

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2017**

Board Members Present

Mr. John Byrum; Mr. Richard Wagner; Mr. Steve Jarvis

Others in Attendance

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Mr. Scott Craver; Ms. Katrina McMasters; Mrs. Susan Craig;
Mrs. Elizabeth Huff; Ms. Sheri Woodyard; Mrs. Caroline Hedrick; Mrs. Lexa Eagle**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:31 a.m. by Mr. John Byrum. An invocation was offered by Mr. Byrum.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Steve Jarvis made a motion to approve the Agenda. Mr. Richard Wagner seconded the motion. The Agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Richard Wagner made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2017 meeting. Mr. Steve Jarvis seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address.

Management Report

Director Moorefield let the Board know that there are no new numbers to report for expenditures. We have not received updated information from Finance and there will be an up-to-date report given at the next Board meeting that will be for the period of November through December.

Mr. Moorefield shared that we currently have 8 vacancies and all but two are in process for hiring – interviews are being done. One person to whom a job offer was made will not be coming to work. The hiring process was discussed briefly, letting the Board know that a job offer is made and drug screens are performed for all people not currently employed by the County.

Mrs. Elizabeth Huff reported on the Income Maintenance area. The figures presented on the management report are semi-complete due to State problems with NC Fast this week. Overall, the area continues to operate well above State standards. Workers have been trying to process applications and reviews as diligently as they can, but have had efforts hampered in the past week by statewide problems with NC Fast availability for staff. Medicaid applications are up and this appears to be due to the open enrollment period for Federal Marketplace applications. Medicaid caseloads are about the same, but may increase with the increase in applications. No Food and Nutrition Services information was available.

Mrs. Huff reports that in the Emergency Assistance area, the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is underway. Mrs. Huff did a very brief survey with applicants just recently to determine how they learned about the program and most indicated that they have received this assistance previously and there were some that stated they learned about the program from all of the sources where advertisement has been placed. As of now, we have spent about 13% of the allocation; however, this number may be incorrect due to problems with NC Fast and having to do paper applications, which will be entered into the system once it is available again. We have seen approximately 50 people less this year than last year at this time with LIEAP.

Mrs. Huff reported that in the Child Day Care area, there are no significant changes. We are currently overspending our allocation at 106%. Our Agency will probably be implementing a waiting list around the first of 2018. Policy has changed and less children are being terminated from services. We may also get a re-allocation if other counties are not spending their allocation. A State audit was just completed and our Agency scored 98.3 percent. The auditors were very pleased with the score and shared that this is a very high score, especially considering that Child Day Care moved onto the NC Fast system during the review period of the audit. If an agency scores 95 percent or above, there is no corrective action necessary.

There was discussion about the State making allowances for processing times when NC Fast is down. The Board was informed there is no allowance provided.

Mr. Scott Craver reported that the numbers for Child Support remain steady and the total number of cases is up again.

Mr. Moorefield took this opportunity to inform the Board that Mr. Craver has been appointed to the Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Board. Because of Mr. Craver's previous involvement with Cardinal on the Community Oversight Committee and his role as a liaison in trying to work with Cardinal providing needed services for our Foster Children and Wards, he will be a good representative for the needs of people needing Mental Health services and Substance Abuse Treatment in Davidson County.

In the Child Protective Services area, Ms. Katrina McMasters reports that we have another high month of reports. Abuse reports continue to be high, but CPS is working diligently to close the cases that need to be closed. The numbers of open cases have remained steady, while the numbers of children coming into care has slowed a bit. The top group of CPS reporters for the month of November was Human Services personnel.

Mrs. Susan Craig reported that a greater number of children were moved into permanence during November than came into care. We have custody of 164 children and are still down one worker. She also shared that the new cases they are receiving have Domestic Violence issues that the children have been a part of and this presents new challenges for conducting the court ordered visitation for each child and each parent. The court may order two visits per week for two hours each visit per parent. What that means for our Agency is that a visit with each parent must be conducted separately. The staff and resources for conducting these visits are stretched thin. We currently have three full time staff, two part time staff and one contracted worker completing these visits. Questions were asked and answered about how visitations for the children we have in care is handled.

In the Adult Services area, things are status quo. The Angel Tree gifts are a success again this year, with lots of presents for the wards for which our Agency has responsibility. Most of the requests are for basic clothing and toiletry items.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

House Bill 630 Update

Mr. Moorefield provided updated information regarding House Bill 630, which began as Rylan's Law and is the Family and Child Protection and Accountability Act that passed in the 2017 Legislative Session. Senator Barringer was the initial sponsor of this bill. The reason for this House Bill relates to a child death in Moore County when a child was returned to parents without proper supervision and observation by DSS and the child died.

Mr. Moorefield shared a brief overview of what the requirements of the law are for the Department and what is being proposed. This law is to establish Social Services regional supervision and collaboration, reform the Child Welfare System; improve accountability and State oversight of the Child Welfare System; require written agreements, corrective action, and State intervention with Social Services Departments. It has been challenging for the State to effectively supervise all 100 Departments and the push now is to offer more efficient and effective State supervision of fewer local agencies. This regional approach is definitely encouraged, but not required.

The State will be hiring a third party to prepare a plan and work groups are being held now to help determine just how to handle possible regionalization and other changes proposed for Social Services reform. Performance measures are being developed by DHHS to cover all administrative performance measures and tasks with policy so that the State can hold each agency accountable for their performance going forward. Beginning with Fiscal Year 2018-2019, all Social Services departments shall enter into annual Written Agreements that specify mandated performance requirements and administrative responsibilities with regard to all social services programs other than medical assistance. During this first year, counties will adhere to a standardized agreement; however in year two, specifics can be made to the agreement for each county. If county performance is not at acceptable levels, the potential for State intervention is very possible. House Bill 630 will affect Social Services tremendously state wide in the years to come.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, January 23, 2018, at 4:15 pm, on the first floor of the Governmental Building in Lexington, Conference Room D.

Adjournment

Mr. Steve Jarvis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Richard Wagner.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield