

**BRUNSWICK COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
March 25, 2024 7:00 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 7:01 p.m. in the Odell Williamson Auditorium.
- A. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Dr. Williams asked for public comments. There were none.
- B. SPECIAL PRESENTATION:** Dr. Williams asked if there were any special presentations. Mr. Stanley was honored to announce that Ms. Cathy Lytch is now the Health & Human Services Executive Director. Mr. Stanley looks forward to her making Health & Human Services the best in the state. Ms. Lytch is thankful for the opportunity and trust in her.
- II. REGULARLY OCCURRING ITEMS:**
- A. ATTENDANCE:**
1. The following members were present:
 - Dr. Allen Williams
 - Mr. Marty Cooke
 - Ms. Cindy Carver
 - Mr. Hubert Reaves
 - Dr. Justin Asbury
 - Mr. Gene Ward
 - Dr. Lauren Gallagher
 2. Members absent:
 - Ms. Lisa Narron
 - Mr. Chip Carroll
 - Dr. Travis Pickens
 3. Staff members present:
 - David Stanley, Deputy County Manager
 - Cathy Lytch, Health & Human Services Executive Director
 - Rich Ohmer, Deputy Social Services Director
 - Anita Hartsell, Veteran Services Director
 - David Howard, Health Services Director
 - Danny Thornton, Environmental Health Director
 - Cherie Browning, Director of Nursing
 - Lyle Johnston, EMS Director
 - Marjorie Rayl, Quality Assurance Specialist
 4. Guests present: None

- B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes for the monthly meeting held on **January 22, 2024** were reviewed. Dr. Williams asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none. **Mr. Ward moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Cooke seconded the motion. The vote to approve the minutes as presented was unanimous. (Closed)**
- C. AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS:** Dr. Williams asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There were none. **Mr. Reaves moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Ward seconded the motion. The vote to approve the agenda was unanimous. (Closed)**
- D. STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
- 1. VETERANS SERVICES:** Ms. Hartsell was approached by a member of the Cape Fear Blue Star Mothers of America Chapter about the Wreaths Across America Mobile Education Exhibit. The exhibit is to be displayed at the government center on the 12th. Ms. Hartsell noted that staff attended their state training conference last week where Secretary Gaskins with the N.C. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs spoke about the \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds that have been approved. The Secretary hopes this to be finalized sometime in May. **(Info)**
 - 2. CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION TEAMS:** Ms. Browning noted the team met on February 13th to review cases and no system problems were found. **(Info)**
 - 3. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:** Mr. Thornton thanked board members for showing up for the Golden A Awards ceremony. Mr. Thornton noted that the State is trying to adjust the daily activity codes but the new model creates challenges with aligning with manpower studies. The Water Protection Program continues to work on meeting the goal of completing applications within 4 weeks. The oldest file on hand is six weeks out. As of March 5th out of 67 active files, six are over the 4-week turnaround. Staff performed 59 site evaluations, issued 58 improvement permits, and 49 construction authorizations. Staff inspected 35 new private wells and sampled 17. Food & Lodging staff conducted 107 inspections, made 140 site visits, reviewed 19 plans for new establishments and issued 15 permits, including some new pools. Ten EH Specialists are now authorized in pools. As staff is hired they work toward the authorizations they were hired for and then cross-train for pools. **(Info)**
 - 4. HEALTH SERVICES:** Mr. Howard said that funding for WIC is experiencing some shortfalls including the USDA. Brunswick County's WIC program is in a better position than most having an increase in participants. BCHS is partnering with Novant Health to have their mobile mammogram unit here on the second and fourth Mondays. Mr. Howard discussed the Safe Sleep NC Pilot Initiative, a collaborative with UNC Chapel Hill. Brunswick County may focus on NICU babies which are known to be at greater risk in unsafe environments. **(Info)**
 - 5. HHS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT:** Mr. Howard reported BCHS offers many different types of vaccines for children through elderly. They also have State supply and private supply of many of these vaccines. Staff work with patients from other places and must obtain their history. Staff are working to streamline the process to improve efficiency. **(Info)**

6. **NC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Ms. Lytch reported that Senate Bill 625 was presented last fall, then tabled, and has now been brought back. There are a number of concerns within the bill as it relates to counties and Departments of Social Services. **(Info)**
7. **PUBLIC HOUSING SERVICES:** Ms. Lytch stated the waiting list has been open since March 11th and closes today. Staff have received close to 1,800 applications, either electronically, by mail, or in person. The new electronic system pulls a random selection of 250 applicants. This will be done this week and all applicants will be notified of the results. On January 30th, Public Housing partnered with Habitat for Humanity and held a meeting for people to learn how to apply for the Habitat program. Ms. Lytch was recently informed that one of Public Housing's voucher holders was selected for a house which will be ready in 15-18 months. **(Info)**
8. **SOCIAL SERVICES:** Mr. Ohmer reported the LIEAP program began on December 1, 2023 and will end on March 31, 2024. As of March 21st, 2,213 applications were received with 1,825 being approved. Overall enrollments due to Medicaid expansion continue to increase. As of March 5th there were 385,244 adults enrolled statewide in Medicaid with Brunswick County's portion being 5,170. The state launched a campaign last month to increase overall awareness of Medicaid expansion and eligibility requirements. Mr. Ohmer noted that March is Social Worker Appreciation Month and the theme this year is "Empowering Social Workers". April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and the theme this year is "Building a Hopeful Future, Together". April 5th has been designated Wear Blue Day. Staff will plant the Pinwheels for Prevention Garden in front of the walking trail. They are a national symbol of child abuse prevention and a visual reminder of the world we want all children to grow up in, happy, healthy, and prepared to succeed. **(Info)**
9. **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES:** Mr. Johnston gave an annual report for 2023 noting that they received the most calls ever, at 26,084, with the month of July being the busiest. Over the last seven years there has been a 42% increase in calls. In 2023, there were 14,693 people transported. Mr. Johnston noted that his department is implementing new reporting software this year. Additional staff and equipment have been requested in the upcoming budget. **(Info)**

III. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **VACANT HHS ADVISORY BOARD POSITIONS:** Ms. Lytch noted an engineer is still needed. Several people have expressed interest but none have applied. **(Open)**
- B. **NC DOT BRIDGE UPDATE:** Ms. Lytch reported the bridge repairs are ahead of schedule, hopefully opening up tomorrow and staying open until after the Azalea Festival. All repairs are expected to be finished by May 23rd. **(Closed)**

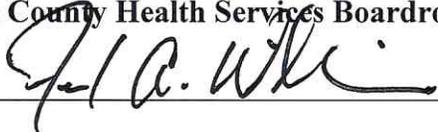
IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. GOLDEN A AWARDS STATISTICS:** Ms. Lytch appreciates the work Danny and his team put into the event. Out of 533 food establishments, 357 qualified for the Golden A Award, 67% of the establishments. There were 165 establishments that earned Platinum certificates for receiving a Golden A for five consecutive years. All 18 of our schools and all three senior sites received awards. **(Closed)**
- B. NEW AMBULANCES:** Ms. Lytch announced that the Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of seven new ambulances at Monday's meeting. Five of the seven units are replacements and two are for additional capacity. Mr. Johnston added that he has found a company that builds units 24/7 and able get them delivered much sooner in 12 to 16 months. **(Open)**

V. BOARD INPUTS: Dr. Williams asked if there were any additional Board inputs. There were none. **(Info)**

VI: ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, **the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m. with a motion by Mr. Ward. Mr. Cooke seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

The next BCHHS Advisory Board meeting will be held on **May 20, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. in the Brunswick County Health Services Boardroom.**


_____ Chairperson


_____ Secretary