

# Madison County Board of Health Meeting

Thursday, September 25, 2025, 6:00 pm

## Members

Dr. Robert Adams DDS, Chair  
Dr. Suzanne Sheldon, DVM  
Cynthia Niles, Pharmacist  
Robin Smith, Public  
Larry Peek, Engineer  
Melissa Sluder, RN

Dr. Shannon Dowler, Physician  
Jeremy Hensley, Commissioner  
Cheryl Conway, PhD, RN Vice Chair  
Dyatt Smathers, Public  
Dr. Melissa Robinson MD. Ex Officio  
Jessica West, Public

Regular Meeting       Special Meeting

## Members Present:

Dr. Robert Adams DDS, Chair  
Jeremy Hensley, Commissioner  
Cheryl Conway, PhD, RN  
Dr. Melissa Robinson MD. Ex Officio  
Jessica West, Public

Dr. Shannon Dowler, Physician  
Cynthia Niles, Pharmacist  
Dyatt Smathers, Public  
Melissa Sluder, RN

## Staff in Attendance:

Tammy Cody, MHS, Health Director  
Lindsey Thomas WIC Director, Director of Care Management and Notary

Bradley Hodges, Preparedness Coordinator/HR Director

## AGENDA

5:45-6:00 pm - Optional Environmental Health info session presented by Savannah Kent, NC State Soil Scientist.

- I. **Call Meeting to Order** Chair Bob Adams, DDS  
Chair Dr. Adams called meeting order with quorum at 6:05 p.m. New BOH member Jessica West welcomed, sworn in, and given 2025 BOH Member Packet and USB Drive.
  - II. **Commemoration of Hurricane Helene Anniversary & Public Health Response** Chair Bob Adams, DDS  
Tammy Cody reviewed the Health Department's response to Hurricane Helene including shelter operations, oxygen and medication delivery, and vaccine refrigeration via emergency generator.
  - III. **Approval of** Chair Bob Adams, DDS
    - a. Agenda
      - a. Dr. Adams advised that, per Attorney Laws, "other business" does not qualify for closed session. Dyatt Smathers moved to discuss the closed session topic in open session. Dr. Shannon Dowler seconded. No further discussion. Motion approved unanimously (10-0).
    - b. Board of Health July 24, 2025, Minutes
      - a. Dyatt Smathers moved to delay approval of the July 24, 2025 BOH Meeting Minutes to the November BOH Meeting. Melissa Sluder seconded. Motion approved unanimously (10-0). It was agreed that going forward Meeting Minutes would be prepared for Health Director review within 7 days after the BOH Meeting and that Dyatt Smathers would review within the next 7 days before forwarding to full Board.
  - IV. **Public Input Session** Community
    - a. There were 6 members of public present to observe, but none signed up to speak.
  - V. **Announcements** All
    - a. Dr. Adams accepted Association of NC Boards of Health Award for "Outstanding Board of Health" in Hillsborough and reported special mention of MCHD's Dental Program, MAT Program, Helene Response, and Accreditation with Honors.
    - b. Dr. Adams spoke on Advent Health's Public Comment Hearing session on Oct 11, 2025 at Pack Memorial Library concerning Certificate of Need for a PET Scanner. Tammy asked members to attend if possible.
    - c. Tammy honored the memory of employee Kathy Price.
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- d. Dyatt Smathers encouraged members to provide letters of support for Advent's application for additional beds at Weaverville site. The original number of beds still being contested by HCA, should be decided by November.

## VI. New Business

- a. Environmental Health Board Training Savannah Kent, NC State Soil Scientist
- i. Savannah Kent, REHS, Regional Soil Scientist with NC DHHS On-Site Water Protection Branch, provided an in-depth training on Environmental Health inspection types, their frequency, and the possible outcomes of those inspections. There was discussion about statewide shortage of Registered Environmental Health Specialists and training times to complete each certification such as food/lodging, well/septic, school, etc.
- b. Environmental Health Operations and Recruitment Tammy Cody, MHS
- i. Tammy Cody reviewed current EH staffing including contracted employees with specific certifications. Working with state on recruiting for immediate needs – senior REHS with multiple certifications. Adjusted salary to be competitive including sign-on bonus with 2-year commitment; no additional taxpayer money required.
  - ii. Commissioner Hensley showed data compiled by Madison County HR Director. 24 NC counties currently with EH posting. Madison County salary now in alignment.
  - iii. Board discussed recruitment strategies such as hiring intern if neighboring county will agree to train, and long-term strategies such as attending high school/college career fairs. Tammy currently working with Mars Hill U and AB Tech.
- c. Environmental Health Notice of Violations Tammy Cody, MHS
- i. Tammy spoke on outcome of EH Notice of Violations. NOV's issued but there has been little to no legal follow-up in past 10 years. Has been a source frustration among EH staff. Board Members expressed desire for leniency with those impacted by Hurricane Helene; the intent is only to concentrate on the pre-existing problem of NOV's without legal action. Savannah Kent offered her state-wide experience that legal action on NOV's requires attorney well-versed in EH. Tammy will meet with the County Manager and Commissioners and report back to the BOH.

## VII. Administrative Reports

- a. Medical Director's Report Melissa Robinson, MD
- i. MOUD program stable, approx 70 patients; contracting with Dr. Young as backup provider.
  - ii. Urine Drug Screens – reality does not match public perception. Each substance suspected requires separate (costly) test, new substances appearing daily for which no test exists, false positives and negatives occur based on many factors such as meds taken. MCHD has been providing LabCorp "Chain of Custody" collection for county agencies such as DSS but LabCorp becoming difficult and it makes MCHD look as if responsible, so anticipate stopping. Would continue only in-house UDS for MOUD program because a provider is assessing patient and their meds.
  - iii. Gave in-person update to Hot Springs Health on tick-borne illnesses.
  - iv. Will be attending annual TB training.
- b. Health Director's Report Tammy Cody, MHS
- i. Staff vacancies – RN, EH Program Specialists, EH Program Director.
  - ii. Recent Tall Cop Says Stop presentation - substances being sold at smoke shops and gas stations that are described by presenter as being as addictive as heroin. BOH asked to reference website.
  - iii. Cuts by federal government to Medicaid/Medicare will impact budget. Dr. Dowler advised that MCHD should prepare for fund pay-back because cuts took effect before computer programs changed. Dr. Adams note no increase in 10 years plus current cuts will cause trouble.
  - iv. MCHD Helene response hotwash scheduled.
  - v. Meeting scheduled with design team for new admin building.
  - vi. A lead investigation was opened for a pre-K school room with peeling paint. Tammy working with state and school admin.
  - vii. Flu vax available. Working with schools for students with parental consent.
  - viii. Recent Opioid Settlement Community Forum went well.
  - ix. A 6% funding cut to AA151 Title X was back dated, so MCHD will have to pay back as well as take current cut.
  - x. The Cost Settlement Desk Audit for 2020 resulted in a \$14,103 refund to MCHD.
  - xi. MCHD following up a potential pertussis exposure, Early College student, occurred at AB Tech Buncombe.
- c. Financial Reports Tammy Cody, MHS
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- i. Financial reports reviewed. Discussion took place regarding impact of Medicaid cuts.

**VIII. Other Business**

Chair Bob Adams, DDS

- i. Dr. Adams reported that Little Ivy Academy has consented to school inspection.
- ii. Dyatt Smathers reminded BOH that emails sent via the new BOH e-mail distribution, even if from personal email addresses, are subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

**IX. Adjournment**

Chair Bob Adams, DDS

- i. Dyatt Smathers moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously (10-0). Dr. Adams adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Next Meeting: November 20, 2025 at 6pm. Optional info session at 5:45 pm.



Robert M Adams DDS  
Chair, Board of Health

Tammy Coyle MHS  
Health Director

11-20-2025  
Date

11-20-2025  
Date