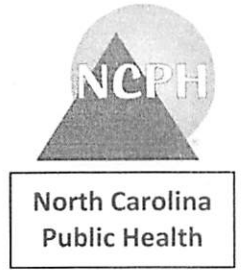




**RICHMOND COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

127 Caroline Street  
Rockingham, North Carolina 28379  
Phone: 1-910-997-8300  
Facsimile: 1-910-997-8336 Health Dept



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:** May 19, 2020  
**TIME:** 7:00pm  
**LOCATION:** WEBEX Webinar

**BOARD ATTENDANCE:**

Paul Smart, Chairperson  
Bryan Land, County Manager  
Dr. Tommy Jarrell, Director, Health & Human Services  
Aletha Lanier, Nurse  
Dr. Don Covington, Optometrist  
Cassandra Byers, Daymark Center Director  
Ronald Tillman, Board of Education  
Jon Marks, Pharmacist  
Carolyn Walker, Public Member  
Thad Ussery, Public Member  
Pat Solomon, Public Member  
Dr. Rick Watkins, County Commissioner  
Dr. William Cleveland, Dentist  
Evonne Moore Leonard, Social Worker  
Dr. John Stevenson, Retired Physician

**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:** Robby Hall
- **Motion Seconded By:** Thad Ussery
- **Motion Carried:** Yes

**MEETING MINUTES:** Paul Smart asked for a motion to approve the January 21, 2020, meeting minutes.

- **Motion Offered By:** Patricia Solomon
- **Motion Seconded By:** Ronald Tillman
- **Motion Carried:** Yes

4. **OLD BUSINESS:** None.
5. **NEW BUSINESS:** Committee reports on Coronavirus COVID-19

- A. Dr. Jarrell presented a Powerpoint slideshow which provided an overview of the coronavirus (COVID-19) statistics and addressed the efforts implemented for Richmond County citizens.

As of May 19, 2020, there are 1,537,830 total cases in the United States, of which 75% are active cases, 19% are recovered cases, and 6% are fatalities. In the state of North Carolina, there are 19,700 total cases, of which 96% are active cases and 3.5% are fatalities. He noted that North Carolina does not report recovered cases. Richmond County tested 1,022 people for COVID-19, of which 115 tested positive; 754 tested negative, and several test results are pending. Richmond County encountered two fatalities with one currently in the hospital. Moreover, 70 are currently on home quarantine and 42 have recovered.

COVID-19 testing in Richmond County is offered by drive-thru at First Health Richmond Campus. The Health Department has partnered with First Health and sent our nurses to assist with testing on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Residents can be screened, triaged and tested in their vehicles; and the test results return within 24-48 hours. Plans have been discussed to extend testing days to more than twice a week to increase the number of people who can be tested. Future plans for COVID-19 testing include the drive-thru, Health Department, Convenient Care Center, and medical offices throughout Richmond County.

Dr. Jarrell discussed North Carolina's three phase approach to lift restrictions in place and to resume normalcy for citizens throughout the state. Moving forward with these phases is based on data from testing, tracing and trends and in consultation with members of the business community. *Phase I* of the plan runs May 8 through May 22, with the stay at

home order remaining in place with some modifications. Gatherings are limited to no more than ten people; social distancing and face coverings are recommended in public. *Phase II*, projected to begin on May 22, will lift the stay at home order but recommends vulnerable populations to continue staying at home. The number of people allowed at gathers is expected to increase while restaurants, bars, worship facilities, entertainment venues and other businesses will open with reduced capacity and must follow strict safety protocols. *Phase III* is expected to begin 4-6 weeks following Phase II and lessens restrictions for vulnerable populations and further increases the number of people allowed at gatherings. While physical distancing is still encouraged, restaurants, bars, worship facilities, entertainment venues and other businesses can operate at increased capacity. Restrictions remain in place for nursing homes and other congregate living facilities during all three phases.

Dr. Jarrell explained the process of receiving COVID-19 test results at the Health Department. All test results (negative and positive) are forwarded to the county where the person resides. All positive test results are entered into the NCEDS system and a report is generated each morning. The Communicable Disease staff at the health department verify that positive cases are residents of Richmond County. These residents are contacted to gather information and begin the 14 day quarantine phase. During the quarantine period, our nursing staff make contact and document progress into NCEDS.

Dr. Jarrell discussed the operation and services provided by the Health Department during the pandemic restrictions. The building doors are locked. All staff and the public can enter through the health department entrance after their temperature is checked. The number of clients entering on a daily basis has reduced significantly due to the pandemic; however, services such as dental and community care clinic are staffed and functioning. WIC is conducting services via telephone.

Daily press releases were prepared to inform the public about coronavirus updates within Richmond County. Currently, daily updates are posted on the county's website and Facebook page.

- B. Director Hall reported the ongoing services and emergency benefits offered to residents of Richmond County as the impact of COVID-19 continues.

In March, the USDA provided supplemental funds to the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Program. Richmond County experienced a 48% increase in the number of new applications in April which resulted in greater food purchasing power. In addition, the (FNS) certification periods for all FNS cases that have certification periods ending March 31 or April 30 or May 31, 2020, have been extended to six or twelve months, with the exception of Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) cases. This extension includes re-certifications for both months that are in-progress or not started. Automatic extension will alleviate the need for FNS households to leave their homes to mail or deliver their recertification forms or to retrieve required verifications, reducing potential exposure to the COVID-19.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services received approval from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) benefits to FNS and non-FNS households with children who have temporarily lost access to free or reduced-price school meals due to pandemic-related school closures. P-EBT benefits will be based on the number of days schools were closed in a given month, multiplied by the daily reimbursement rate (\$5.70/day) for a free breakfast and a free lunch. Approximately 6,000 residents in Richmond County will receive P-EBT benefits.

DSS has implemented changes in its operation to appropriately accommodate its clients in light of COVID-19. DSS has established a call center to answer questions and provide information about changes to EBT. Several staff were assigned to work from home which has proven to be beneficial. DSS has met established timelines and exceeded other counties in processing FNS applications. Lastly, DSS staff initiated efforts with residents from the local community to make cloth masks which were distributed to Richmond County staff.

- C. Jacqueline Welch discussed the impact of COVID-19 on services provided to seniors. The Senior Centers and activities are closed and the In-Home Aide program is at a standstill. Aging Services advertised on its Facebook page requests for food and monetary donations to supplement on-sight supplies for seniors. They have collected over \$2,000 in donations to purchase items to meet the needs of seniors.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Welch introduced the Pandemic Outreach Partners program which provides planned supplemental home deliveries for Richmond County seniors using Health department, DSS, EMS and Aging Services staff as well as community volunteers. Shelf staple items and meat will be delivered to seniors from food and items donated by Perdue Farms, Family Dollar Stores, Cascade Tissue Group, CorTek, Von Drehle, Our Daily Bread Christian Food Ministries, and Place of Grace. Ms. Welch discussed food packaging, serving, delivery, and volunteer safety tips that will be implemented. The old Sandhills Regional Hospital in Hamlet is the staging site where staff and community volunteers will separate and package food items on Wednesday. Andrew Hege, Environmental Health Technician, will ensure all safety measures and COVID-19 protocols are being followed to keep the workers, volunteers and food recipients safe.

Ms. Welch stated Aging Services looks forward to partnering with DSS and other agencies in the community to provide continuous services for seniors in Richmond County.

**6. INFORMAL DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Smart thanked the staff at the Health & Human Services department for their hard work in handling the pandemic. Dr. Watkins thanked the directors for their efforts in behalf of Richmond County citizens.

**7. ADJOURNMENT:**

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

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

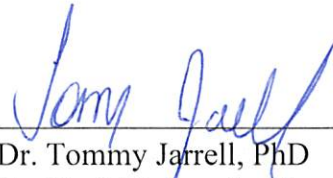
**NEXT MEETING:** Dr. Jarrell discussed the location of the next meeting to be held either via webinar or in person based on the status and any restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic.

**DATE:** July 21, 2020  
**TIME:** 7:00pm  
**LOCATION:** To be determined.



---

Paul Smart, Chairperson  
Health & Human Services Advisory Board



---

Dr. Tommy Jarrell, PhD  
Health & Human Services Director