

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
 Jason Chappell, Chair  
 Jake Dalton, Vice-Chairman  
 Emmett Casciato  
 Larry Chapman  
 Teresa McCall



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## Transylvania County Board of Health

*To improve and protect the health of all people in Transylvania County*

**February 10, 2026– Regular Meeting**  
**Community Services Building First Floor Large Meeting Room**  
**6:00 pm**

### MINUTES

**I. Call to Order**

Quorum was reached with six members present. Mrs. McCall called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

<b>Members Present</b>	Thomas Fuller, OD Elizabeth Privette Teesie Stanton Wiley Sim Cozart III, DDS Dawn Kauffman, RN Teresa McCall
<b>Members Absent</b>	Christina Mahoney, RN Sandra McNeill, RN
<b>Staff Members Present</b>	Elaine Russell, Health Director / Secretary to the Board Heather Bradley, Personal Health Director Neill Cagle, Environmental Health Sabrina Griffin, Clinical Planner/Evaluator Laura Petit, Business Officer Krystal Raines, WIC Director Tara Rybka, Assistant Health Director Jermois Morris, CARE/Preparedness Coordinator
<b>Others Present</b>	3 members of the public

**Welcome, Announcements, and Public Comment/Public Hearing**

## **II. Agenda Modifications**

None

## **III. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Approval of Agenda**

### **B. Minutes – November 12, 2025**

The agenda and minutes from November 12, 2025, were approved with a motion from Dr. Cozart and second by Mrs. Kaufman. Approval was unanimous.

## **IV. Administrative or Committee Reports**

### **A. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Board needs to appoint a chair and vice chair at the first meeting of the year. Dr. Lamm has concluded his time with the Board of Health.

Mrs. McCall nominated Sandra McNeill to serve as chair and Dr. Cozart seconded the nomination. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. McCall nominated Beth Privette to serve as vice-chair and Dr. Cozart seconded the nomination. The motion passed unanimously.

Since Mrs. McNeill was not in attendance, Mrs. McCall continued to facilitate the meeting.

### **B. Health Director's Report**

1. The agency currently has a posted vacancy in nursing (WIC/immunization nurse) and environmental health (septic/well). We were able to fill another nursing position, and she started today. We will interview for the environmental health position later this week.

CARE's Director, Kristen Gentry, departed for a leadership role at the Blue Ridge Dental Clinic in December. The posting for the CARE Coalition Director will be posted soon, the agency is analyzing tasks, funding streams, and the potential for internal advancement.

2. The Region 1 Public Health Workforce Development Project, managed by the agency, was selected for a grant award by Dogwood Health Trust. The grant award is \$465,000 over a 2-year period. The grant will continue the support for regional legal trainings/staff development and the development of collaborative staffing models in western North Carolina.

3. The agency was among the 22 counties with total use of available federal Family Planning

funds between June 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025. The State determined it is an easier accounting process to address the federal Family Planning claw-back using funds unexpended at the local and state level during the targeted time period. Therefore, the 22 counties with total expenditure of the funding line (including Transylvania County) were excluded from contributing to the claw-back. The State did advise this was a unique alignment of circumstances and it's unlikely to occur again if future claw-backs occur.

4. The new NC Public Health Accreditation Standards were released January 1, 2026. The agency is due to undergo accreditation review January – April 2028. The agency is analyzing the new evidence guidance to determine changes. The new guidance appears to be more streamlined.

5. Preparation for the FY26-27 budget is underway. No requests for new positions are anticipated. Increases in some operating expenses are anticipated due to continued rise in vendor pricing. Next year's Agreement Addenda from NC DPH were released this afternoon after the printing of the Health Director's Report.

## **V. Old Business**

## **VI. New Business**

### **A. Bad Debt Write-Off**

The Department of Public Health Bad Debt policy identifies the process for handling aging accounts with no payment activity greater than 180 days. Pursuant to this policy, it is my recommendation to write off bad debts totaling **\$134.00** for the time period **01/01/2025** to **06/30/2025**.

Accounts under \$50 (Bad Debt):	\$ 0.00
Accounts \$50 and above (NC Debt Setoff):	\$134.00

If this recommendation is approved by the Board of Health, it will be submitted to the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners for consideration and approval. If approved, qualifying debts of \$50 or more will be forwarded to the North Carolina Tax Debt Setoff Program for potential recovery.

#### **Recommended Action:**

The Board of Health approves the Bad Debt write-off as presented and authorizes the Health Director to forward the request to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

The recommended action was approved with a motion from Ms. Stanton and second by Dr. Fuller. Approval was unanimous.

## **B. Measles Outbreak Update**

Elaine Russell presented information about measles outbreaks, including data for the US in 2025 and 2026, national trends over time, cases in North Carolina, the outbreak in South Carolina, and local actions being taken by the agency.

The Measles PowerPoint is attached to the meeting minutes. (See attachment #1)

Dr. Cozart asked about vaccination rates; Transylvania County's K-5 measles vaccination is 90%, with some schools with lower rates. The Buncombe County cluster is associated with a small school. Ms. Stanton asked about homeschool vaccination rates; that data is difficult to track because there is no school to collect their records. Dr. Cozart asked about vaccine supply; we have not seen any delays with access to MMR. Dr. Cozart asked about the age for vaccinating young children; first dose of MMR is typically administered at 1 year of age, but we can offer a vaccine at 6 months in certain circumstances, including outbreaks. Ms. Stanton asked staff to also reach out to Rise & Shine and El Centro. Elaine confirmed that our childcare nurse has been in regular contact with day care centers about measles guidance along with other topics.

## **C. 2025 Annual Communicable Disease Report**

Our former CD nurse, Kathy Kelley, retired as of December 2025. One of the first duties for new CD nurse Mary Creasman and backup CD nurse Natalie Green was to compile CD investigation data from 2025. Elaine Russell reviewed highlights from the annual Communicable Disease Report, including rabies investigations; mosquito- and tick-borne disease such as La Cross encephalitis and growing concerns around Lone Star ticks; tuberculosis; airborne disease including fewer pertussis cases, 1 case of mumps, and 3 influenza deaths; hepatitis including multiple chronic hepatitis C cases; foodborne illness including steady numbers of campylobacter cases, a case of *C. perfringens* usually related to meat preparation, and cases of salmonella; sexually-transmitted diseases with steady numbers; and 1 case of Creutzfeldt-Jakob and a few varicella cases.

The 2025 Communicable Disease Report is attached to the meeting minutes. (See attachment #2)

## **VII. Public Comment or Public Hearing**

None

## **VIII. Adjournment**

Dr. Cozart made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second by Mrs. Privette. There was unanimous approval, and the meeting concluded at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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J. Elaine Russell  
Secretary, Board of Health

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Date

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Sandra McNeill  
Chair, Board of Health

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Approved Date

## **Attachment #1: Measles Update**



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## **Attachment #2: 2025 Communicable Disease Report**



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