



February 5, 2025

**BURKE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

The Burke County Public Health Advisory Committee met in its regular session on Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Board Room located at 700 East Parker Road, Morganton, North Carolina. The Members present were:

PRESENT: Dr. Anthony Frank, Chairman
Dr. Laura Gratton
Dr. Nicholas Thomas
Dr. Kenneth Bonfield
Dr. Joel Welch
Commissioner Phil Smith
Jessi Stout
Gwen Stephens
Josett Taylor
Cristy Gupton

ABSENT: There were no absent Board Members

ALSO PRESENT: Danny Scalise, Public Health Director
Ashley Jarrett, Assistant Public Health Director
Bobby Smith, Director of Nursing
Amy Burnette, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Frank called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

Burke County Public Health's Mission, Vision, and Values declaration was read aloud by Chairman Frank.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Frank called for a motion to approve the Minutes from the December Advisory Board Meeting. Dr. Welch made the motion, and it stands approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chairman Frank called for a motion to approve the Agenda for this meeting. Dr. Thomas made the motion, and it stands approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Mr. Scalise introduced our newest Board Members, Josett Taylor, Cristy Gupton, and Kenneth Bonfield. Ms. Taylor is filling the Registered Nurse Seat. Ms. Gupton is filling the Citizen Representative Seat, and Dr. Bonfield is filling the Licensed Optometrist Seat. Current Committee Members continued the overviews by introducing themselves.

PRESENTATIONS:

Kierra Garrett, third year MPH student at UNC Gillings, presented slides of her Burke Street Medicine presentation. (Slides Attached)

In alignment with the Burke County Public Health Strategic Plan, the following reports were made:

1. Establish a Culture of Dignity, Love, and Respect (Ashley Jarrett)

- Ms. Jarrett reported that Burke United Christian Ministries (BUCM) is doing a Point in Time Count to identify Burke County's homeless and unsheltered citizens. This data is going to be given to HUD to support housing for unsheltered citizens.
- Ms. Jarrett also collects data from focus groups around the county and is hoping to collect data from 12 focus groups-or as many as possible.

2. Be an Employer of Choice (Danny Scalise)

- Mr. Scalise explained that one of the requirements for PHAB Accreditation is a Workforce Development Plan. BCPH Staff are in the process of developing this strategy. This plan discloses how we are going to be a better workforce for Burke County.
- The County has hired new HR Staff, April Reese. Ms. Reese is an HR Generalist who will be working primarily with Burke County Public Health and Burke County Department of Social Services staff. Her office is housed here in the Health Department, but some of her office hours will be at the Avery Building.
- Budget season will begin in March. The county's Budget Retreat will be held at the North Carolina School for Science and Math on March 6-7. Mr. Scalise stated that all budget requests and the final budget book is shared with the Advisory Board.

3. Mitigate Substance Use Disorder and Improve Mental Health Components (Danny Scalise)

- We still have the vacancy for the Director of Behavioral Health.
- Dr. Bonfield asked what could be done with the opioid settlement funds and grants. Monies from the grants are spent first because they do have an expiration date; settlement funds do not. Mr. Scalise recommended creating a system; stating that a public health department should not just be clinical only. Dr. Frank stated that deaths from opioids have declined due to Naloxone and the clean needle programs, but there is a long way to go to pull people out of their addiction. Ms. Gupton suggested money should be spent on items on the preventative side.

4. Be An Academic Health Department (Danny Scalise)

- BCPH is submitting a mental health collaborative with UNC Gillings
- We are in the process of putting together the next community forum to be held at the CoMMA. Dr. Ernie Fletcher will likely be a speaker/presenter.
- Two abstracts have been submitted with three more to follow to the American Public Health Association.
- Mr. Scalise and Ms. Jarrett have both been appointed as faculty members at UNC Gillings.

5. Be a Healthcare Treatment Provider of Choice (Bobby Smith)

- A Quality Improvement Team was formed and their kick-off meeting was held last week. Mr. Smith stated that we need a Quality Improvement Plan instead of primarily Quality Assurance that is more robust with in intention of helping the citizens of Burke County. This team will meet monthly.

6. Be a Good Leader in Environmental Health (Ashley Jarrett)

- Environmental Health is staffed now with six Registered Environmental Health Specialists and two Registered Environmental Health Interns.
- They upgraded their offices/space to accommodate. The department is working on scanning old records to clear up some space.
- The Environmental Health department has hired contract workers to complete a “blitz” to try to get caught up in On-Site Wastewater applications. This blitz contract ends February 14th.
- Currently, Food & Lodging are at 33% in inspection completions and On-Site Wastewater has backlogged 81 applications.
- Mr. Scalise stated that our Environmental Health Department should have 10.5 employees, so we are almost there.

DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS:

Mr. Scalise asked the Committee if they had any questions or comments on the meeting for the benefit of the new members. There were no questions or comments.

COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS:

Commissioner Smith thanked the Committee Members for their willingness to serve on the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Frank made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion. The Second Burke County Public Health Advisory Committee Meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

****Approval and Attestation on following page****



Approved on April 2, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Frank", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Anthony Frank, Chairman
Burke County Advisory Committee

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Scalise", written over a horizontal line.

Danny Scalise, MBA MPH, CPH, FACHE
Burke County Public Health Director