

# HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

## Chair

Ms. Heather Parker

## Vice Chair

Mr. Fleming El-Amin



## Board Members

Mr. John Blalock  
Ms. Carmelita Coleman  
Mr. John Davenport, Jr., PE  
Dr. James Doub, OD  
Dr. Palmer Edwards, MD  
Dr. Brooke Griffith  
Dr. Calvert Jeffers, Jr., DVM  
Dr. Charles Massler, DDS  
Dr. Linda L. Petrou, PhD  
Dr. Sharon Pettiford, DNP, RN, CNRN  
Ms. Sharon A. Rimm, LCSW  
Dr. Peter Robie, MD  
Mr. J. Phil Seats, R.Ph., MBA  
Dr. Ricky Sides, DC  
Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt, Commissioner

## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES HYBRID BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 5, 2024

### Board Members Present

Mr. John Blalock, Ms. Carmelita Coleman, Dr. James Doub, Dr. Palmer Edwards, Dr. Brooke Griffith, Dr. Charles Massler, Ms. Heather Parker, Dr. Linda Petrou, Dr. Sharon Pettiford, Ms. Sharon Rimm, Dr. Peter Robie, Mr. J. Phil Seats, Dr. Ricky Sides, Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt

### Board Members Present via Hybrid

Mr. Fleming El-Amin, Dr. Calvert Jeffers

### Board Members Absent

Mr. John Davenport

### Staff Present

Ms. Shontell Robinson, Mr. Joshua Swift, Ms. Lorrie Christie, Ms. Tanya Donnell, Ms. Christa Smith, Ms. Nihya Payne, Dr. LaShonda Ouk

### Guests Present

None.

### Call to Order

On Wednesday, June 5, 2024, the Forsyth County Health and Human Services Board held its regularly scheduled bi-monthly hybrid meeting. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Ms. Heather Parker at 5:30 p.m.

### Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed by all.

### Consideration of Board Minutes for June 5, 2024

The minutes from the April 3, 2024 Health and Human Services Bi-monthly Hybrid Board Meeting were reviewed. A discussion regarding revisions to the minutes was held.

Correction to the April 3, 2024 meeting Mr. John Blalock was not present and he submitted his update via a video recording. Also, the correct spelling of the EMS Assistant Medical Director's name was added as Dr. Sean Lewis. Ms. Parker requested a motion to approve the minutes with the changes. Dr. Petrou made a motion to approve the minutes and Dr. Doub seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried and the minutes were approved with the changes with 16 votes in favor.

### **Public Comment Period**

None.

### **Deputy County Manager's Comments – Ms. Shontell Robinson**

*(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)*

#### **Budget Updates:**

The county manager submitted the recommended budget to the county commissioners. There were several position requests with the bulk being for FNS (Food & Nutrition Services). The county manager recommended the following:

Social Services - \$327,530

- Program Integrity (Income Maintenance Caseworker (IMCW) III – 2 positions at zero County Dollars
- Hearing Officer (IMCW III) – 1 position -\$17,747 in County Dollars
- IMCW IIs (FNS Apps and Recerts) – 8 positions - \$274,291 in County dollars
- IMCW III (FNS Lead Worker – 1 position - \$35,492 in County Dollars

Public Health - \$116,814

- Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant -This position was strongly recommended by the Medical Director.

#### **Budget Schedule**

- A detailed budget presentation will be held on June 6 at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Center.
- Budget Workshops will be held on June 11 and June 12 at 9:00 a.m.
- A Public Hearing on the budget, where residents can give their comments, will be held at 6 p.m. on June 10 at the Forsyth County Government Center. Those wishing to give comments remotely should call 336-422-1200 at 5:45 p.m. on the day of the meeting. They will be placed on hold and recognized to speak in the order their calls were received.
- A special Meeting, where the Commissioners may possibly adopt the budget, will be held on June 13 at 2:00 p.m.

### **Director of Social Services Comments – Ms. Christa Smith**

*(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)*

## **Agency Wide Vacancy Rate**

In January 2023, we were at 18.6 %, in June of last year we were at 14.1% and January of 2024 we were at 12.5%

## **Laptop Deployment -Economic and Medicaid Services**

- A total of 200 staff will be deployed new laptops. The office flow has changed. Everyone is now seen on the first floor. The laptops will allow staff to be more mobile when assisting customers.

## **Adult Services**

### **Elder Abuse Task Force**

- This task force now has an ADA (assistant district attorney) assigned to it and the governor declared the week of May 26 “Awareness Advisory Week”.
- Operation Fan Heat Relief  
The governor also declared the week of May 26 “Awareness Advisory Week”. Fans will be given out to eligible Forsyth County residents through September 2024.
- There are three ways to apply:
  - i. Contact FCDSS by calling 336-703-3501, Complete the online form or Walk in to complete form

The team will also take to fans to some of the outreach events.

- “If Only” Program  
This program grants wishes to older residents that would not be eligible under other programs. The “If Only” marketing materials have been refreshed and they were highlighted in the Weekly magazine.
- May is Older Americans Month  
It is led by the Administration for Community Living. Forsyth County will host the Spring Fling at Brown and Douglas Active Adult Center. Age Friendly Forsyth collaborated with Adult Services staff to serve as panelist.
- June 15<sup>th</sup> World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)  
The campus will be decorated with purple, selfie photo submission contest, the Forsyth County Commissioners will read the proclamation and Piedmont Triad WEAAD Walk/Stroll/Roll will be held on 6/15 at Triad Park

## **Children’s Services**

### **Child Welfare Information System**

- DSS has been selected to be the first-round pilot
- Training of staff to begin in the fall 2024
- Implementation in January 2025 (Intake and CPS).
- In-Home Services and Foster Care in late 2025.

### **Foster Home Recruitment**

- New portal for prospective foster parents – will go live June 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Will add bus wraps.
- Signed a contract to attend Wake Forest University sports events.
- Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot, community event will air in movie theaters over the July 4 weekend.

### **Child Abuse Prevention Month Events**

- All of the events were well attended and well received.

### **Economic and Medicaid Services**

- Program Integrity have been working hard due to an increase in card skimming on North Carolina. The state put a process in place so victims can report and have benefits reissued to them.
- Celebrated approximately 260 eligibility specialists during the week of May 20-24.

### **Child Support**

#### **Vacancies**

- Vacancies: Two office assistants as of May 31, 2024.

#### **Collections**

- Collections: Collected over \$18.7 million as of April 2024 which is 82% of the goal for the fiscal year.
- Several agents recognized for outstanding lump sum payments, aiming to exceed the goal for this measure.
- Already exceeding goal for Paternity Establishment and cases under order.

#### **Outreach**

- Great Commission Community Church Community Day
- Rolling Hills Community Day
- Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods
- Rural Hall Shred and Med Community Health Fair
- Project Reentry at Forsyth County Prison

Ms. Sharon Rimm gave kudos to Ms. Smith for all of the hard work being put forth.

#### **Director of Public Health Comments – Mr. Joshua Swift**

*(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)*

## **Vacancy Rate**

Mr. Swift was excited to announce that the vacancy rate has been cut in half since January 2023 from 24% to below 10%.

## **Bird Flu**

Ms. Robinson sent a press release regarding this. Samples were collected by Wastewater SCAN which is a Stanford based organization. They test the water as it comes into the facility and are testing in a total of 200 locations across the country with three being in North Carolina (Winston-Salem, Kinston and Wilson). They collected water from February through April, monitored the water coming into the facility, stored it and decided to test it. After testing they saw some fragments of H5N1 which is Bird Flu. The state agrees that it is from animal products such as milk. There are no human cases in NC. The FDA (Food & Drug Administration) is making sure food and milk in stores is safe, the Department of Agriculture is making sure that farms and milk processing facilities stay safe.

## **Hepatitis A**

Monitoring in wastewater samples have shown an uptick across the state. The state continues to monitor Hepatitis A, COVID 19, Norovirus and several other concerns in the wastewater. There are very few confirmed cases. Mr. Swift shared a map that showed monitoring facilities across the United States, as well as, Hepatitis A wastewater testing facilities. Mr. Swift shared a Hepatitis A vaccination fact sheet that is used during outreach in the community. (see handouts included in packet for more information)

## **Personal Health Services**

Soon to launch new program (extension of CureMD) that will enable patients to do online check-in, update demographics, schedule appointments, and sign consents prior to their clinic appointments. CureMD is an electronic medical records data-base.

Personal Health Services has one nursing vacancy in Immunizations, all other areas are fully staffed.

The department celebrated Nurses Week with an appreciation event. Five nurses who worked in the Kate B. Reynolds Hospital participated on a panel of speakers. The theme was Past, Present and Future of Public Health Nursing.

## **Community Health Services**

### **Food lodging & Institutions**

Four new employees are in training and working towards state authorization.

### **On Site Wastewater**

Two new employees are in training and working towards state authorization.

## **WIC**

Due to budgets cuts, five positions have been frozen and two positions eliminated via a reduction in force. The participation rate has increased by 10% (847) since December 2023. The nutritionist position remains filled. The nurses have been going to the NICUs (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) multiple days during the week as well as Head Start programs.

## **Lab**

The lab director resigned, working hard to fill this position as well as a supervisor and a technician in this area.

## **School Health**

There are four vacancies in school health with two offers are pending.

Zero Exclusion events are held every fall. The next two will be held on September 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. If children are not up-to-date on vaccinations, within the first 30 school-days they are excluded. By this time, the parents have had a 6 months-notice.

## **Internal Health Services**

### **Dental Clinic/Preventive Dental Health**

The preventive Dental Health program celebrated 50 years of serving local children. In the last school year 12,389 children in all 44 local elementary schools, four charter schools and approximately 45 childcare centers have been served.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

An annual training and exercise planning workshop was conducted to identify and schedule exercise priorities for the next year and beyond. This Fall, the goal is to use the Flu Clinic for training exercises. This will most likely be a drive through exercise.

## **Preventive Health Services**

### **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**

There are now seven Healthy Corner stores in Clemmons, all are certified and another four to be certified throughout this area in the near future. Some of the store requirements are fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat and skim milk and the store has to be in a food desert which is determined by the state. The store has to accept SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), WIC (Woman, Infants, & Children Program) and be under 3,000 square feet.

### **Coalitions and Community Engagement**

Dr. Reina Rodriguez with the Hispanic Liaison of Forsyth County Program participated in the Love Out Loud panel at the Fifth Annual Community Transformation Luncheon.

### **POSSEE (Prevent Ongoing Spread of STIs Everywhere)**

This group is hosting several testing events including the HIV Walk in May and the Pride event in June.

### **CPR KITS**

The American Heart Association presented Public Health with 17 CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) Anytime kits which were donated by W.R. Vernon Produce.

## **Men's Health**

On Friday, June 14, Forsyth County Public Health will host free screenings and educational sessions for Men. The Forsyth County Commissioners will read a resolution to recognize Men's Health week. There will be several activities planned during that week.

Mr. Seats asked Mr. Swift if he had any updates on measles. Mr. Swift responded that in Forsyth County approximately 97% of the children in schools have been vaccinated against measles.

Dr. Robie shared that he read a statement from John Hopkins Hospital to say that the H5N1 Bird Flu is not transmitted person to person only animal to person transmittal. Mr. Swift responded, that is our impression and the concern is if transmission evolves from animal to animal; animal to human; human to human. The majority of concern is human to human and there is treatment for it and if this becomes a pandemic, there is enough muscle memory to be able to open a clinic. Since it is a flu, unlike COVID, it would be easier to treat.

### **Behavioral Health Services Comments – Ms. Denise Price** *(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)*

Ms. Price announced that she added several programmatic updates in the HHS Board Narrative which you may review at a later date.

### **Construction Updates**

Ms. Price was excited to share pictures of construction at the Highland Avenue Center. The picture in the middle is the living room of the facility-based crisis center, progress will continue.

Sturmer Place is the residential facility that will be available to youth in DSS custody awaiting transition to their needed level of care. Ms. Price shared that an issue with the permit is being addressed.

The auditorium located at Annex I; bids have been received that are lower than expected which will allow some alternates to be added, e.g., sound, lighting.

Ms. Robinson announced that construction for the Highland Avenue Park started this week as well.

Ms. Coleman asked what the primary use for the auditorium would be. Ms. Price responded that concrete usage plans are to be determined but there has been a lot of work around the integration of arts and health care which can easily be folded into space use. The space can also be used for community events.

### **Mobile Integrated - (MIH) Transition**

Effective July 1, 2024, MIH will administratively report to Behavioral Health Services. The first responders and they will continue to operate under EMS (Emergency Medical Services) System Plan and the medical direction of Dr. Stephen Powell. The three primary focuses of work include:

- Response to community-based behavioral health crises.

- Post overdose response including induction and maintenance of Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD).
- -Recidivistic callers to -911, relying on the 911 system to address their behavioral health needs.

### **EMS Overdose Calls Data and Trends**

- For the period April 1, 2024, to May 30, 2025:
  - There were 253 EMS responses –ages 1-85; 123 in April; 130 in the first 30 days of May.
  - There were 4 deaths, 1 in April and 3 in May; ages 35-60; all males.
  - Primary suspected substance in youth overdoses under the age of 15 were by gummies.
  - Primary suspected substances; other/unknown – 99 calls; alcohol 86 calls and prescription drug-22 calls.
  - Zip codes with highest number of calls; 27101-49, 27105-43, 27103-40, 27106-23, 27104-19 and 27127-17.

### **Graduates**

Stepping Up honored five graduates on May 30<sup>th</sup>. Also, the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) celebrated four graduates on May 15. The BHU is funded through Maintenance of Effort (MOE) dollars.

### **Mental Health Awareness**

The Forsyth County Board of Commissioners read a Resolution recognizing May as Mental Health Awareness Month.

### **Syringe Disposal Kiosks**

Twin Harm Reduction, our local certified Syringe Service Program (SSP), placed two kiosks in the community for the collection of used syringes. One kiosk is located near City with Dwellings and the other one is located at the Highland Avenue Center.

### **New Business**

#### **Fee Schedule -- Dr. LaShonda Ouk, Quality Assurance Manager**

*(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)*

Dr. Ouk reported that staff in the following areas of Public Health make up the Fee Schedule Committee: Dental, Environmental Health, Nursing, Lab, Finance, Quality Improvement and Assistant Health Directors. The fee schedule is made from accreditation benchmark 33.6.

Guidance also comes from the state consultants who assist on an annual basis. The fee schedule is comparable to Iredell, Mecklenburg and Guilford counties. The Medicaid Fee schedule is also used to help determine fees. Methodology varies with each area. The new fees will have no to impact on the patients.

Dr. Griffith asked why the fee for long acting birth control is higher than any of the other fees. Dr. Ouk responded that this fee hasn't been increased for several years and it is comparable to the aforementioned counties



Mr. Seats asked if these fees are for someone who may just walk in. Dr. Ouk responded that the way the fee schedule is set is based on the individual income and Public Health can't charge more than what Medicaid charges. The fee is set regardless of the payment an individual can provide.

Ms. Parker asked for a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 24-25 Public Health fee schedule as presented. Dr. Massler made a motion to approve the FY 24-25 fee schedule and Dr. Palmer seconded. With no further discussion, Ms. Parker asked for a vote. The motion carried and the FY 20-24 fee schedule was approved with 16 votes in favor.

### **FROST Committee Update -- Mr. John Blalock**

Mr. Blalock began by sharing updates related to the Opioid Settlement. The Settlement agreements from the most recent round of awards are currently being arranged and many initiatives should be active soon. The Forsyth County Behavioral Health department was one of the funding recipients and we are excited that a new prevention teammate will begin employment in July. This focus of this role will be on youth prevention education and our teammate will partner with schools, recreational centers, church groups, etc. Mr. Blalock also shared that Ms. Price and Ms. Vasquez had conversations recently with those who did not receive awards and offered feedback as to how their applications could be strengthened for future submissions.

Mr. Blalock then shared some additional thoughts on the Mobile Integrated Health strategic reorganization that Ms. Price had previously mentioned. Mr. Blalock stated that the new process for MIH inducing MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) in the field, as well as their support to bridge patients from community Emergency Departments until they are established with a community MAT provider, is going well. We expect the impact of this initiative to grow and look forward to establishing key metrics.

Mr. Blalock also updated the HHS board that the Forsyth County school board recently adopted a policy regarding Naloxone that will begin this coming school year. Key components of the policy include access to Naloxone supplies, which will be provided through the County, as well as training by Behavioral Health on how to identify an overdose and administer the medication. Of note, Wake Forest University also recently reached out to Behavioral Health to inquire about providing Naloxone in their dormitories.

Lastly, Mr. Blalock noted that the next Forsyth Regional Opioid and Substance Use Team (FROST) meeting will be held on July 17th at 11:30 a.m. and will be held virtually.

### **Legislative Committee Update -- Dr. Linda Petrou**

Dr. Petrou reported that there are several committee hearings taking place. They are only in session on Wednesdays. No other updates at this time.

### **Shadowing Opportunity- Moments of Reflection**

None at this time.

### **Closed Session Motion**

Ms. Whisenhunt asked the board to consider a motion to go into closed session to discuss the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or

conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee pursuant to the provisions of N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6). Several board members made a motion to go into closed session and Dr. Petrou seconded. Motion carried with 16 votes in favor.

During closed session, Deputy County Manager Shontell Robinson discussed her and the County Manager's recommendation to hire Denise Price as the Health and Human Services Director effective July 1, 2024. The board is required to provide their advice and consent.

Immediately following closed session, the board went back into open session to vote on the County Manager's recommendation to hire Denise Price as the Health and Human Services Director.

Mr. Seats made a motion to accept the recommendation to hire Ms. Denise Price as the Health and Human Services Director. Dr. Sides seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Massler made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

**Next Hybrid Meeting: August 7, 2024-5:30 p.m.**