



RICHMOND COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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North Carolina
Public Health

Tommy Jarrell, PhD
Director of Health & Human Services

Robby Hall
Director of Social Services

RICHMOND COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: November 17, 2020
TIME: 7:00pm
LOCATION: Human Services Building large classroom and WEBEX Webinar

BOARD ATTENDANCE:

In Person:

Paul Smart, Chairperson
Dr. Tommy Jarrell, Director, Health & Human Services
Aletha Lanier, Nurse
Carolyn Walker, Public Member

Via Webinar:

Dr. Don Covington, Optometrist
Cassandra Byers, Daymark Center Director
Pat Solomon, Public Member
Dr. William Cleveland, Dentist
Evonne Moore, Social Worker
Dr. John Stevenson, Retired Physician
Thad Ussery, Public Member
Jon Marks, Pharmacist
Ronald Tillman, Board of Education
Bryan Land, County Manager
Dr. Dale McInnis, President, Richmond Community College

NON-BOARD ATTENDANCE:

Robby Hall, Director of Social Services
Jacqueline Welch, Aging Services Director
Sheila Brosier, Administrative Assistant

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Paul Smart called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
- 2. INVOCATION:** Paul Smart delivered the invocation for the meeting.

3. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Paul Smart asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

- **Motion Offered By:** Aletha Lanier
- **Motion Seconded By:** Evonne Moore
- **Motion Carried:** Yes

MEETING MINUTES: Paul Smart asked for a motion to approve the August 18, 2020, meeting minutes.

- **Motion Offered By:** Jon Marks
- **Motion Seconded By:** Carolyn Walker
- **Motion Carried:** Yes

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

5. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A. Dr. Jarrell addressed topics on the Public Health Administrative Report. The WIC department continues to reach its clients through telehealth and telephone conferences during the COVID pandemic. WIC staff are commended for managing its clients using alternative methods and is currently at 138% of caseload. For the past 6 months, the WIC participation rate for Richmond County had been rated #1 in North Carolina.

The Community Alternatives Program (CAP-DA) is currently serving 92 clients. The program had a cap of 89 participants, which created a waiting list. The current waiting list is approximately 2 ½ to 3 years. The state has reallocated CAP-DA slots throughout the counties which helps to reduce Richmond County's waiting list for services.

The Health Department offered free flu vaccines to the public by drive-thru and walk in. The nursing staff administered over 250 flu vaccines over the past month. We have 200 flu vaccines left and hope to administer it all.

- B. Director Hall discussed the Social Services Administrative Report. DSS is on target with meeting the collection goal set for child support payments this fiscal year. There are currently 62 children in foster care. DSS has encountered difficulty in finding placement for foster children and several foster care parents succumbed to Covid-19. Nevertheless, we are diligently promoting the foster care program to the public.

During the COVID pandemic, DSS staff continue to provide services to existing clients and conduct interviews and screening to new clients. In addition to telephonic contact, a video conference room has been established to allow staff to see clients during interviews. The public has limited access to move throughout the Social Services building; however, staff continue to answer questions and provide assistance as needed. DSS made 2023 contacts in October through reception.

Since the pandemic, we have seen an increase in participants in the Food & Nutrition Program, Medicaid, and CIP.

- C. Jacqueline Welch reported on the Aging Services Administrative Report. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Aging Services continues to move forward with providing meals, services, and activities to the seniors. The congregate meal site began serving hot meals on three days a week for clients to pick up. The Home Delivered Meal program is expected to be subsidized by additional COVID funds which will help to reduce the current waiting list. Volunteers from Aging Services, DSS and Area of Richmond Transit deliver the meals. We continue to receive donations from local restaurants. Kudos to one new merchant, Seafoodie, who was asked for a donation and voluntarily provided over 200 fish platters to HDM clients at no charge.

The Senior Centers remain closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, services, such as energy assistance, home repairs/ramps, home health care, etc., are still being provided to seniors. Social workers meet with clients at their doorstep to assist with completing applications. Medicare open enrollment appointments are being taken over the phone as well as referrals for various programs. Aging Services received 24 new clients and assisted a total of 43 seniors in October. Information pertaining to the 2020 LIEAP outreach will be highlighted in the Aging Services upcoming newsletters.

Aging Services is hosting a T-shirt fundraiser for Alzheimer's Awareness to raise funds for our Dementia Assistance Program. The deadline to order is November 30th and t-shirts are expected to arrive in early December. The 42nd Annual Senior Christmas Party has been cancelled. In recognition of the holidays, Aging Services is planning to distribute fruit bags to the seniors.

6. **OLD BUSINESS:** None.

7. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Recommendation for Approval of Reinstatement of Advisory Board Members:

Dr. Jarrell explained the terms of service for the following board members will expire in February 2021, and a recommendation for reinstatement will be submitted to the County Commissioners for approval at their December meeting. Carolyn Walker requested to end her term in December 2020 and not be considered for reinstatement. She expressed her gratitude in serving on the board for many years. Dr. Jarrell asked the board members to present the name(s) of a candidate at the next meeting. Paul Smart asked for a motion to approve the recommendation for reinstatement of the following advisory board members.

Bryan Land
Aletha Lanier
Dr. Dale McInnis
Dr. John Stevenson
Ronald Tillman

- **Motion Offered By:** Evonne Moore
- **Motion Seconded By:** Thad Ussery
- **Motion Carried:** Yes

B. Selection of board member for the Friends of Richmond County Aging Services Board

Jacqueline Welch worked with the county attorney to establish Friends of Richmond County Aging Services Board, a 501C-3 organization designed to allow the public to make donations to Aging Services. The mission of this organization is to financially assist Richmond County Aging Services by seeking donations, corporate gifts and engage in fundraising efforts in order to provide services which will improve the quality of life for seniors in Richmond County, NC. The organization is in its initial phase of creating bi-laws and a committee. The committee will consist of one County Commissioner and five board members. Ms. Welch sought a member of the Health & Human Services Board to serve on this board. Pat Solomon and Paul Smart volunteered.

C. COVID-19 Update:

Dr. Jarrell provided an update on the effect of COVID-19 in Richmond County. Approximately 17,700 Richmond County residents have been tested, which equates to 40% of the population. To date, there are 1,675 positive cases of which 165 are active, 1,472 have recovered, and 38 have succumbed. Statistics reveal 55% are female and 45% are male; the majority of positive cases are between 51-64 years old.

There are free COVID testing sites throughout Richmond County. The Health Department began testing in April and will offer free testing Monday-Friday from 8:00am – 5:00pm through December. Free testing will be available in the parking lot at the Cole Auditorium during the week December 7-11 from 8:00am-6:00pm; and at Ellerbe Middle School parking lot during the week of December 14-18 from 8:00am – 5:00pm. Convenient Care, Fast Med, Goshen, First Health Richmond Memorial, and various doctor offices offer COVID testing. Test results from all locations are reported to the Health Department which are consolidated and reported on our webpage daily, excluding weekends.

Through COVID funds, three temporary part time staff and two part time nurses were hired to administer COVID testing and to help contract tracers notify those persons who may have come into contact with positive cases. Dr. Jarrell explained the role of contract tracing for persons who are identified as positive cases. Once the Health Department is notified of a positive case, contract tracers contact the person(s) within 24 hours to ascertain their symptoms, where they have been and who they came into contact with within the past 48 hours. Dr. Jarrell described guidelines for home quarantine vs. isolation.

Under direction of Governor Roy Cooper, the COVID-19 guidelines have been modified. Executive Order 176 began on November 13th and extends through December 11th. This order stipulates Phase 3 measures are extended and limits mass gathering for indoor gatherings and social events to 10 people, with exception to religious functions, conference centers, schools, and colleges. The limit for outdoor mass gatherings remains at 50 people. To prevent rapid spread of COVID-19, the governor has increased face covering requirements and stressed the significance of social distancing.

The COVID-19 County Alert System was introduced by Governor Cooper and NCDHHS Secretary Cohen. It is color coded tracking system to pinpoint counties with the highest

levels of COVID-19 spread with recommendations on how to bring numbers down. The system uses a combination of three metrics to categorize counties into the color-coded tiers: 1) rate of positive cases; 2) hospitalizations; and 3) # of cases per 100,000 people. Counties must meet the threshold for case rate for that tier and the threshold for either % of positive cases or hospitalization. The color-coded tiers are red (critical), orange (substantial), and yellow (significant). Richmond county is currently in the orange tier with 8.4% positive cases and moderate impact of county hospital. Dr. Jarrell recommended ways to get our numbers down by increased testing, continue to encourage small meeting group sizes during the holidays, wear masks and social distancing.

COVID-19 vaccines will be available soon after it is authorized for use by the FDA. The amount of vaccines sent to each state will be based on the state's population. It is expected that the initial vaccines will be administered to first responders (health care workers, EMS, etc.), then to nursing home residents, persons 65 years and older, and persons with chronic medical conditions. The vaccine is expected to be available by the end of December 2020; however, the method of distribution is unknown. Hospitals, pharmacies, and health departments will administer the vaccine in a two-part series.

8. INFORMAL DISCUSSION:

Paul Smart thanked everyone for attending and wished all a safe and happy holiday. On behalf of the Health and Human Services board, an offer of condolences was sent to Thad Ussery, Jon Marks, and their families on the loss of their loved one.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Paul Smart asked if there were any other matters to discuss to which no one responded; therefore, he asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

- **Motion Offered By:** Aletha Lanier
- **Motion Seconded By:** Evonne Moore
- **Motion Carried:** Yes

NEXT MEETING: Dr. Jarrell stated the location of the next meeting will be held either via webinar and/or in person based on the status and any restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic.

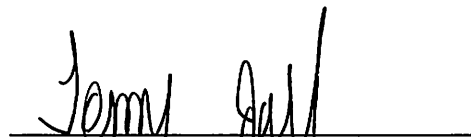
DATE: January 19, 2021

TIME: 7:00pm

LOCATION: To be determined.



Paul Smart, Chairperson
Health & Human Services Advisory Board



Dr. Tommy Jarrell, PhD
Health & Human Services Director