

January 27, 2026

The Alamance County Social Services Board met with its regular monthly meeting on this date. The meeting was held at HSC Building (1st Floor) 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC with the following in attendance were: Mrs. Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice-Chair; Dr. Darrell Warner, DSS Board Member; Commissioner Ed Priola, DSS Board Member; Ms. Candice J. Gobble, DSS Director; Ms. Virginia Hunker, DSS Business Officer; Ms. Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director; Ms. Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services; Ms. Jamie Hamlett, DSS Attorney; Ms. Sherry Hook, Alamance County Assistant County Manager and Ms. Lauren Wilcox, County Budget Analyst were present.

Ms. Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice-Chair, opened the meeting.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda: Tyronna Hooker, DSS Board Vice-Chair

December 2025 items on the consent agenda approved. Dr. Darrell Warner, DSS Board Member made the motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Ed Priola, DSS Board Member.

Staff Reports:

Fiscal: Virginia Hunker

EXPENDITURES - DECEMBER 2025			
Year to Date through December 31, 2025	Expenditure Target Rate =50%		
ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	Budget FY 25-26	Expenditures	Spending %
SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 17,978,799.00	\$ 8,456,938.00	47%
OPERATIONS	\$ 1,892,930.00	\$ 787,882.00	42%
SERVICES	\$ 6,163,194.00	\$ 2,197,997.00	36%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 26,034,923.00	\$ 11,442,817.00	44%

REVENUES- DECEMBER 2025			
Year-to-Date through December 31, 2025	Revenue Target Rate = 42%		
ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	Budget FY 25-26	Revenues	Rev Rec %
FEDERAL	\$ 12,460,823.00	\$ 6,250,176.00	50%
STATE	\$ 1,397,026.00	\$ 668,734.00	48%
COUNTY	\$ 107,593.00	\$ 57,210.00	53%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 13,965,442.00	\$ 6,976,120.00	50%

Ms. Virginia Hunker reported the State still does not have an approved budget. We are hopeful the budget will be approved by April 2026. DSS is still trending on target for February.

Ms. Virginia Hunker reported on the FY26 2nd Quarter Financial Report. At the end of December 2025, DSS has expended 44% of its budget, remaining below the target rate of 50%. Revenues are at 50%, exceeding the target rate of 42%. An additional funding allocation of \$12,548 was approved and added to the budget to support Foster Care emergency placement needs. After reassessing projected FNS revenue losses due to the 25% reduction starting in October 2025, the anticipated reduction is estimated at \$889,727.

Question: Any update on VAYA funds?

Director Gobble responded there has been no different information from last month. We have until January 30, 2026, to return unused funds.

We continue to have an ongoing relationship with VAYA due to Adult population who continue to receive services.

Question: If we don't return the funds – what will happen?

Director Gobble responded we continue to communicate with VAYA via email. The other counties who have VAYA funds are in the same predicament. We have not received any word on how the other counties will proceed.

VAYA will continue to see some foster children before transferring to CFSP.

Fraud: See report –

Unit	December 2025	December 2024	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Fraud	\$23,692.42	\$14,479.16	\$184,541.93	\$193,325.95
Fraud Referrals Received	21	9	157	95

An Intentional Program Violation was established for a client which resulted in a 24 month disqualification in accordance with the Food & Nutrition Services Program policy. A claim was also calculated and established in the amount of \$12,204, representing benefits improperly received due to the violation.

Services: Lynette Wellons, Assistant Director of Services-

Ms. Lynette Wellons reported the following:

All services reports are highlighted in NEW Social Services Dashboard which are as follows:

Child Welfare -

Placement Stability & Foster Home Availability:

Shortages of licensed foster homes and crisis placements can lead to children sleeping in temporary settings or distant placements. Alamance County Social Services has built strong partnerships for times of crisis that we have been able to utilize, preventing children from being housed in the DSS building.

Metric	December 2025	December 2024	Current YTD	Prior YTD
Placement Stability	7	7	10	33

As you can see from the placement disruption data above, there is a 21.2% increase over the course of the year. These are foster children who are at high risk of not having placement and are likely to end up in the DSS building.

We continue to face significant workforce challenges with staffing shortages and turnover among caseworkers, negatively affecting caseload management, service continuity and worker support. Alamance County falls in line with this issue across the state. Turnover directly impacts service continuity for those individuals we serve, often delaying case progress or timeliness.

We continue to see large numbers of children and adults involved in the system have behavioral health needs, but services and placements that can adequately meet these needs remain limited. For children and the transition to Healthy Blue Care Together has been more crippling.

Adult Protective Services:

APS Evaluations are increasing up to 16% (from FY 23-24 to FY 24-25).

- Alamance County DSS had an increase in APS evaluations, signaling more reports of potential abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults.
- This reflects growing APS caseloads locally, consistent with aging populations and increased awareness/reporting. Over 40% of Alamance County's population are 50+ at the end of calendar year 2025.
- Based on where we are for FY 25-26, trends show that we will exceed growth of the prior fiscal year.

Child Support – (Statistical Report Information) –

Unit	December 2025	December 2024	Current YTD	Prior Fiscal Year
Child Support	\$969,771.44	\$899,882.95	\$5,411,413.79	\$5,441,010.66

- No report

Economic Support: Danae Pickard, Economic Services Division Director

Ms. Pickard reported the following:

- Childcare funding in North Carolina has been heavy in the news due to concerns about potential federal funding freezes and the impact on the state's childcare providers. Here are some key points:
- NC has not received any official notice from the federal government about a funding freeze and the state's childcare program is continuing as normal.
- Energy season applications continue with LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program). We currently have funds until all are exhausted. The program runs until March 2026. We currently have CIP funds as well. All Economic Services staff work diligently to help citizens with heating needs and complete these applications timely.

Operations – Director Candice J. Gobble

Administrative Support/Personnel: Candice J. Gobble

Director Gobble reported we finally have a new HR Manager – Ms. Whitney Lipscomb who is slated to start February 2026.

Ms. Gobble reported the following:

Metric	Current Month
Total Filled Positions	196
Total Vacancies	34
New Hires	2
Separations	9
Internal Transfers	3

Director's Report – Candice J. Gobble, Director–

Director Gobble discussed the NEW Board packet with the addition of the Social Services Dashboard adding new data. We wanted to include more information that highlights different metrics than the past report such as:

Child Welfare:

- After Hours reports
- # of reports accepted for assessment
- Placement Stability

Adult Protective Services:

- New Petitions filed
- Cases accepted for Evaluations
- SA In-Home Cases

Food & Nutrition Services:

- FNS recertifications due and completed

Medicaid:

- # of Redetermination cases due and completed

Energy:

- LIEAP Applications received
- CIP Applications received

Customer Services & Community Engagement:

- Lobby Traffic
- Call Volume
- Top Reasons for Contact

Added:

- Trend Snapshot
- Key Risks & Emerging Issues
- Upcoming Priorities

Question: Do we have any updates regarding VAYA funds?

- No – there have not been any updates from the LME regarding these funds.

Question: Has any of the other Social Services return VAYA funds?

- No – all DSS are on the same holding pattern.

Question: Does the issue need to go before the County Commissioners?

- The County Attorney is handling the issue with VAYA regarding any litigation.

Assistant Director Lynette Wellons added the transition with BC/BS is not going smoothly. We continue to have issues as it relates to high-risk cases. We continue to meet with BC/BS weekly to avoid placement issues.

Question: Is the Director's Association involved as it relates to BC/BS?

- No – They advise to use the process established by BC/BS. We continue to work with State representatives.

New Business: 2026 Board Meeting Schedule

Board Members discussed 2026 Board Meeting schedule. All meetings will be on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 12noon and will be held on the 1st Floor in Professional Board Room at HSC Building located at 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC.

See Schedule:

Tuesday	January 27, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	February 24, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	March 24, 2026	12 noon

Tuesday	April 28, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	May 26, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	June 23, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	July 28, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	August 26, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	September 22, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	October 27, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	November 24, 2026	12 noon
Tuesday	December 15, 2026	10:00am

Discussions were held to move December 2026 meeting to 3rd Tuesday, December 15, 2026, due to Holiday Schedule. The meeting will be held at 10am in Professional Board Room.

Action: Motion made by Dr. Darrell Warner and seconded by Commissioner Ed Priola to approve all scheduled dates with the change of December meeting date.

New Business: House Reconciliation Bill 1 (H.R. 1) Overview

Director Gobble presented the following presentation on H.R. 1 and the impacts to SNAP (FNS) and Medicaid Administration.

Director Gobble added that most of the policies are not out yet for this law. We are following guidelines for DHHS.

H.R. 1 is a federal budget reconciliation package that makes significant changes to federal spending and program administration. This legislation proposes major changes to federal spending and program administration and has significant implications for both SNAP (FNS) and Medicaid programs at the county level.

Summary of SNAP (FNS) Changes

Eligibility	Funding
Expansion of Work Requirements – requirements already in place. Staff have received training.	Eliminates future funding by SNAP-Ed
Eliminated certain exemptions for those subject to Work Requirements – Changes already active. The exceptions no longer exist for Foster Care, Veterans and Homeless.	Reduces Federal Administrative match from 50% to 25% (October 2026) – This is a major shift that places a larger share of administrative costs on states and counties. Alamance County DSS could potentially take an \$890k cut. This is one of the largest impacts on DSS.
Limits the SNAP – LIHEAP (Low-Income Home Energy Program) Connection – Changes will affect those who normally receives higher shelter deduction (HCSUA). Only elderly or disabled member will get the automatic deduction.	Established benefit cost-share for states with Payment Error Rates above 6% (October 2027). This creates a new financial risk tied directly to program accuracy and compliance. NC cost share would be \$420m per year using this payment error rate. There is much work occurring at the State level to assist counties in lowering the payment

	error rate. In May 2025, the payment error rate for the State was 7.63%. This is a combined statewide error rate, not specific from county to county.
Limits SNAP non-citizen eligibility – Will be limited to individuals who reside in the US and are (1) US citizens, (2) lawful permanent residents (3) aliens who are Cuban or Haitian entrants or (4) individuals who are lawfully residing in the US in accordance with the Compacts of Free Association between the US and Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Patua.	

Director Gobble added with the payment error rate NC will ultimately have a decision to make should the payment error rate goes down below 6%.

Option 1: NC pays the increased state benefit cost share based on current SNAP enrollment. NC would have to pay cost share based on the error rate from 3 years prior and the State does not control most SNAP rules. Congress decides who can receive benefits and how much they receive. The States do not control how many people are enrolled in SNAP. During a recession or tough economy, more people may need help, and States could have to pay more than expected.

Option 2: If NC cannot pay for increased State benefit cost share, NC will have to stop offering the SNAP program completely. Over 1.4 million North Carolinians lose benefits, NC would lose \$2.8 billion in annual federal funds (which generates \$4.2 billion in economic impact). Rural grocery stores that depend on SNAP revenue could risk closure. Over 7,000 jobs in NC across grocery, agriculture, manufacturing, transportation and other industries created by SNAP could also be at risk of closure. Over 500,000 children will no longer automatically qualify for school meals because of SNAP.

DHHS is committed to working with the Governors Association and lobbyists as it relates to these changes within this bill.

Summary of Medicaid Changes

Limits “Qualified Alien” eligibility (October 2026)	We will see changes within next month
Work/Community Engagement Requirements (January 2027)	Adults covered through Medicaid expansion will have to meet work or community engagement requirements unless they qualify as an exception.
Eligibility Redeterminations for certain individuals are to occur every 6 months (January 2027)	This will require more frequent checks to be enrolled instead of once a year. NC FAST
Limits Retroactive Medicaid Coverage (January 2027)	This coverage will be limited so that people who apply for Medicaid can

	only receive one or two months of backdated coverage instead of the longer period allowed now. DSS uses the PARIS report to avoid people who may be enrolled in another state are not receiving duplicate benefits.
Ensuring deceased individuals do not remain enrolled (January 2028)	NC already checks for deceased individuals using the federal death records. Alamance Co. Health Department receives death certificate for every individual who is deceased in Alamance Co.
Revising home equity limit for determining eligibility for long term care services (January 2028)	This means some individuals with higher home equity may no longer qualify for LTC coverage.

Budget Implications

Provision	Effective Date	Direct Impact on County Revenue
SNAP Administrative Cost Shift	October 1, 2026	Estimated Loss to Revenue: \$889,727
Medicaid/Work Community Engagement Requirements	January 1, 2027	Estimated Loss to Revenue: \$480,169

The SNAP Administrative cost shift will create a major financial strain for counties. Beginning October 1, 2026, the federal match for SNAP administration drops from 50% to 25% which results in the loss of \$889,727 loss to Alamance County. While there is active advocacy asking the state to assume this additional 25% cost, it is unlikely that the state will take on that responsibility.

Every local DSS operates under a Memorandum of Understanding with DHHS that requires strict timeliness standards for processing SNAP applications and recertifications. Three of the required performance measures are based entirely on how quickly counties complete this work. If counties cannot maintain staffing or capacity due to the loss of federal funding, meeting those mandated timelines becomes much harder – putting agencies at risk for corrective action or worse, the withholding of state funding.

The projected revenue loss tied to Medicaid Work/Community Engagement requirements is estimated at \$480,169 will only occur if the state is unable to secure the funding needed to implement these new requirements. The new Medicaid Work/Community Engagement requirements will require significant system updates to implement. This work requirements apply specifically to adults covered under Medicaid Expansion. Should the work requirements not be implemented, Medicaid Expansion could come to an end.

These changes have real operational consequences. We anticipate increased eligibility workload across both SNAP and Medicaid. More frequent redetermination, new compliance requirements and tighter eligibility rules will increase administrative burden and the risk of payment errors.

Director Gobble discussed the Rural Health Transformation that was established under H.R. 1 and is administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to strengthen rural healthcare delivery from 2026 through 2040. The program allocates \$50 billion over five fiscal years, with \$10 billion available annually, supporting states in implementing strategies tailored to their rural communities. For NC, the program aims to enhance health care delivery for over 3 million residents in rural areas. The program will provide \$213 million in the first year with supporting over 400 rural health facilities. NC will receive \$100 million annually for the next five years.

Questions/Answers:

Question: What changed with alien status?

- The new bill has significantly restricted SNAP eligibility for non-citizens, particularly undocumented immigrants. The change is a part of a broader effort to tighten eligibility requirements for food assistance programs. The change is expected to lead to a significant reduction in the number of people receiving benefits. The five-year waiting period for SNAP eligibility for certain qualified immigrants will remain in place.

Question: PARIS report – Is that for all 50 States?

- The PARIS report is consolidated report and used within all States. The report is received quarterly here at Alamance Co. DSS and worked on the time constraints of working caseloads.

Question: Will 50% for FNS cases go to 25% - will that affect staff?

- We are not sure. The work will remain the same as the percentage just goes down. The applications will continue to get worked the same and we will continue to have to meet the timeliness standards established by DHHS.

Announcements:

None

Adjournment -

The next board meeting is 12:00 pm **Tuesday, February 24, 2026**, at DSS – Professional Board Room located on the 1st Floor at 319 N. Graham Hopedale Rd., Burlington NC.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10pm. Motion was made by Commissioners Ed Priola, DSS Board Member, and seconded by Dr. Darrell Warner, DSS Board Member, to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carmen L. Morrow

Date Approved: _____