

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

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Ms. Heather Parker

Vice Chair

Mr. Fleming El-Amin,

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Ms. Carmelita Coleman
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, RN
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 4, 2025

Board Members Present

Mr. John Blalock, Dr. James Doub, Dr. Palmer Edwards, Dr. Brooke Griffith, 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, Ms. Carmelita Coleman, Dr. Calvert Jeffers

Board Members Absent

Dr. Charles Massler

Staff Present

Ms. Kimberly Chase, Ms. Lorrie Christie, Ms. Tanya Donnell, Ms. Denise Price, Ms. Christa Smith, Mr. Joshua Swift, Ms. Annie Vasquez, Ms. Shantele Williams

Guest

None

Call to Order

On Wednesday, June 4, 2025, 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 April 2, 2024

The minutes from April 2, 2025 Health and Human Services Bi-monthly Hybrid Board Meeting were reviewed. Dr. Doub made a motion to approve the minutes and Dr. Petrou seconded the

motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried and the minutes were approved with 14 votes in favor.

Public Comment Period

None.

Educational Opportunity -- Ms. Annie Vasquez Substance Use Health Coordinator

Ms. Vasquez announced that Substance Abuse Health Educator, Ms. Hanna Phillips has joined the team. Her summer goal is to work with WSFCS and City Parks & Recreation. Ms. Vasquez announced the first class will be held at the Highland Avenue Center in July 2025. It will target teens from 12-18 years of age.

Ms. Phillips will work on Opioid awareness, how to use Narcan and how to recognize an overdose. Ms. Vasquez will talk to parents regarding ways to talk with their children about drugs. Currently working on a vaping curriculum and will have a thirteen-week Drug Education session in the Fall and Spring.

Ms. Vasquez's goal is to get as much funding as possible out into the community. In the near future, she would like to hold workshops for small community organizations who may have been denied funding.

Ms. Vasquez announced that Behavioral Health offers free lock boxes for medication, gun locks, medication disposal boxes, Narcan, Fentanyl test strips and Xylophone test strips.

Mr. Blalock announced that Ms. Vasquez was recognized by the NCACC (North Carolina Association of County Commissioners) for the Heroic Hands Award. This celebrates public service for recognizing an outstanding team member who exemplifies dedication and leadership through public service.

Deputy County Manager's Comments -- Ms. Denise Price

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

Behavioral Health Services Director Recruitment Update

Ms. Price announced that a Behavioral Health Director has been selected, more details to come.

Health & Human Services Activities

- Open house will be held at the Annex I auditorium, the Highland Avenue Park and the Highland Avenue Center on Friday, June 13, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Forsyth County HHS campus on Highland Avenue.

- Sturmer Park which is a six-bed residential treatment facility, where children can be placed, has been uplifted to make it more of a home environment. An open house will be planned in the near future.

Monitoring Potential Funding Shifts

There have been no changes at this point but will continue to monitor at the state and local level.

Director of Social Services Comments -- Ms. Christa Smith

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

Ms. Smith began by announcing the DSS vacancy is at 4.29%. Ms. Smith gave credit to the staff for working so hard on recruiting and retention.

Performance Evaluation Changes

Ms. Smith reported the following changes: The “Job Duties and Responsibilities” category will be eliminated. The Items will be combined into the “Job Knowledge and Skills” category. This information was shared with staff on 1/9/25 in a memo and refreshed with staff at the virtual huddle meeting in May to ensure awareness and readiness for upcoming change.

Adult Services

May is Older Americans Month

The division has been spotlighting activities across the county:

- African Dance Class - Senior Services Intergenerational Center
- Morning Blend (Coffee Talk) - Shepherd’s Center of Greater Winston Salem
- IMPROVment Movement Class - Senior Services Intergenerational Center
- Veterans Coffee Connections – Trellis Services
- Saturday Night Fellowship - Shepherd’s Center of Greater Winston Salem
- 2nd Annual Blooming Together Intergenerational Arts Festival - Senior Services Intergenerational Center
- Older Americans Month Spring Fling at Salem Lake - Brown & Douglas Active Adult Center

2025 Operation Fan Heat Relief (OFHR)

Those interested in receiving a fan can call (336) 703-3501, submit an online www.forsyth.cc application or visit the Department of Social Services and Adult Services Staff will assist them, including delivering a fan to their home if they lack transportation.

The eligibility criteria for OFHR applicants:

- Must live in Forsyth County
- Home situation where a heat-related threat to health & wellbeing exists
- Be age 60 years+ or be an adult with a disability

Family & Children's Services

April was Child Abuse Prevention Month

DSS worked with partner community agencies to create a schedule of awareness events including the following:

- April 3 – Child Abuse Prevention Kick-Off (Government Center)
- April 10 - Forsyth County Board of County Commissions Resolution
- April 21 – Proclamation Declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month
- April 29 - Ring Out Child Abuse events in multiple locations around Forsyth County (including DSS and Parenting Path)

May is National Foster Care Awareness Month

- May 1st being National Foster Care Day
- May 31st being National Foster Parents Appreciation Day.

DSS celebrated our licensed Foster Parents on May 6th at Tanglewood Park. DSS currently has 13 licensed foster families and 3 additional families pending license approval.

PATH-NC GO LIVE

On Monday, June 2nd, CPS & APS Intake and Assessments went live into a case management system called PATH-NC (Partnership and Technology Hub for North Carolina) The state was very supportive and overall it was a good experience.

Economic Services

May has been declared Eligibility Specialist Month for the entire month, the theme is “Boots on the Ground”. There are approximately 270 Eligibility Specialist who determine eligibility for people in our community. During this month, Eligibility Specialist were recognized at the Commissioner’s meeting with a resolution.

Medicaid Services

North Carolina Medicaid received approval from the Federal Government for continuous coverage for children, which results in longer coverage periods.

- Children up to 6 years = eligible until the end of month of 6th birthday
- Children 6-19 years = eligible for 24 months

Forsyth County currently has 25,063 residents receiving Medicaid Expansion services.

Medicaid Expansion enrollment by age group:

- 9496 ages 19-29, 37.9%
- 5969 ages 30-39, 23.8%
- 4281 ages 40-49, 17.1%
- 3575 ages 50-59, 14.3%
- 1742 ages 60-64, 7.0%

Enrollment by Gender

- Male 10,810 (43.1%) Female 14,253 (56.9%)

Ethnicity

- Not Hispanic 20,742 (82.8%)
- Hispanic 3,671 (14.6%)
- Unreported 650 (2.6%)

By Race

- White/Caucasian 13,214 (52.7%)
- Black/African American 10,965 (43.7%)
- Asian 359 (1.4%)
- Multi Race 221 (0.9%)
- Unreported 215 (0.9%)
- American Indian or Alaskan 54 (0.2%)
- Native Hawaiian or Other 35 (0.1%)

Medicaid in the Community

Medicaid staff has been preparing to go out into the community. They will be hosting the following: Community Health Fairs, Homeless Caucus, Probation Resource Fair, NAMI Walk and Career Expos.

Child Support Services

The Child Support Division collected approximately \$18.7 million this fiscal year and are on track to meet the ongoing support goal. They are exceeding the goal for Cases Under Order at 92.07%.

- Under the guidance of our County Attorneys, \$23,702 was collected in court during April 2025 which is an increase of approximately \$2,000 from last March!

Staff recognition for Large Collections

- Canary Wilson for collecting \$9,500 on one case
- Dereika Stone and Alicia Smith for each collecting \$2,500 on one case,
- Tanisha Butler-Johnson for collecting \$6,000 in court on one case and \$12,566 total from a Workers' Compensation Settlement.
- The State of NC Child Support Office recognized Heather Boles for collecting \$18,546.38 on one case as a result of a passport revocation.

As of April 14, 2025, Child Support is fully staffed.

Director of Public Health Comments

Mr. Joshua Swift

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

Mr. Swift announced that he received information from Dr. Robie regarding the RSV vaccine that is now available from CDC (Center of Disease Control)

A study was released showing approximately 20,000 new born infection mortalities were reduced by 8%. This information has been shared with the Forsyth County Infant Fatality Committee. The vaccine is very expensive and is not covered under the State of North Carolina.

Mr. Swift made the following comments:

Vacancy Rate

The current vacancy rate is 15%. Out of the 42 vacancies, 27 positions are frozen due to budget cuts. Preparing to fill those positions as of July 1, 2025.

WSFCS Career Center Nursing Students (Winston Salem Forsyth County Schools)

Forty-five students came to visit during the last week of their classes to be introduced to Public Health.

Measles Preparation

The team has been meeting on a weekly basis for the last two months in order to monitor measles cases. Also, preparing for testing, contact tracing, staffing a call center and ordering supplies. There are over 1000 cases in the United States. Communications to both hospital systems and private partners has been shared. Measles can spread in approximately 72 hours so the team is preparing to move quickly. The Preparedness Coordinator has scheduled Tabletop Exercises for 10 counties in this region.

Monitor Federal and State funding

Mr. Swift reported that there have been no reductions at this time. He reported that ASTHO (Association of State and Territorial Health Officials) released a budget summary and he is also in constant communications with the state.

Personal Health Services

New Clinic Nurse Program Manager

Ms. Kelly Flournoy is experienced in Public Health coming from Guilford County Public Health.

Immunization and Communicable Disease

The team is fully staffed.

TB Team (Tuberculosis)

Two new nurses joined the team and in the process of hiring a provider. The Forsyth County Commissioners have supported this process for eleven months. Since termination of COVID funds, in late March, Mr. Swift was able to use alternate funding to provide TB support and training staff for the MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella) clinics. This information has been shared through several media outlets.

Community Health Services

WIC (Women, Infant & Children)

The average caseload continues to be approximately 10,000.

School Health

Continuing to fill positions, made seven offers to nursing candidates for next academic year. In the spring of 2025, 152 student vaccinations were provided in preparation for the next academic year.

Environmental Health

On-site Wastewater has two new authorized staff members. Ms. Jamie Christie joined the team after completing her internship here.

Pool Inspections

Approximately 400 pools have been inspected.

Dream Asia Food Festival

The team completed inspections for 52 vendors within 12 hours.

Lab

The interface with clinic Electronic Medical Record (EMR) goes live this week.

Internal Health Services

Dental

Summer outreach to Boys & Girls Club and childcare centers has begun. The contracted dentist continues to work with Public Health which allows more clients to be served.

Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Swift and his team completed the CDC (Center for Disease Control) operational readiness review assessment. Several scenarios were discussed i.e. cyber-attacks, bioterrorism, weather events etc.

Finance Office

Mr. Swift reported that the Request for Proposals (RFPs) for the Electronic Medical Records, Lab, and Medical Director are being reviewed.

Preventive Health Services

Health Promotion

Healthy Forsyth kicked off a “Walk for Me Forsyth” in the Boston Thurmond area of Winston Salem.

POSSE (Prevent Ongoing Spread of Sexually Transmitted Infections Everywhere)

The Mobile unit has been renovated with funds from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. (NC DHHS)

Annual Professional Development

The team along with the human resources department, conducted an annual professional development day with team members.

Dr. Robie commented, some county health departments are using wastewater viral surveillance to analyze wastewater viral particles quality and it has become a good projector if it is going to be in your community. Mr. Swift responded that this has been used in the State of North Carolina by the City of Winston-Salem by using a sewage shed in approx. 30 places in the State; however, the specific areas are not identified.

Interim Director of Behavioral Health Services Comments

Ms. Ronda Tatum

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

Substance Use & Prevention Services

Presented by Ms. Annie Vasquez, Substance Use Services Coordinator *(see Educational Opportunity, page 2)*

Ms. Tatum reported that the International Harm Reduction Day which was held on May 7th at Northside Shopping Center was a success and shared that Ms. Vasquez did an excellent job. She reported that it was well attended and well received. Also, working with several agencies on installing wall units or distributing Narcan and there are five upcoming Narcan trainings.

Peer Support Services

Monthly Homeless Caucus Gatherings

Ms. Tatum reported that there were two Caucus Gatherings held at the Forsyth County Central Library. The first one was held on April 14, 2025. Mr. Andy Hagler, Director of the Mental Health Association of Forsyth, presented on how to access Mental Health services in the community. The second one was held on May 14, 2025. Ms. Lorraine Childs, a Forsyth County Social Services Eligibility Specialist presented on how to access Medicaid Services.

57 Peer Contacts in April 2025

Jose Perez, Peer Support Specialist had 57 contacts in April. Sheltering and Housing were the main focus. He also receives referrals from Social Services. He is able to assist in making contact between the individual and the service providers. Referrals made in April: Housing/Shelter 24, Financial 13, Food 7, Employment 2, Behavioral/ Mental Health 7, Medical 2 and Computer Assistance 2.

Stepping Up

In April there were 17 male and 7 female participants. There were 12 Mental Health Court participants. Three participants graduated the program in May 2025. Ms. Tatum shared that Keisha Springs, Sr. Social Worker does an excellent job with this program.

Pharmacy

The pharmacy moved into the new location, the Highland Avenue Center, 650 N. Highland Avenue, WS, NC 27101. Ms. Tatum commended the team for working so hard to make a smooth transition for all.

Prescriptions Filled

The requests for prescriptions to be filled is increasing as it is more convenient for customers since the pharmacy is in the same building; 1,159 prescriptions were filled in April.

Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH)

Overdoses increased from 32 in March 2025 to 51 in April 2025.

EMS Overdose Responses March & April 2025

There were 307 overdose responses for March and April and two deaths. The primary suspected source is alcohol which is also a secondary suspected source.

Behavioral Health Services

MIH (Mobile Integrated Health) Program

The MIH program is still in the reimagine stage. There are 11 vacancies (1 Social Worker, 7 Paramedic and 3 Peer Support Specialists). A contingent offer has been made for 1 MIH Paramedic. The Social Worker and the Peer Support Specialist positions have been advertised. The vision is to have 24/7 coverage.

New Business

Consideration for Approval

Childcare Priority for Waitlist -- Ms. Kimberly Chase

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

Ms. Chase reported the following: When funding is low, a waitlist is created. At that time a, a policy is required to be submitted to the state for approval. Once the state approves, the Health & Human Services Board has to vote to approve or disapprove. The policy will remain in place for five years. A new requirement is a waitlist survey that has to be conducted twice each year. Notices will be sent to families; if the family does not respond, they will be removed from the waitlist.

Ms. Parker asked for a motion to approve the Subsidized Childcare Assistance Waiting List Local Policy. Dr. Robie made a motion to approve and Mr. Seats seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried and the policy was approved with 14 votes in favor.

Energy Outreach Plan -- Ms. Kimberly Chase

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

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally funded block grant. There are three programs under this umbrella; CAP (Crisis Intervention Program), LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program and Weatherization). This group also provides education to staff in Food & Nutrition and Adult Aging Services. An Outreach Planning Committee has to be formed of DSS staff and community partners to collaborate and review criteria. The committee

also has to plan a way to invite individuals in to apply. The Forsyth County Communications team assists by sharing the information through various media outlets.

Ms. Parker asked for a motion to approve the Energy Outreach Plan. Dr. Robie made a motion to approve the Energy Programs Outreach Plan and Dr. Griffith seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried and the Outreach Plan was approved with 14 votes in favor.

HHS Board Operating Procedures (media) Denise Price
(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)

Ms. Price reported that there was one modification made to section 10 page 8.

Response to Public and Media Inquiries.

Because of potential contact with the media, other public officials and community representatives, and the confusion which could result from conflicting communication, either the Board Chair or the HHS Director shall act as the spokesperson for the HHS Board. Any inquiries regarding the HHS Board or HHS activities should be referred to the HHS Director.

Mr. Seats made a motion to approve the Health & Humans Services Board Operating procedures and Mr. Blalock seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried and the modification to the Health and Human Board Operating Procedures was approved with 14 votes in favor.

FROST Committee Update Mr. John Blalock

Mr. Blalock mentioned that a lot of his updates were already conveyed earlier by Annie Vasquez during her spotlight. Pertaining to the Opioid Settlement awards process, the Commissioners approved their FY26 funding recommendations and the team is currently in process of drafting the agreements so that work can begin in July. The team is also preparing the FY25 year-end report. Behavioral Health is planning to have the first quarterly meeting with award recipients in July, and the next FROST meeting will be held virtually on July 9, 2025.

Legislative Committee Update Dr. Linda Petrou

May have smaller budgets or use the current budget in the next fiscal year. The discussion is between the House and the Senate at this time.

Shadowing Opportunity- Moments of Reflection

No update at this time.

Ms. Parker asked for a motion to adjourn. Dr Petrou made a motion to adjourn and Dr. Palmer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

DP/tmd

Next Hybrid Meeting: August 6, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.