

Harnett County Board of Health
Minutes of Regular Meeting
March 5, 2026

The Harnett County Board of Health met in regular session on Thursday, March 5, 2026 in the Health Department Board Room, Harnett County Governmental Complex, 307 W. Cornelius Harnett Blvd., Lillington, North Carolina.

Members present: Dr. Brandon Washington, DDS, Chairman, Dr. Lori Langdon, M.D., Vice Chairwoman, Dr. Catherine Evans, DDS, Ms. Stacie Hogan, RPH, Dr. Amanda Langdon, DVM, Commissioner Barbara McKoy, Ms. Amy Brown, Ms. Betty Goodwin, Ms. Michelle Pleasant and Ainsley Johnson, Health Director.

Others present: Oliver Tolksdorf, Natasha Johnson, Gail Hobbs, Melissa McLamb and Belinda Rayner.

Chairman Washington called meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Announcements – Ms. Johnson stated no announcements for tonight’s meeting.

Consent Agenda – Minutes - Motion made by Dr. Lori Langdon, M.D. for the January 15, 2026, agenda and minutes to be approved and seconded by Ms. Stacie Hogan, RPH, Motion Carried.

Consider additions and deletions to the published agenda – None made.

Public Comment – Period of up to 30 minutes for informal comments allowing 3 minutes for each presentation – Chairman Washington opened the floor for informal comments by the public, allowing 3 minutes for each presentation up to 30 minutes. Seeing no one, Chairman Washington closed the informal comments.

FY 2026-2027 Budget Proposal – Ms. Johnson discussed the overall budget proposal and fee schedule for FY 2026-2027 budget. The Health Department and Aging make up forty-six programs with thirty-five in Health, eleven in Aging and Employee Clinic. Each department has its own individual column to show budgeted amounts per line item. For FY 2026-2027 we are proposing a total budget of \$8,402,390. This is a reduction of \$10,950 from FY 2025-2026 budget. We proposed some increases and decreases in certain items. One increase was in medical contracts to allow for contracting with an Advanced Practice Provider later this year when we have staff on leave. Training for staff has been increased to ensure adequate competency and service, and an increase of repairs and maintenance for our building due to the age of the building with increased needs including electronic door locks and signage. We have budgeted for a handheld ultrasound machine for the Prenatal and Family Planning clinics.

We have decreased uniforms and allocated amounts per employee as recommended by

our Finance Department. Medical supplies will be decreased by analyzing our spending patterns over the last 2 years. We are expected to receive some additional federal and state funding in our budget this year. We saw an increase in Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) funding, WIC and Child Fatality Prevention. We have seen a decrease in federal and state funding for TB, Title X Family Planning funding and WIC Peer Breastfeeding program funding. We have decreased our anticipated Medicaid earnings based on current trends over the last year, and the cost settlement based on current amounts received. Our total anticipated revenues is \$3,974,266, and we are asking the county for the local appropriations in the amount of \$4,4428,124. This is a decrease of \$32,201 from the year prior. Aging has decreased expenses from programs based on expected decreased revenues from the Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults (CAP/DA) program. CAP Revenues are decreased by \$130,952 so we have worked to evaluate our budget and needs over the last 2 years. The decrease is anticipated due to a decrease in referrals. We also anticipate decreased federal funding in the Seniors Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (MIPPA) and Providing Elders Additional Sustainance (PEAS) funding. With the decrease in expenditure and revenues, we are confident this proposed budget is sufficient to meet the needs of our recipients and community. We are asking for \$49 less county dollars this year. The Expansion Budget Request for Health is for three Environmental Health Specialist positions, two for Onsite Wastewater (OSWW) and one for Food & Lodging. The request is due to the increased demand in Environmental Health. Currently, OSWW operates with only three full-time EH Specialists and one supervisor. In 2024, Environmental Health issued more operational permits than any other county in the state; this is a clear indicator of both demand and our commitment to service. Our goal is to visit sites within two weeks of application submission and respond to the same day for final inspection requests. Unfortunately, due to inadequate staffing compared to growing demand, response times often exceed these targets. The Food, Lodging, and Institutions section is charged with inspecting restaurants, mobile food units, lunchrooms, elderly nutrition sites, hotels, camps, meat markets, residential care facilities, public pools, tattoo establishments, childcare centers, schools and conducting lead inspections. In 2024, there were 1,212 required inspections for these establishments (not including the lead program). Depending on the risk level of the establishment, some require visits up to four times per year. In addition, our staff perform foodborne outbreak investigations, plan reviews, construction visits, educational visits and work closely with our building and fire inspectors. We currently have four full-time employees and one supervisor dedicated to carrying out this work. In our rapidly growing county, staffing levels have not kept pace with the increasing demand for services. Staff turnover, the time required to properly train new employees and the rise in required inspections have all contributed to these delays. Increasing staffing by three positions in the Environmental Health department will substantially strengthen and improve service delivery. For the Employee Clinic's proposed budget, this budget has decreased slightly. The main decrease was in uniforms aligning with

county recommendations and medical supplies. We anticipate that we can operate sufficiently with a \$2,759 decrease in county funds.

Ms. Johnson requested that we be allowed to purchase influenza vaccine using one vendor for adults. Henry Schein continues to be the Health Department's vendor for flu vaccine, the Health Department pre-books before March with Henry Schein and we are guaranteed the influenza vaccine. Gail Hobbs announced the fee schedule including Clinical and Environmental Health fees have been reviewed during the annual budget process. The recommended fee increases were included in the Board of Health packet for review and approval.

Motion made by Dr. Catherine Evans, DDS, to adopt proposed budget FY 2026-2027 which includes the fee schedule as presented and seconded by Dr. Amanda Langdon, DVM, Motion Carried.

Health Director's Report and Program Reports – Ainsley Johnson

- **Care Management Update** – Ms. Johnson shared updates regarding the CMARC Care Management for At Risk Children (CMARC) and Care Management for High-Risk Pregnancies (CMHRP) programs. Local health departments have historically provided care management services to at-risk children (age 0-5) and high-risk pregnant women (age 14–44) through their CMARC and CMHRP programs. When Medicaid transitioned to managed care there was contract language that specified how care management would be provided in NC. On July 1, 2026, contract language requiring PHPs to contract with local health departments to deliver care management for these populations will expire. The PHPs will have discretion to determine how to meet their members' care management needs in alignment with contract requirements and the department's clinical coverage policies, while facilitating member access to services as close to the point of care as feasible. We have been actively advocating for the continued ability to provide care management through local health department. Having care managers who are local, familiar with county resources and already connected with patients and their caregivers is essential for achieving positive health outcomes. This month the NC Association of Health Plans and NC Association of Local Health Directors issued a request to the Division of Health Benefits to expand this transition deadline to allow careful planning and to limit any disruption in care. We are working with the Local Health Directors Association to advocate for keeping these care management programs within all local health departments, as well as collaborating on transition planning for after July 1, 2026. For now, these programs will remain in our budget until we receive further guidance. We remain hopeful that these services will continue here and in all local health departments.

- **Measles Update** – Ms. Johnson reported the Health Department has been monitoring the situation closely and taking steps to prepare for a response if needed. Information has been sent to all local healthcare providers outlining response procedures and communication expectations related to measles. In addition, team members with our in-house Epidemiology (EPI) team, Harnett County Emergency management, Harnett County School System and Cape Fear Valley Harnett Health leadership. We shared current information, outlined the processes we have in place in the Health Department and discussed how we will collaborate in response to any cases. Currently, we have signage at our front entrance to limit individuals with symptoms or potential exposures from entering the building. We are also triaging sick appointments by phone to reduce the risk of high-risk individuals exposing others. We are providing an Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) outreach clinic later this month and we are working with Harnett County schools to provide vaccine clinics in each school attendance area.
- **Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)** – Ms. Johnson announced Commwell Health, a FQHC located in six counties in southeastern NC has received a service area competition grant through Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to provide healthcare services in Harnett County. Services are expected to start in summer 2026. Commwell Health has met with the Health Department to review the services offered, the services provided here and plans for future collaboration. The location for the future site will be in Coats.

Clinical Report- Melissa McLamb

- Melissa McLamb reviewed the Activity Summary on page nine of the packet. Despite having one vacant Public Health Nurse II position and recent unexpected absences with staff, our numbers remain within the expected range. There was an increased number of Emergency Department visits for respiratory viruses in January 2026; however, the number of visits has been decreasing since that time, which aligns with the trends we are observing at the Health Department. In January 2026, several memos and alerts were sent to local providers. A memo from North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) regarding the ongoing Mpox outbreak, including the recent detection of recombinant Mpox in the United Kingdom. Per the memo, North Carolina had 61 Mpox cases reported in 2025, down from the 79 cases in 2024, however, 64% of the cases occurred on or after September 1, 2025, suggesting a more recent increase. A CDC's Health Alert Network (HAN) regarding New World

Screwworm was sent sharing information about recent New World Screwworm (NWS) animal cases in the Mexican state of Tamaulipas, which shares a border with Texas. No NWS infestations related to this outbreak have been identified in people or animals in the United States as of January 20, 2026.

The Health Department has noticed an increased number of animal bite reports. Information on NC General Statute 130A-196 that requires reporting of all animal bites to the Health Department was shared with local providers. The NCDHHS Measles Data Dashboard is updated every Tuesday and Friday. As of March 3, 2026, the dashboard showed 24 cases of measles reported in NC since December 2025. Majority of those cases were in ages 17 and younger and 67% of those cases had unknown vaccine status or were unvaccinated. The Health Department continues to make efforts to be prepared for any possible measles cases or exposures in Harnett County. The NC Immunization Program recently expanded access to MMR vaccines, allowing Health Departments to use 317 Vaccines for Adults (VFA) and Vaccines for Children (VFC) funded MMR vaccine for measles post-exposure prophylaxis, regardless of insurance status. The Health Department offers vaccines, including MMR during business hours by appointment or walk-in. The mobile unit will also be offering MMR vaccine at the YMCA in Cameron on March 12, 2026 and we are in the planning stages with Harnett County Schools to offer MMR vaccine at certain schools. The health Department EPI Response Team held a tabletop training exercise on March 2, 2026. The team walked through a multi-measles case scenario, and the exercise enabled us to assess the readiness of the team for Communicable Disease investigation.

- **Environmental Health** – Oliver Tolksdorf discussed various Onsite Wastewater (OSWW) permits that are handled within the section. Currently, OSWW is on track to issue more permits than previous year of 2025. Food & Lodging section have several pending projects that require reviewing. After reviews and construction are completed, they will then become regular inspections that will increase the Food & Lodging workload.
- **Aging & Case Management** – Melissa McLamb reported the Harnett County SHIIP Medicare Program continues to provide daily counseling to Medicare beneficiaries and their family members. Some individuals are newly enrolling in Medicare, while others currently in Medicare Advantage plans are reviewing their coverage options and considering changes. The Medicare Advantage open enrollment period ends on March 31, 2026. The Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine has partnered with the Family Caregiver Program to host a Family Caregiver Expo on Friday, April 10, 2026 from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm at

the School of Medicine's Levine Hall. This event is through the grant funding received by the School of Medicine. The Harnett County Family Caregiver Program will have a booth at the expo and will assist in promoting the event throughout the community. The 27th Annual Senior Health & Wellness Fair will take place on Thursday, May 14, 2026 from 10:00am to 2:00pm at the Dunn Community Center. Vendors will be on site to share information about programs and services available to seniors. NC Department of Insurance is co-sponsoring the event and providing funding for an onsite shred truck. A complimentary hot dog lunch will be provided through the generosity of community partners, including Carolina Packers, the Mid-Carolina Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and Black's Tire & Auto Service. The Harnett County SHIP/Medicare Program will also co-sponsor the 2026 Harnett County Med-Assist Event on Friday, June 5th, from 10:00am to 2:00pm in the Commons Area. This event will offer free over-the-counter medications to Harnett County residents. The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina will provide fresh food through a drive-through distribution for attendees. Vendors will host booths with information and incentives for participants.

- **Health Education/WIC/Community Events** – Belinda Rayner reported the Health Education Division hosted several events for American Heart Month initiatives in February.
 - The annual Go Red Lunch and Learn took place on Tuesday, February 10, 2026 in partnership with Cape Fear Valley Harnett Healthcare. Approximately 80 people attended the event. The event included a presentation, exhibits and a heart healthy lunch.
 - Go Red Sunday was held to raise awareness that heart disease is the number one health threat for women. The initiative partnered with local churches across the county to help share heart health information with their congregations. Participating churches received heart health information packets to distribute to members. Twelve churches throughout the county participated in this program.

The Health Education Division has the following upcoming events planned.

- The National Nutrition Month Series, "Fuel Your Body" will take place every Thursday in March from 12:00pm-1:00pm in the Commons Area. Each session will cover a different nutrition related topic.
- Spring into Fitness Virtual Challenge March 23, 2026 - April 19, 2026. This challenge is designed to encourage participants to be more physically active.

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- Bingocize Nutrition Workshop March 24, 2026 - May 28, 2026. Classes meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the Library. This 10-week program that combines the game of bingo with physical activity and other health topics for older adults.
- The annual Girls are Great & Teen Girls Conference will take place on Saturday, April 18, 2026 from 9:00am – 1:00pm at the Harnett Health Sciences Center.

Community Health Assessment update - The 2025 Community Health Assessment was submitted to The Division of Public Health on March 2, 2026. The document will be released to the public this month.

Closed Session – There was no need for closed session.

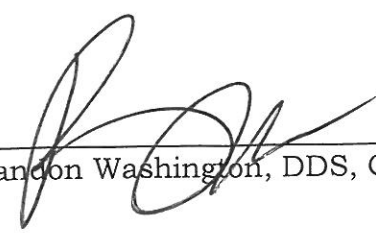
New Business –**Chairman Washington** opened the floor for New Business. Being none, Chairman Washington closed New Business.

Chairman Washington adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Ainsley Johnson
Health Director



Dr. Brandon Washington, DDS, Chairman