Meeting Notes – Aug. 31, 2021

Chris Busby was responsible for our program on Aug. 31, 2021 and he invited as his guest Dr. Hollie C. Cost from the Office of Public Service through the Outreach Office at Auburn University. Along with Dr. Cost was Dr. Chippewa M. Thomas also from Auburn University and LaFayette Fire Chief Doody.

Dr. Cost spoke to the club about a rural health care project that the University Outreach Program is establishing in conjunction with the city. They will be setting up a telehealth station in the vacant building next to the DHR building (where Dr. Vester's old office used to be). The goals of this project are to: improve health care access, health and wellness education for the community and community engagement. LaFayette is AU's first partner in this project.

In this free-standing telehealth station, a person enters the station and with the touch of one Start button, will have access to health care. In the station one will be able to have their height, weight, body temperature, respiration rate, blood oxygen saturation level and body mass index (BMI) measured. A medical professional will appear on the screen and further information can be given and with the high quality video capability, the medical professional can "see" the patient. There will be a coordinator on site to help as needed and AU students will also be in the building.

This is a two year pilot project funded entirely through grants. There will be no cost to the city. It is expected that some $700,000.00 will be expended over the two year period. Currently, many people use the local fire station as their "clinic". Chief Doody and his staff will be sharing their clinic data with AU Outreach to help determine the hours the telehealth station should be available so that it meets our community's needs. The telehealth station will be sanitized using UV lighting between each visit, which will take about three minutes. The station will be wheelchair accessible and is large enough for you to bring another person with you inside the station. Janitorial services will also be provided. The hope is to have the telehealth station up and running by January of 2022.

Diane Sherriff