledge and understanding of existing community health resources, including but not limited to behavioral health and substance use disorder resources, to ensure an efficient provision of services and prevent unnecessary duplication;
- Take the lead on informing the public of health threats and trends along with plans to proactively address them;
- Amplify the work of the professionals who lead a variety of critical initiatives in Metro, including the management of vital records, overdose surveillance, screening for and treating STDs and tuberculosis, bringing people living with HIV into care, leadership of four public clinics, immunizations, family planning, and food inspections, among other programs;
- Support MPHD's role as a critical partner in effectuating Nashville's innovative co-response programs Partners in Care with the Metro Nashville Police Department and Responders Engaged and Committed to Help in conjunction with the Nashville Fire Department;
- Evaluate the needs and available resources for services that are vitally important to the community, including Metro Animal Care and Control;
- Maintain high-level connections with area hospital and clinic administrators with the aim of building mutually supportive relationships for successful daily operations and emergency activities. Play an active liaison role with health systems when staff require assistance in this area, and lead on innovations related to new or revamped shared initiatives and support staff in doing the same;
- Develop and nurture partnerships with community stakeholders involved in health issues and service delivery, including facilitating the Mayor's Behavioral Health and Wellness Advisory Council;
- Develop stakeholder feedback opportunities to help drive systemic changes that address health

disparities, health trends, and critical health threats within Nashville; and function as a model leader in welcoming partners and stakeholders by providing a platform for cohesive and complementary action;

- Prioritize making financial investments or earmarking 3-5% or more of grant and local funds for partner organizations working in their respective Public Health area that are having an impact on our city's health challenges; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Metropolitan Council that the Metropolitan Board of Health take into consideration the information outlined above when selecting the next Director of Health.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan County Council hereby goes on record as supporting the Metropolitan Public Health Department and its mission of protecting and improving the health of all Nashvillians.

Section 2. The Metropolitan County Council believes that the selection of a new Director of Health is a critical decision with far-reaching implications for the health and well-being of our community.

Section 3. The Metropolitan County Council requests the Board of Health and Mayor Freddie O'Connell consider the feedback provided in this resolution as part of their selection of the next Director of Health for the Metropolitan Public Health Department. The Metropolitan County Council requests that the Board of Health share this resolution with any applicants who are considered finalists in the search process and in advance of the selected candidate appearing before a joint special-called Budget and Finance and Public Health and Safety committee meeting that will be coordinated as scheduling permits.

Section 4. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.