

The Cleveland County Consolidated Human Services Board met on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Board members present: Sara Karner, Robert Miller, Marty Hamrick, Christina Alexander, Henry Gilmore, Nancy Cline, Paula Canipe, Allison Gragg, Danny Blanton, Mary Accor, Suzanne Hensley, Maggie Hohne, Rick Dixon, Kale Meade, Deb Hardin

Staff present: Tiffany Hansen, DeShay Oliver, Leslie McSwain, Nathan McNeilly, Rebecca Johnson, Sherry Vess, Anne Short, Andrea Power

County Attorney present: Logan Roberts

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:

Chair Sara Karner called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and welcomed everyone.

CITIZEN RECOGNITION:

No citizens requested to appear before the Board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR THE FEBRUARY 10, 2026, CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING:

Chair Karner presented the proposed agenda for the February 10, 2026, Consolidated Human Services Board meeting for consideration of adoption.

Motion: A motion was made by Allison Gragg with a second by Marty Hamrick to adopt the agenda for February 10, 2026, Consolidated Human Services Board meeting as prepared. The motion carried unanimously.

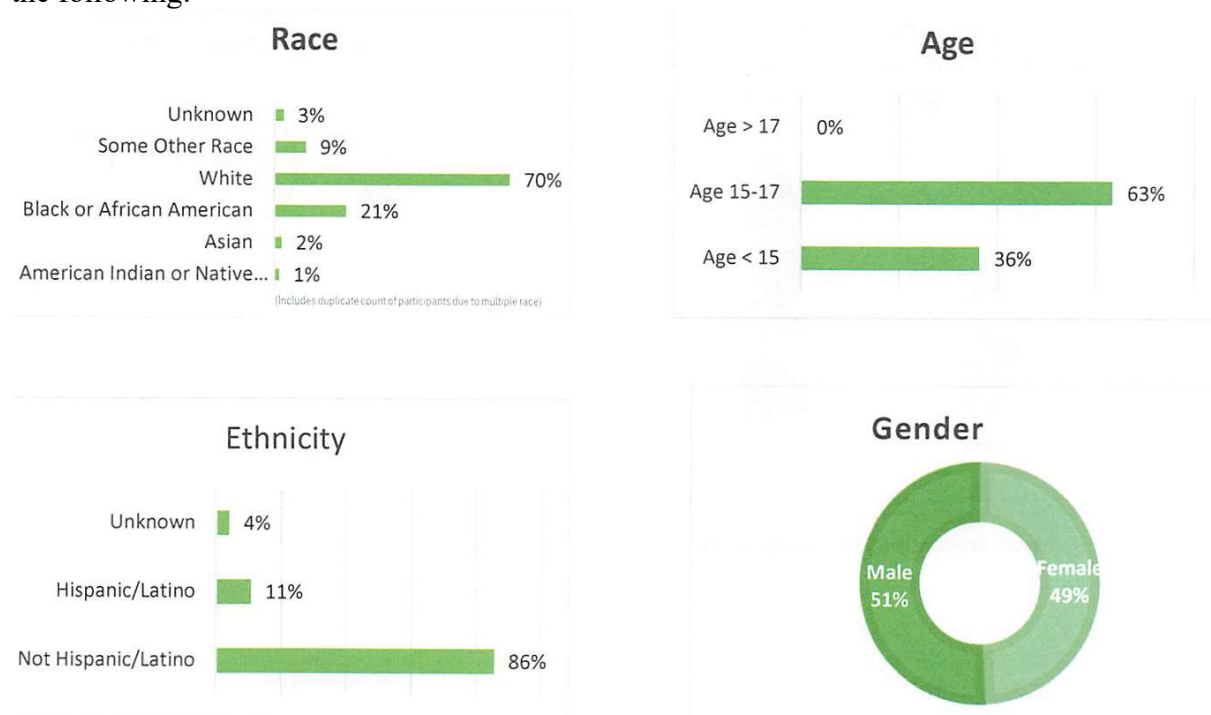
APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE JANUARY 13, 2026, CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING:

Chair Karner presented the January 13, 2026, Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting Minutes for consideration of approval.

Motion: A motion was made by Mary Accor with a second by Henry Gilmore to approve the January 13, 2026, Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting Minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PREVENTION COALITION GRANT EVALUATION DATA PRESENTATION:

Chair Karner introduced Anne Short with the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Presentation. Anne began by explaining that during the FY2025 year, sites were assessed on the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Survey. The data we are presenting are the results organized by Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative objectives. In FY2025, 442 young people submitted matched pre and post-tests. (Objective 1) 61 percent of youth demonstrated an increase in knowledge that supports the prevention of pregnancy and STI's, compared to 56 percent in FY2024. The number of youths who know where to access contraceptives increased by 24 percent. (Objective 2) 6 percent of youth demonstrated an increase in attitudes supporting abstinence. This number was calculated by the percentage of youth who agree they abstain because they do not want to get an STI decreased by 1%. percent of youth who abstain because they do not want to get pregnant or get their partner pregnant increased by 1%, and percent of youth who abstain because if they or their partner get pregnant, it would make their future plans harder to reach increased by 8%. (Objective 3) 37 percent of youth demonstrated an increase in attitudes supporting condom use. The percentage of youth who agree that condoms are good at preventing pregnancy increased by 15%, and the percentage of youth who agree that condoms are good at preventing STI's/HIV increased by 12%. In FY2025, Cleveland County Health Department served 564 young people in Cleveland County, 85% of whom attended at least 75% of the offered sessions. Participant demographics included the following:



Anne wrapped up the presentation by explaining that when we started working on teen pregnancy in 2008, our pregnancy rate for girls ages 15 through 19 was 82.4 per 1000 girls. Our teen pregnancy rate currently is 28.1 per 1000 girls. Henry asked how many years we have been teaching? Anne answered that we are in our 8th year. Sara asked if we disclose where students can receive protection. Anne said we do tell them that they are eligible to attend Family Planning at the Health Department and if students have questions they typically will ask someone in the school-based health center. Kale asked if we are in all of the high schools. Anne explained that we

are in Burns, Crest, and Kings Mountain. We would like to teach at Shelby High School as well but due to scheduling conflicts we have not been able to make that happen. Danny asked if we address sex education in middle schools. Anne said that students were not mature enough to handle the curriculum in middle schools. Danny also asked if we have had a good response from parents for consent to attend the class. Anne explained that we have anywhere from 55-70% of students in the school that participate. Maggie asked if a student could join anytime during the 7 weeks. Anne answered that they can, but it is a building block curriculum so after the first 2 weeks it would be hard for the student to catch up. Suzanne asked if there is an incentive for students to bring their enrollment forms back. Anne answered that we work closely with the Health & PE teachers and they work to get those forms back. Sara asked what can be done for getting Shelby access to this class. Is there a way we could bring the students to the Health Department and be taught here? Anne said we can explore this, but it would be difficult with the logistics to get this done. Suzanne did comment that the earlier a student begins to hear this information, the better it is.

STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH REPORT PRESENTATION:

Chair Karner introduced Anne Short with the State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) Presentation. The State of the County Health Report is an annual report that is completed every year that a Community Health Assessment is not completed. The top four leading causes of death in Cleveland County remained constant over two 4-year reporting segments which are diseases of the heart, cancer, COVID-19, and chronic lower respiratory disease. The fifth leading cause of death did change from Cerebrovascular disease to Other unintentional injuries. This is due to the increase in the deaths of opioid overdose during this time period. Substance abuse staff attributed the increase in deaths to isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic and access to funds due to the pandemic checks issued in 2020 and 2021. Accessibility to physical and behavioral health services continues to be an issue of concern for Cleveland County. The Health Department continues to address these issues by supporting the clinic located on site at the Cleveland County Health Department and by opening the services of the Licensed Clinical Social Worker to provide behavioral health services to all residents of the county, not just those who are patients in the Health Department clinics. Access to food is also an issue within the County that has been impacted by significant policy changes at both the state and federal levels. Anne did provide her contact information for those that may want to reach out with questions.

ADOPTIONS PRESENTATION:

Chair Karner introduced Rebecca Johnson with the Adoptions Presentation. Rebecca is celebrating the fact that 9 children were adopted during the month of December and 5 during the month of January. This is a huge improvement in comparison to years past when it took several years to be able to move forward with an adoption. Rebecca asked everyone to share a video that was released on social media (Facebook & Instagram) for foster care. We have MAPP classes for those that are interested in fostering that begin on Thursday of this week. This is a 10-week course to become a foster parent. If you have any questions about foster care, please reach out to the Department of Social Services for more information. Mr. Miller asked if it is difficult to place teenagers. Rebecca said it is hard to place teenagers most times due to mental health issues. Mr. Miller also discussed that once a child reaches the age of 18, they are released from Social Services care and often don't

know how to handle the adult world. Rebecca did explain that we do have a social worker at DSS that continues to help those that have reached the age of 18 with work, food, and shelter. If the client agrees to stay in this program and abides by the policies of the program they can stay in this until they are 21 years of age. Rebecca commented on the DSS team and their dedication to the safety of our children.

CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION REPORT PRESENTATION:

Chair Karner introduced Tiffany Hansen with the Child Fatality Prevention Report Presentation. Tiffany presented the CFPT handout for 2025. The Child Fatality Prevention Team is mandated by NC Statute to review child deaths and advocate for system improvements. The purpose of the local CFPT is to identify deficiencies in the delivery of services to children and families by public agencies, make and carry out recommendations for changes that will prevent future child deaths, and promote understanding of the causes of child deaths. The purpose of this report is to give a summary of the causes of death, the number of cases reviewed, and recommendations for prevention that have been made and to share local team activities and accomplishments. In 2025, the CFPT reviewed 12 child deaths in Cleveland County and identified 4 system problems and recommendations for future prevention efforts. The number of child deaths for Cleveland County did decrease from 16 deaths in 2024. Of the 12 deaths reviewed for 2025. There was 1 gunshot wound, 2 motor vehicle accidents, 2 drownings, 1 unsafe sleep condition, 2 extreme immaturity/prematurity and 4 were related to neonatal problems at birth. Motor vehicle safety, gun safety, unsafe sleep conditions, drowning and water safety are areas of concern for Cleveland County. The recommendation for motor vehicle accidents is to continue to provide motor vehicle safety and education to the community. The recommendation for sleep conditions is to continue to provide safe sleep education to citizens of Cleveland County and consider renewing a 12-month contract for the safe sleep billboard for Cleveland County. The recommendation for Gun Safety is to continue to provide gun safety and gang violence education for the community. Cleveland County should also continue to provide gun safety locks. The recommendations for drowning is to continue to provide pool and water safety education to the community that is currently being provided by Safe Kids of Cleveland County, and to continue to provide the water safety and life jacket loaner stations provided through Safe Kids of Cleveland County and consider replacing and/or updating the jackets or adding more stations if needed in the future. Maggie mentioned that May is water safety month.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS:

ITEM NUMBER ONE:

The North Carolina Division of Child and Family Well-Being, Community Nutrition Services Section (WIC), has allocated an additional \$15,728 due to WIC participation exceeding initial caseload assignments. We request permission to budget this amount in the WIC (540) Department. These funds will be used to offset existing salaries within the department.

Motion: A motion to recommend the proposed budget amendments to the Board of Commissioners was made by Mr. Miller and a second was made by Danny Blanton. The motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Chair Karner asked if there was any additional business to discuss. There was no additional business to discuss.

ADJOURN: 6:58 PM

There being no further business, Chair Karner called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Henry Gilmore moved, with a second by Mr. Miller, that the Cleveland County Consolidated Human Services Board meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Tiffany Hansen, Secretary
Cleveland County Consolidated Human Services Agency