



Ben Hill County Board of Health Meeting

MINUTES

February 18, 2026 | 12:00 P.M. | Ben Hill County Health Department

Members Present

Daniel Cowan, Chairman
Mayor Jason Holt,
Vice-Chairman
Stephen Harden
Tolisa Smith
Katie Petrie

Members Absent

Thelma Graham,
Secretary
Susan Smith

Others Present

Dwain Butler
Karen Harrison
Tiffany Cannon
Ken Lowery
Layne Harrell, CNM
Alex Collins
Jill Reade
Julie Parker
Sandra Sheppard, TJP
Nikki Payne, TJP

Call to Order

Mr. Daniel Cowan called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM.

Introductions

Mr. Dwain Butler introduced Tiffany Cannon filling in for Allie Pridgen for Financial Updates.

Public Comments

Mr. Daniel Cowan informed the board of the passing of Mr. Jim Turner, who was a long-standing member with the Ben Hill County Board of Health.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Mr. Cowan asked for a motion to approve minutes from November 19, 2025. Ms. Tolisa Smith made a motion to approve. Mr. Stephen Harden seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Financial Updates – Tiffany Cannon, Accounting Supervisor

- Ms. Cannon reviewed the Revenue and Expense Summary for Ben Hill County from July 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025.
- Ms. Cannon stated the Budget FY2027 will be presented in May for approval.

Public Health Updates - Dwain Butler, Deputy Health Director

- Mr. Butler informed the board that Dr. Eanes had knee surgery a few weeks ago and is recovering.
- Mr. Butler updated the board on the reorganization of Environmental Health, introducing Jill Reade, Environmentalist who has 25 years of experience.
- Mr. Butler announced Alex Collins is the new Environmental Health Regional County Manager for Ben Hill, Irwin, Tift, and Turner counties.
- Mr. Butler reviewed the Ben Hill County Customer Survey.

- Mr. Butler stated the district continues to monitor the changes with the CDC and Federal Government.
- Mr. Butler updated on Influenza.
- Mr. Butler thanked the board for completing the Community Health Survey.
- Mr. Butler reminded the board if they receive any services at Ben Hill County Health Department, they will have no out-of-pocket expenses.
- Mr. Butler stated South Health District is monitoring the measles outbreak in South Carolina.
- Mr. Butler announced South Health District is developing a facility standards assessment.
 - ❖ Mr. Butler explained the assessment includes inspecting each facility for repairs or maintenance that is needed and will present the findings with the board. He stated we want to be proactive instead of reactive.
- Mr. Butler shared Tesesa Hritz with Infectious Disease and Terri Ball with HOPWA who are on the agenda for today could not attend and will be scheduled for the next meeting in May.

Health Department Updates – Layne Harrell, RN

- Ms. Harrell reviewed the Ben Hill County Health Department Productivity Report.
- Ms. Harrell discussed the No Fee STI clinic that was held in December and on February 10, 2026.
- Ms. Harrell discussed the upcoming Scoliosis screening for 6th and 8th graders.
- Ms. Harrell reported that Ben Hill County Health Department is partnering with Pre K for referrals for vaccinations and health checks.
- Ms. Harrell stated the health department has a new RN that started in October.

Environmental Health Update – Alex Collins, MPH

- Mr. Collins reviewed the Ben Hill County Environmental Health Update and Food Inspections Report.
- Mr. Collins informed the board of the upcoming changes with fuel for the generator.

Epidemiology Updates – Ken Lowery, DrPH, MPH

- Dr. Lowery reviewed the Investigated Illness Report 10/01/2025 – 12/31/2025.

The Jessamine Place – Sandra Sheppard, Director

- Ms. Nikki Payne reviewed The Jessamine Place Financial Report – FY26 which includes the Year to Date: Budget Analysis report and the Year to Date: Budget Analysis with Full Budget report, both for July 2025 – November 2025.
- Ms. Sheppard reviewed the Directors Report.
 - ❖ Mayor Holt asked Ms. Sheppard if she was familiar with Night to Shine. Ms. Sheppard replied yes. She stated she would meet with Mayor Holt to discuss a plan for next year.

Announcements

Mr. Cowan announced the next meeting is May 20, 2026, at 12:00 pm (Budget Meeting).

Mr. Butler reminded the board members to sign and turn in the Conflict-of-Interest statement.

Adjournment

Mr. Cowan adjourned the meeting at 12:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Thelma Graham, Board Secretary
Julie Parker, Typist