

**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
GUILFORD COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE**

August 27, 2015  
Greensboro, North Carolina

The Health & Human Services Sub-Committee appointed by the Board of County Commissioners met on August 27, 2015 at 10:00am in the J. Harry Weatherly Conference Room, located on the second floor of the Old Guilford County Courthouse, 301 W. Market Street, Greensboro.

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Committee members Vice Chairman Jeff Phillips, Commissioners J. Carlvena Foster and Justin Conrad.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Ray Trapp

**ALSO PRESENT:** County Manager, Marty Lawing; Merle Green, DHHS-Public Health Director; Heather Skeens, DHHS-Social Services Director; Gregory Bush, Staff Development, DHHS-Social Services; Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board; and members of the media.

Commissioner Phillips called the meeting to order at 10:12am.

County Manager Marty Lawing introduced the discussion of DHHS Strategic Goals and Measurable Benchmarks developed by DHHS management and staff.

Merle Green, DHHS-Public Health Director, reviewed Public Health departmental benchmarks within Strategic Goal 1. She discussed the regional grant funding being used to develop a communication campaign and policies that would discourage use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigs) in public places.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned if the communication campaign and five new policies were state policies.

Ms. Green stated these policies would only be enforced within the county.

Commissioner Conrad questioned if changes in Federal Drug Administration (FDA) policies had resulted in this effort to discourage e-cig use.

Ms. Green stated no formal policy had been developed regarding e-cigs, however studies show that e-cig use in youth escalates to tobacco cigarette use resulting in groups at the federal and state levels urging youth not to purchase e-cigs.

Vice Chairman Phillips expressed his hesitation to expand current policy and target e-cig use in public spaces.

Ms. Green noted that tobacco use is a controversial subject.

Vice Chairman Phillips stated he is unsure if there would be sufficient votes to pass an ordinance prohibiting e-cigs in public places.

Commissioner Conrad clarified that the policies would only be enacted for county government buildings.

Ms. Green reviewed the requirements of the regional grant and its associated benchmark. She further discussed benchmarks related to the NC Age of Sale law and promotion of the NC Quitline to increase tobacco cessation within the County.

Lawing asked if statistics were available regarding the number of lung cancer-related deaths within the county.

Green stated the data is available, although reporting is normally delayed by 18-20 months.

Commissioner Foster questioned how the department would measure the benchmark to increase fruit and vegetable consumption.

Green stated community surveys would be used to gather this data.

Commissioner Foster asked if data from community partners would be utilized.

Green stated their data would be very helpful and would be used when calculating if the department had met its target.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned the number of relationships the PH Mobile Market had developed with local farmers.

Green stated they had a relationship with one farmer who was very consumer-friendly and highly recommended by the local Farmer's Market. She noted that this farmer was currently able to keep the Mobile Market well supplied with fresh produce.

Vice Chairman Phillips commented that with the department working to meet this benchmark, more relationships with farmers would be required to meet the demand.

Heather Skeens, DHHS-Social Services director, commented that there has been a push to encourage customers to purchase fruits and vegetables. She discussed the incentives attached to purchases made with EBT funds.

Green reviewed the benchmarks associated with reducing incidents of HIV and sexually-transmitted diseases (STD's) within Guilford County.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned if Guilford had the highest rate of STD's within the state.

Green confirmed that Guilford did have the highest rate, however good tracking and efforts to counsel infected patients could account for higher than average numbers, compared to counties that were not effectively tracking these cases. She stated early education was the best method of prevention.

Vice Chairman Phillips requested a breakdown of the age groups with the highest incidence of STD's.

Commissioner Foster expressed concerns about those who choose to spread STD's with blatant disregard for the population.

Vice Chairman Phillips echoed Foster's concerns and questioned what, if any, measures could be taken to address this issue.

Green discussed the goal to reduce binge drinking and the possibility of partnering with local non-profits who are already working in this field.

Skeens clarified that substance abuse is not treated or tracked within DHHS.

Lawing asked if the County should be involved, if resources are available, or if substance abuse treatment should remain a sole function of local non-profits.

Phillips questioned if binge drinking was an escalating trend within the community.

Green discussed substance abuse issues and the related benchmarks in detail.

Commissioner Conrad expressed concerns with the e-cig benchmark and noted that since there was no final decision from federal agencies on the safety of e-cigs, a requirement to ban them from public spaces would receive no support. He stated it would be a waste of resources to devote staff time to a policy that has not been approved by the federal government.

Vice Chairman Phillips echoed Conrad's concerns and commented that the Board should hear the facts.

Lawing questioned if the Board will hear these benchmark's, or if the committee will weed out goals and provide a final, condensed version to the Board.

Vice Chairman Phillips clarified that the Board should hear the goals and the committee's recommendations.

Commissioner Foster echoed Conrad's concerns regarding e-cig policies, and asked what, if any, consequences this would have on grant funding.

Green stated there would be no repercussions if the County failed to adopt an e-cig policy.

Skeens reviewed the remaining five benchmarks related to Social Services data.

Commissioner Foster questioned the annual percentage of children who experience maltreatment in Foster Care. She expressed concern that DSS reported no incidents of maltreatment during 2014-2015.

Skeens clarified that this figure only shows substantiated reports of maltreatment in foster homes.

Vice Chairman Phillips asked if an exercise benchmark should be included in the first goal. He stated that exercise can be a precursor to healthy eating habits and an overall lifestyle change, and suggested that the Board and staff could promote activity.

Green spoke to the benefits of exercise and healthy eating and stated they complemented each other.

Commissioner Foster discussed her partnership with Public Health in Operation Desert Storm, which would launch September 20, 2015, to promote healthy eating, exercise and chronic disease management.

Commissioner Conrad asked if the Parks Department was included in these discussions.

Green confirmed that Parks was included and reminded group of the grant received from NC Department of Rural Health a few years ago, which allowed Public Health to work with local congregations to promote healthy lifestyles. She stated that the department would begin seeking grant opportunities that would allow them to work with a defined group, which would allow them to track benchmarks.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned if the County could develop an awards program for citizens who accomplish their exercise and healthy eating goals.

Commissioner Conrad noted that the program should be kept simple, due to limited resources.

Green suggested that while searching for grant opportunities, DHHS staff could work with local news stations to promote lifestyle goals on morning shows and create public service announcements; however some funding may be required to coordinate services and purchase supplies.

Ms. Green and Ms. Skeens reviewed departmental benchmarks for strategic goals 2 and 3.

Skeens discussed in detail the Work First program benchmark highlighted on the handout. She stated Work First is a small program with only 249 participants and explained the guidelines and monitoring requirements. Skeens asked if this benchmark should be included with Goal 3, since the program participation is minimal.

Commissioner Foster spoke to the benefits of the program, stating it assisted people in gaining employment, securing child care and satisfying volunteer requirements. She stated the program should be included as a benchmark.

Skeens noted the program is statistically insignificant compared to other high volume programs, but the agency is required by the federal government to track participation.

Vice Chairman Phillips stated he wanted to learn more about the program and asked if County funding was involved.

Skeens stated the program was funded through a combination of federal and state dollars, along with a matching amount from the County. She noted that there were potential changes to the program at the federal level that would impact implementation at the state and county levels.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned if approximately six social workers were required to work with approximately 250 participants.

Skeens discussed the program requirements, social worker responsibilities and participant monitoring.

Lawing requested a reasonable period between initial program participation and employment for Work First customers.

Skeens stated she will pull this information from program supervisors.

Ms. Green and Ms. Skeens reviewed strategic goal 4.

Commissioner Foster questioned City of Greensboro's role in Animal Control.

Green noted that Animal Control, housed within the Public Health department, covers Greensboro and Guilford County, however City of High Point responds to animal control complaints for High Point.

Commissioner Foster asked if rising incidents of whooping cough and sickle cell anemia warranted additional study by the department.

Green stated testing for sickle cell disease and the trait is conducted at birth, and everyone who with the disease who resides in Guilford County has a medical home.

Ms. Green introduced strategic goal 5 and reviewed the related benchmarks.

Ms. Skeens discussed the program integrity benchmark in detail.

Vice Chairman Phillips noted the Board would prefer that this plan should indicate if additional funding sources are required.

Skeens stated that the accompanying recommendations discuss funding needs in detail.

Vice Chairman Phillips requested an additional column on the benchmarks handout to indicate if additional funding was required to accomplish the goal. He also questioned if the amount of staffing for the program integrity unit was sufficiently adequate to maximize recovered dollars.

The committee discussed the purpose of program integrity versus the County's internal audit department, and compared their roles to audits conducted by state agencies.

Skeens clarified that the County Internal Audit department partners with external auditors to conduct state mandated single audits.

Vice Chairman Phillips stated that the Board must discuss how to improve audit results.

Skeens discussed the single audit in detail, stating it is a snapshot of approximately ten programs, and allows the department to review the quality of these programs.

Vice Chairman Phillips echoed his prior statement and indicated that the Board should discuss if additional resources were required to comply with these audits.

Lawing introduced the DHHS recommendations for strategic goals.

Vice Chairman Phillips requested feedback from the advisory committee on the strategic goal plan, and noted that additional time was needed to review goals prior to making recommendations to the Board.

Lawing stated that the advisory committee received the presentation on the strategic goal plan during its August 5, 2015 meeting, and would provide feedback during its September 2, 2015 meeting. He reviewed the tier system developed to prioritize recommendations. Lawing suggested the committee recommendations be presented to the Board during an upcoming work session.

The committee scheduled the next meeting for September 14, 2015 at 2:00PM.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned by unanimous consent at 11:59am.

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Chairman

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Deputy Clerk to Board