



CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING

Monday, January 5th, 2026

224 Seminary Street

Kenansville, N.C. 28349

The Consolidated Human Services Board met at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 5th, 2026 in the Commissioners Room located at 224 Seminary Street, Kenansville, N.C.

Present: Commissioners: Chairman Dexter B. Edwards; Vice Chairman Elwood Garner; Jesse L. Dowe, III; Wayne Branch; and Justin Edwards.

Also Present: Lisa Hughes, Interim County Manager; Carrie Shields, Deputy County Manager; Tim Wilson, County Attorney; Chelsey Lanier, Finance Officer; Jasmine Savage, Administrative Specialist and Jaime W. Carr, Clerk to the Board.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Edwards.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation was given by Mayor A.J. Connors of Warsaw. Mayor Connors then led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Approval of the Meeting Agenda

Chairman Edwards asked if the members of the Board approved the proposed meeting agenda, and if any Board Member, County Manager, or Clerk to the Board wished to make any changes or additions to the agenda. No changes/additions made.

Motion was made by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner Branch, carried unanimously, to approve the meeting agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Commissioner Branch, seconded by Commissioner J. Edwards, carried unanimously, to approve the minutes of the December 1st, 2025 Consolidated Human Services Board meeting as presented.

Regular Meeting Agenda

Public Comments

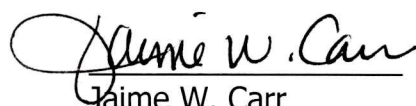
No Public Comments

End Public Comments

Annie Murrell, Social Services Director, provided an update on the Department of Social Services. She stated that, regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the agency met all required standards for the month of December. Ms. Murrell announced that applications for the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), which provides financial help for heating costs, opened to the public on January 2 and will remain available until March 31 or until all funds are exhausted. She further noted that the single-county audit was conducted in November, and the agency had no findings or questioned costs related to the Medicaid program or the finance department. Ms. Murrell emphasized the importance of staff retention, stating that maintaining at least 80% of Medicaid staff, or staff in any unit, is critical to ensuring continued program growth and success. Currently, several staff members have been with the agency for two to three years. For the last quarter, Ms. Murrell coordinated agency-wide training sessions, which included CPR certification, de-escalation techniques, and customer service training.

Tracy Simmons-Kornegay, Health Director, provided an update on the Health Department, including reports on epidemiology, budget, and staffing. She noted recent and upcoming programmatic assessments, including the BCCCP audit conducted on December 4th, which resulted in no findings. Additionally, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Wellness Section audit, covering family planning and maternal health, is scheduled for March. Regarding accreditation, the site visit is set for Wednesday, February 25th, and requires the presence of two commissioners. Ms. Simmons-Kornegay shared positive news for North Carolina: the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently approved the state's application for the Rural Health Transformation Program. In its first year, the program is expected to provide \$213 million to enhance health care delivery across 85 rural counties, supporting over 400 rural health facilities and bringing significant federal investment to rural communities. Duplin County is among the counties included in this initiative, which outlines six strategies to strengthen rural health systems in areas such as access, workforce, and infrastructure. She also reported on the annual Christmas Food Drive and Resource Event held on December 23rd at the Event Center, which served nearly 400 families. Special thanks were extended to the North Carolina Eastern Central Food Bank, House of Raeford, Duplin Christian Outreach Ministries, Poston Baptist Church, Godwin's of Rose Hill, the Event Center, and all others who contributed to the success of this event.

Motion was made by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner J. Edwards, carried unanimously, to adjourn until Monday, February 2nd, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. for a Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting at the Administrative Building, located at 224 Seminary Street in Kenansville, N.C.


Jaime W. Carr
Clerk to the Board