



CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, February 4th, 2026

224 Seminary Street

Kenansville, N.C. 28349

The Consolidated Human Services Board met at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 4th, 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; 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 Commissioner Branch. Commissioner Branch 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 Branch, seconded by Commissioner J. Edwards, carried unanimously, to approve the meeting agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Commissioner Branch, seconded by Commissioner Garner, carried unanimously, to approve the minutes of the January 5th, 2026 Consolidated Human Services Board meeting as presented.

Regular Meeting Agenda

Public Comments

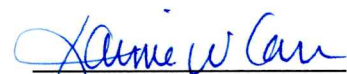
Deborah Morales from DSS Child Support Unit voiced concern over renewed discussions on privatizing child support, despite the significant efforts and proposals staff have made to improve service delivery and maintain strong performance.

End Public Comments

Annie Murrell, DSS Director, provided a departmental update to the Board. She reported upcoming changes resulting from the HR 1 bill that includes a reduction in reimbursement for Food and Nutrition Services activities from 50% to 25%, effective October 1, 2026. Additionally, beginning January 1, 2027, Medicaid clients will face new work requirements, and redeterminations for Medicaid expansion cases will occur every six months instead of annually, increasing staff workload. Ms. Murrell stated that DSS remains in compliance in all program requirements with its Memorandum of Understanding benchmarks. She also noted current staffing challenges, with 16 vacancies and 5 Child Support positions on hold.

Dr. Tracey Simmons-Kornegay, Health Director, provided an update on the Health Department, including reports on epidemiology and budget. She presented the Board with the 2025 Communicable Disease and 2025 Child Fatality Prevention Team annual reports. Regarding accreditation, Dr. Simmons-Kornegay reminded the Board that the site visit is scheduled for Wednesday, February 25th, 2026 and requires the presence of two commissioners. She also shared that the annual immunization assessment was completed on January 13th, 2026 with positive findings, and additional assessments are scheduled for February and March. The Health Department received additional funding: \$13,104 for WIC (bringing the total budget to over \$470,000) and \$32,500 for Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening (bringing the total to \$58,600) to screen 100 more women. Additionally, the Duplin County Health Department is now a preferred primary care provider for Aetna State Health Plan members with PPO plans. Dr. Simmons-Kornegay also informed the Board that the Health Advisory Council elected Dr. Lee Gurley as Chair and Dr. Margie Hunter as Vice Chair for 2026. Quarterly meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of the first and second month of each quarter at 6:30 p.m., with the next meeting on February 12th, 2026.

Motion was made by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner J. Edwards, carried unanimously, to adjourn until Monday, March 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