

Henderson County Board of Health

Minutes

Regular Meeting – March 17, 2025

Classroom of the Henderson County Department of Public Health
1200 Spartanburg Highway Hendersonville, NC 28792

I. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Health meeting was called to order by Dr. Maggie Hayes, Chairperson, at 6:08 p.m.

Members Present	Jay Egolf, County Commissioner Samantha Roberts, Veterinarian Jennifer Hensley, General Public Member Jeffrey Young, Professional Engineer Kathleen Baluha, Registered Nurse Kenesha Smith, Pharmacist – Vice Chairperson Maggie Hayes, Physician – Chairperson Alison Reid, Dentist Haley Perry, Optometrist
Members Not Present	John Bryant, General Public Member Scott Prechter, General Public Member
Staff Leadership Present	Dave Jenkins, Health Director Camden Stewart, Administrative Officer Dr. Diana Curran, Medical Director Stacy Nash, Community Health Director Crystal O’Dell, Director of Nursing

Quorum Present

II. Public Comments

A community member spoke about recent changes to access and availability of public health information online and encouraged the Health Department to share relevant information on its website as deemed appropriate.

III. Approval of the Meeting Agenda

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Dr. Maggie Hayes asked board members if they were prepared to approve the proposed agenda. **Motion:** Ms. Baluha made a motion for the agenda to be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Young. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Dr. Hayes requested approval of the consent agenda. **Motion:** Ms. Baluha made a motion for the consent agenda to be approved. The motion was seconded by Dr. Perry. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

V. Presentations and Reports

Strategic Plan Update

Health Director, Mr. David Jenkins, shared the 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan At-A-Glance report with the board. This report outlines each of the department's core functions, their associated goal and strategies as well as their status towards accomplishment. Of note, all strategic plan activities are now in progress or on track for completion by 2026. In the last year, several activities have moved from "no or minimal progress" to "progress made" including "Expanding utilization of current technology for enhanced patient/client communication, engagement and support", "Support development and completion of training room", and "Train additional staff to accomplish records retention and disposal activities and define plan to work on archives with existing staff".

Child Fatality Prevention Team Annual Report

Mr. Jenkins reviewed the 2024 Local Child Fatality Prevention Team (CFPT) report with the board. The CFPT met five times in 2024 and reviewed 7 child deaths from 2023. Firearm-related injuries and suicide were notable causes of death in 2023. Henderson County experienced no new sleep-related infant deaths in 2023, but in 2022 the state of North Carolina had 135 sleep-related infant deaths; of these 91 were related to co-sleeping and 44 due to other unsafe sleeping environments. Discussion was held around the definition and conditions of an "unsafe sleeping environment" and its differentiation from co-sleeping.

Henderson County is participating in a Safe Sleep NC pilot, leading teen suicide prevention activities and advocating for changes to roadway safety concerns where multiple car accidents have occurred with teen drivers in response to findings and recommendations of the CFPT.

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Health Director Report

Measles

As of March 13, 2025, a total of 301 confirmed* measles cases were reported by 15 jurisdictions: Alaska, California, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York City, New York State, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, and Washington.

There have been 3 outbreaks (defined as 3 or more related cases) reported in 2025, and 93% of cases (280 of 301) are outbreak-associated. For comparison, 16 outbreaks were reported during 2024 and 69% of cases (198 of 285) were outbreak-associated.

Measles outbreaks in the US typically originate from international travel exposures in unvaccinated or under-vaccinated US residents. Measles is highly contagious, and in communities with lower than 95% vaccine rates for two doses of MMR, it can be difficult to control the spread.

Unfortunately, Henderson County and other areas in Western North Carolina are at risk of a Measles outbreak if it comes to our communities. The vaccination rate in Henderson County in 2024 was 81% for 1 dose of MMR by age 12 months, and 74% for 2 doses of MMR for Kindergartners in the 2024-2025 school year.

The MMR vaccine is highly effective against Measles, 93% protective after one dose and 97% or more after the second.

Onsite Wastewater Legislation- House Bill 376

- Section 130A – 336 (a) (1) – It reads as if they are trying to allow permits to never expire. The logic that a site may never change is flawed.
- Section 130A – 337 (b). Reads as if environmental health would have no authority to go back to site after the system has been initially installed. Currently we revisit each new Improvement permit or construction authorization permit for a final walkover. This inspection allows us to confirm that the setbacks are met, that the tank is not deep, and to lock in the drainfield/tank to known points like the house. This is a potential problem as far as ensuring that the rules are met.
- Section 87-97 (d) – Reads if they are trying to privatize drinking water wells by authorizing well contractor to evaluate the site for a well but it cannot be the well installer for said property.

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Children and Family Resource Center (CFRC)

Children and Family Resource Center (CFRC) was honored with the 2025 Public Health Partners Award on Wednesday by the N.C. Association of Local Health Directors. The award recognizes CFRC's outstanding contributions to public health and its commitment to supporting children and families in Henderson County.

CFRC was nominated for the award by the Henderson County Department of Public Health. "For more than 25 years, CFRC has been a vital partner in our efforts to improve community health," said Community Health Director Stacy Nash. "Their dedication to the community and their willingness to step in during times of need have had an immeasurable impact on our work and on the lives of countless families in our region."

CFRC's extensive contributions to public health include:

- **Advocating for Teen Wellness:** CFRC played a crucial role in the establishment of the Henderson County Teen Wellness Center, benefitting countless teens in the community.
- **Providing Childbirth Education:** When the Health Department faced staffing shortages and was unable to offer childbirth education classes, CFRC stepped in to ensure expectant parents continued to receive essential education and support for positive birth outcomes.
- **Supporting Children with Special Healthcare Needs:** CFRC has been instrumental in Henderson County's Innovative Approaches initiative, creating inclusive spaces like the "Zen Den Sensory Calming Corner" and coordinating parent support groups.
- **Hurricane Helene Response:** CFRC provided frontline support to meet the basic needs of impacted families. CFRC also hired a bilingual case manager to provide trauma-informed care to families impacted by the storm.
- **Commitment to Trauma-Informed Practices and Community Collaboration:** CFRC has consistently demonstrated leadership in trauma-informed care, equity and public health education.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

Approval of FY25/26 Health Department Budget

Mr. Jenkins discussed both the Health and Environmental Health proposed FY25/26 budgets, presenting an overview of projected expenses and revenues in FY25 as compared to FY26.

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Both Health and Environmental Health are requesting very minimal changes to their budgets this fiscal year. One position reclassification is included in the Health budget. Four position reclassifications are included in the Environmental Health budget to provide more opportunities for advancement within the division. Discussion was held around the department's fund balance including Medicaid direct payments, pre-paid health plans, determining fees/cost of services and Medicaid managed care.

Dr. Maggie Hayes asked board members if they were prepared to approve the proposed FY25/26 Health Department budget. **Motion:** Dr. Smith made a motion for the proposed FY25/26 Health Department budget to be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baluha. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Support – HB197 – Local Communicable Disease Programs/Funds

Mr. Jenkins presented House Bill 197- Local Communicable Disease Programs/Funds to the board for their information and review. This bill would allocate a portion of \$12,500,000 in both FY25/26 and FY26/27 (approximately \$264,000) to Henderson County to 1) better prepare for emerging and re-emerging public health threats, and 2) to retain staff, hire additional disease staff, and to expand public health programs and services which are vital to maintaining communicable disease response. Currently, a majority of the department's communicable disease program is supported by local dollars. This appropriation would offset much of these program costs. With the board's approval, Mr. Jenkins will submit a letter of recommendation and support on the board's behalf to local legislators involved in voting on this bill. **Motion:** Dr. Hensley made a motion to support and further advocate for HB197 Local Communicable Disease Programs/Funds. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baluha. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Support – National Public Health Week April 7-13, 2025 Resolution

National Public Health Week will be recognized on April 7-13, 2025. The board was presented with a resolution documenting significant strides made by local and national public health efforts in the last 30 years. Mr. Jenkins requested the board support this resolution and proposed a presentation of the resolution at the Henderson County Board of Commissioners meeting in early April. **Motion:** Dr. Hayes made a motion to support the National Public Health Week Resolution. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baluha. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote.

VIII. Board Member Remarks

Mr. Young inquired about Hurricane Helene relief funding that the local health department and/or county has received and will be receiving. Mr. Jenkins reminded the board that the

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Health Department has received just over \$ 1million through AA122 Hurricane Helene Essential Functions Support to address the post-disaster needs of the local public health system during recovery. Commissioner Egolf spoke about funding related to clean up and debris management. Further discussion was held around alternative methods for debris pick up/management around the county.

IX. Adjournment

Motion: Dr. Smith made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Ms. Baluha. **Vote:** The motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14pm.

Respectfully submitted: B. David Jenkins
Secretary to the Board/Health Director

 04/21/25
Date

Approved by the Henderson County Board of Health at the April 21, 2025 meeting.