



Recommendation for Action

File #: 20-1504, **Agenda Item #:** 23.

3/12/2020

Posting Language

Approve extending the appointment of Mark Escott, M.D. as Interim Health Authority and designation of Jason R. Pickett, M.D. as Alternate Health Authority through September 30, 2020.

Lead Department

Austin Public Health.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

December 7, 2017- Council previously approved the appointment of Dr. Philip Huang as the Health Authority with two alternate Health Authorities.

February 7, 2019 - Council previously approved the appointment of Dr. Mary Ann Rodriguez as the Interim Health Authority with two alternate Health Authorities.

October 3, 2019 - Council previously approved the appointment of Dr. Mark Escott as the Interim Health Authority with one alternate Health Authority.

For More Information:

Stephanie Hayden, Director, 512-972-5010; Kymberley Maddox, Assistant Director; Lucy Thompson, Agenda Coordinator, 512-972-5045.

Additional Backup Information:

This RCA requests Council's approval to extend the appointment of Dr. Mark Escott as Interim Health Authority through September 30, 2020. The recruitment for a permanent Health Authority is taking longer than anticipated. Staff is currently working with a recruiter and expects to have the position filled this fall.

Dr. Escott has been serving in this role since October 3, 2019 and extending his term will ensure consistency within Austin Public Health (APH) while the recruitment process is finalized.

Dr. Escott has designated Dr. Jason R. Pickett as Back-Up Alternate Health Authority.

Under state law (Health and Safety Code Section 121.029), the Health Authority may delegate any power or duty imposed on the health authority to a properly qualified physician to act while the health authority is absent or incapacitated. The physician designated by the health authority must:

- Meet license and residence requirements;
- Be appointed as a designee in the same manner as the Health Authority; and
- File the Oath of Office, executed by a duly appointed Notary Public, with the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The delegation is effective during the term of the Health Authority making the delegation. The Health Authority is responsible for the acts of the physician to whom the powers have been delegated, and the entity that appoints the Health Authority must have procedures in place to prevent duplication of authority and provide notice to the Austin Public Health Director when authority is transferred. APH has had a “Delegation of Back-Up Health Authority” in effect since July 1, 2000.

Dr. Mark Escott received his medical degree from Flinders University School of Medicine in South Australia and a Master’s in Public Health from the University of Texas at Houston School of Public Health. He has a license to practice in the State of Texas and is subspecialty certified in EMS with the American Board of Emergency Medicine. His medical education includes an internship at the University of Adelaide-Modbury Public Hospital and a residency in emergency medicine at Pennsylvania State University-MS Hershey Medical Center, including serving as Chief Resident in Emergency Medicine. Dr. Escott currently serves as EMS System Medical Director for the City and Travis County. He previously served as Director of the Division of EMS and Disaster Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine, and as Health Authority for the Montgomery County Public Health District. Dr. Escott meets all of the requirements of the Health and Safety Code to be designated as a Health Authority.

Alternate Health Authority

Dr. Jason R. Pickett received his medical degree from Eastern Virginia Medical School and has been in practice between 11-20 years. He serves as the EMS System Deputy Medical Director for the City and Travis County, and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Wright State University. Dr. Pickett is the Tactical EMS Co-Chair for the Special Operations Medicine Scientific Assembly and is a member of the Guidelines and Practice Committee for the National Association of EMS Physicians. He is also a member of the Guidelines Committee for the Committee on Tactical Emergency Casualty Care. Dr. Pickett is Board Certified in Emergency Medicine and Subspecialty Board Certified in Emergency Medical Services. Prior to his work with the City, Dr. Pickett served as the Director of the Center for Prehospital and Operational Medicine at Wright State University. He has served as Medical Director for several fire departments and police SWAT teams. He is currently a Lieutenant Colonel in the West Virginia Army National Guard as a Battalion Surgeon in a special operations unit. Dr. Pickett’s current responsibilities include education, clinical guidelines, community health, rescue, and tactical medicine.

Dr. Pickett meets all of the requirements of the Health and Safety Code to be designated as an Alternate Health Authority.

CURRICULUM VITAE

The current curriculum vitae is attached for the Health Authority and Alternate Health Authority, as well as a copy of the required appointing documents required by the Texas State Department of Health Services.

PERFORMANCE

Health and Environment.