

**BRUNSWICK COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
November 28, 2022 6:30 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER/SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS: The regular monthly meeting of the Brunswick County Health and Human Services Advisory Board was called to order by Dr. Allen Williams at 6:31 p.m. in the Health Services Board Room (Building A).

A. PUBLIC COMMENT: Dr. Williams asked for public comments. There were none.

B. SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Dr. Williams asked if there were any special presentations. There were none.

II. REGULARLY OCCURRING ITEMS:

A. ATTENDANCE:

1. The following members were present:

Mr. Marty Cooke
Dr. Justin Asbury
Dr. Jerry Smith
Mr. Michael Norton
Ms. Cindy Carver
Dr. Allen Williams
Mr. Gene Ward
Ms. Lisa Narron
Mr. Hubert Reaves

2. Members absent:

Dr. Flint King, Chairman

3. Staff members present:

David Stanley, Deputy County Manager – Health & Human Services
Anita Hartsell, Veteran Services Director
Danny Thornton, Environmental Health Director
Cherie Browning, Director of Nursing
Cathy Lytch, Social Services Director
Marjorie Rayl, Quality Assurance Specialist

4. Guests present: None

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes for the monthly meeting held on **October 24, 2022** were reviewed. Dr. Williams asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none. **Mr. Cooke moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Carver seconded the motion. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous. (Closed)**

C. **AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS:** Dr. Williams asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There were none. **Ms. Carver moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Reaves seconded the motion. The vote to approve the agenda was unanimous. (Closed)**

D. **STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **VETERANS SERVICES:** Mrs. Hartsell reported the Veterans Benefits Live, VA in My Town event that took place in Wilmington just over a week ago was a huge success. There were a total of 563 veterans who attended the event, some who came as far away as California, Texas, and Montana. The Winston Salem VA Regional Office stated that at least 17 rating decisions were completed for claims requiring expedited action, and \$267,991 in retroactive benefits were paid out during the event. Retroactive benefits will continue to be generated over the coming days thanks to rating and dependency adjustments set in-motion at the event. **(Info)**
2. **CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION TEAMS:** Ms. Browning reported the Child Fatality Prevention Team did not meet in December. The next meeting will be February 14, 2023. **(Info)**
3. **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:** Mr. Thornton reported the Wastewater Protection Program staff is still working a backlog with some parts of the county being 10-12 weeks out. The three recently hired on-site staff have completed their CIT training and are now each completing 20 mock inspections, making great headway. Mr. Thornton will be asking the State in upcoming months to come back to authorize staff. There were 76 active files with 41 being greater than a 4-week turnaround (46% within 4 weeks). Staff completed 79 site evaluations, issued 75 improvement permits and 86 construction authorizations. They also inspected 33 new wells and sampled twelve. The Food & Lodging staff completed 176 inspections, 60 site visits, inspected 11 plans, and issued two permits. **(Info)**
4. **HEALTH SERVICES:** Mr. Stanley announced that Mr. Harrelson retired. Mr. Stanley will be Interim Health Director and give the Health Services report. WIC still has flexibility with programs and remains under the Federal Public Health Waiver. Ninety days after the Federal waiver ends, operations will return to normal. Monthly participation has increased 6% from January to September. From the time flexibilities were put in place through today, Brunswick County's WIC program has experienced a 48% increase in participation, assisting 1100 more people each month. Mr. Stanley reported flu continues to circulate, as well as COVID. The State level is showing the highest peak of flu so far this season in the last couple of weeks with last week seeing a slight downward tick. Dr. Asbury reported seeing mostly the type A flu with only one or two type B. **(Info)**
5. **HHS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT:** In August, Mrs. Lytch provided an update on the State/County MOU that holds counties accountable for meeting state and/or federal measures. Staff is reviewed monthly for this and those who reach 100% receive a certificate and "jeans" pass to dress down. Mrs. Lytch is seeing other staff members being motivated by seeing the top performers being recognized. **(Info)**

6. **NC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Mrs. Lytch noted that, in 2017, a lawsuit was filed against NC and the NC DHHS by Disability Rights NC. Earlier this month Superior Court Judge R. Allen Baddour entered an injunction relief order in Samantha R., et al verses NC and NC DHHS. According to the order, the Innovations Waiver waiting list must be eliminated in 10 years. There are currently 16,000 people on the waiting list, and the Order requires these, and those who qualify for the waiting list over the next 10 years, to be provided with the services they have been waiting for. Mrs. Lytch added there are currently 12,000 people receiving services. The Order requires the State to be accountable for solving workforce issues and closing the service gap. The State must also divert or transition 3,000 people who want to leave or avoid institutional settings over the next eight years and cease new admissions after six years, except for respite or short-term stabilization. This presents a number of challenges as the Innovations Waiver provides additional services to help people remain in their home and allows wrap-around services. **(Info)**
7. **PUBLIC HOUSING SERVICES:** Mrs. Lytch announced that the Commissioners approved Homelessness/At Risk of Homelessness as a local preference. She added that she was notified that staff, the following day, was able to assist a mother and her children that were living in a car because of this preference being approved. **(Info)**
8. **SOCIAL SERVICES:** Mrs. Lytch gave an energy portal update noting, at the end of December, NC DHHS will begin sending automatic energy payments to vendors for the CIP, LIEAP, and Water programs. Mrs. Lytch announced LIEAP begins December 1st for those who are 60 years and older or receiving services for adults. NC DHHS will be issuing automatic payments for the priority group and for those who received a LIEAP payment in the last fiscal year and are currently receiving Food & Nutrition Services (FNS). Mrs. Lytch is working with Meagan Kascsak, PIO on a press release. Staff is also setting up a phone bank to assist with calls. Contract staff has begun their training. Mrs. Lytch noted that the Federal Market Place Open Enrollment is ending on January 15th. All applications for individuals who are denied are forwarded to DSS to determine if individuals or families are eligible for Medicaid. As of last Wednesday, Brunswick County has received an additional 290 applications in November, with additional upcoming months to receive more. CMS has committed to providing states with at least a 60-day notice before the end of the Medicaid waiver. Mrs. Lytch noted in 2022 NC has the opportunity to expand Medicaid under a Federal program that will fund 90% of the cost under the Affordable Care Act. This would help with hospitals for those to go to the emergency department because they have no insurance. Mr. Cooke noted this looks good on the front end but, long term, the state has to cover it. Ms. Carver said that is really tough to get care for those without insurance for surgeries, etc. Residents must apply for financial assistance and hope for approval. Mrs. Lytch added that North Carolina is one of 12 states who have not yet offered Medicaid Coverage to people who earn up to 138% of the Federal poverty level. That is 600,000 North Carolinians who currently are neither eligible for Medicaid nor can afford commercial insurance or get it through their employer. **(Info)**
9. **HHS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:** Mr. Stanley reported 13 different types of open positions are listed on the county website. **(Info)**

III. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **COVID-19 UPDATE AND PLANNING STATUS:** Mr. Stanley noted that transmission is low in our area according to the CDC map. Brunswick County has remained low for the last few meetings, as has most of the state. The BA.5 variant is the most prominent with BQ.1.1, BQ.1, and BA.4.6 following. Overall, Mr. Stanley stated cases are nowhere near what they were last December through January. Staff is still offering vaccines. **(Open)**
- B. **EBOLA UPDATE:** Mr. Stanley reported Brunswick County has monitored ten travelers. These are people who have traveled to Uganda and, upon return, are routed to specific airports and screened prior to returning to their homes. States are given their information in order to continue to follow the traveler for a specified time. Brunswick County has no residents that are actively being followed now, and the United States currently has had no confirmed Ebola cases. **(Open)**
- C. **VACANT HHS ADVISORY BOARD POSITION:** Mr. Stanley announced that an application has been submitted to the Commissioners for review at their December 5th meeting. **(Open)**
- D. **COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT:** Mr. Stanley reported that the next focus group is December 9th. His staff will give a presentation to this Board at the January 2023 meeting. **(Open)**
- E. **LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACCREDITATION:** Mr. Stanley noted that staff has information submitted and continues to prepare for the Site Visit on February 2nd. They will be interviewing two commissioners on this date. **(Open)**

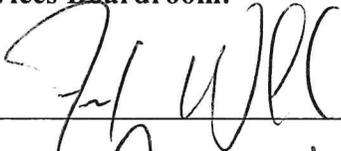
IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDING MEMO FROM NCDOJ:** Mr. Stanley noted another disbursement of settlement funds have been received. The Commissioners are waiting for projects to be presented as a grant request to use the funds. **(Info)**
- B. **HEALTH DIRECTOR SEARCH UPDATE:** Mr. Stanley reported that the county has been actively recruiting for a new Health Director for the last couple of weeks and has some candidates. Interviews will begin soon. **(Info)**
- C. **TELEWORK PILOT:** Mr. Stanley noted that HHS staffing workloads and required services are growing, necessitating available space be reviewed. As a result, telework options for staff are being considered. Any options will have a mandate to not negatively impact services delivery. **(Info)**

- V. **BOARD INPUTS:** Dr. Williams asked if there were any additional Board inputs. Mr. Norton spoke about how much he has enjoyed being a part of this Board for many years. He announced that this would be his last meeting, as he has decided to move on. Mr. Stanley noted that Mr. Norton has helped in many efforts from a customer service aspect, working towards improving service delivery and will be greatly missed. Mr. Cooke thanked him for his work, insight, wisdom, and objective perspective over the years. **(Info)**

VI: ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, **the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m. with a motion by Mr. Norton. Ms. Narron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

The next BCHHS Advisory Board meeting will be held on **January 23, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Health Services Boardroom.**


_____ Chairperson


_____ Secretary

Brunswick County Health and Human Services

Advisory Board Attendance Roster 2022-2023

NAME	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
King	X	X	X			*					*	
Asbury	X	X	X	X	X							
Carver	X		X	X	X							
Cooke	X	X	X	X	X							
Narron	X	X			X							
Norton	X		X	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Reaves	X	X	X		X							
Smith	X	X	X	X	X							
Ward	X			X	X							
Williams	X		X	X	X							
Optometrist	V	V	V	V	V							

A = Month Appointed/Installed

C = Conflict with CC's Meeting

O = Off Board

X = In Attendance

V = Vacancy

AA = Approved Absence

Blank Space = Absent

Quorum equals six members present.

^ = Specially Called Meeting

*** = No Meeting**