

**DAVIDSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Dale Moorefield, Director



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services
Board Meeting Minutes
June 27, 2017**

Board Members Present

**Mr. John Byrum; Ms. Barbara Presnell; Mr. Andy Morris
Mr. Lance Barrett; Mr. Steve Jarvis**

Others in Attendance

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Mr. Scott Craver; Ms. Katrina McMasters; Mrs. Elizabeth Huff;
Mrs. Susan Craig; Mrs. Caroline Hedrick; Mrs. Lexa Eagle; Ms. Rhea Conrad-Reed;
Mr. Chuck Frye; Mr. Chris Watford; Ms. Cathy Payne; Ms. Patricia Hart;
Ms. Megan Sink; Ms. Wanda Woods; Ms. Jackie Wetherby;
Ms. Margaret Graham-Muhammad; Ms. Pam Hollman; Mrs. Hope Swicegood;
Mrs. Kim Craver; Ms. Kathy Replogle; Mrs. Priscilla Loftin; Mrs. Michelle Swaim;
Ms. Leslie Kerr; Ms. Margaret Heher**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Ms. Barbara Presnell. An invocation was offered by Mr. Dale Moorefield. Ms. Presnell welcomed all the special guests to the meeting.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Steve Jarvis made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2017 meeting. Mr. Andy Morris seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Address

There was no public address.

Management Report

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick gave a report on two months of expenditures. For the month of April, expenditures are pretty much the same with the exception of an increase in supplies. Items were purchased during the month that are not purchased on a regular basis, thus the increase.

Overall, for the month of April, we are at 81% spending. In May, we were overspending in the overtime salary area; however, we still have several vacancies and there is still savings in the regular salary line item. Travel and vehicle mileage are also still being overspent. Foster Care Board is being overspent due to the increase in the number of children in our custody and care. Medicaid Transportation is also being overspent, but this should be reimbursed at 100% through April. Medicaid Transportation has transitioned to using NC Tracks as of May. We may possibly not be reimbursed directly for the actual transportation. Work First Transportation is being underspent as some of the bills have not been received, but should be received in June. For the month of May, we are at 88% spending. Mr. Jarvis had a question about vehicle mileage and vehicle usage and asked if the cars are being used most of the time. The Agency's standard is that workers should always be using Agency cars for longer trips, especially when traveling out of the County. Mrs. Hedrick also shared with the Board that the Expenditure Report may be revamped and asked for any suggestions for that modification.

Mr. Dale Moorefield reported on the vacancies in the Agency. There are currently eight vacancies. There is one IMC vacancy and we are close to making a recommendation for the position. There are two Social Work positions vacant in Foster Care. One has been offered and accepted and the other will be offered in the very near future. In the Administrative area, there is an opening due to an individual leaving to go to work for the State in a Day Care Quality Assurance position. This position has been posted and interviews should begin very soon. The Quality Assurance position is not being posted at this time. The Office Support III position that is open is also not being posted. We have requested that this position be reclassified to an IMC position. There are two positions in Child Support; one in Office Support and one Agent. These were posted and have closed and interviews will be forthcoming.

Mrs. Elizabeth Huff shared with the Board that the accuracy and timeliness rates remain about the same. No data has been reported through NC Fast. A new report should come out this week to give more accurate numbers. When the report is republished, it will go back several months. Medicaid applications decreased in May. Food and Nutrition Services caseloads and Fraud remain about the same. We had a person going to Denton for four months, but only three people made application for FNS and Medicaid. This does not appear to be a good use of resources so the plan is to leave paper applications at the City Hall for mail-in applications and leave a contact number for questions. The Work First program does not usually change from month to month. There is still no report available regarding the participation rate. The two-parent participation rate is not being met by very many counties in the State, including Davidson. April and May were both good months for putting individuals in the Work First program to work. In the Child Care area, we were only about \$40,000 underspent for the year. We are no longer on a waiting list. We continue to make efforts to implement NC Fast in the Child Day Care area. June services that will be paid in July will be the first month for checks to be issued to the providers from the State. There is a third party (day care providers) involved entering information into NC Fast and this has created expected new problems that must be solved in order to make the program run smoothly. We currently have approximately 100 cases with errors and are working to get these errors corrected to insure proper issuance of benefits for recipients and payments for providers. The State has indicated that the providers need to correct the problems, but they are unable to do so. In the Emergency Assistance area, spending is down in CIP as temperatures have been mild. In the Work First Emergency Assistance area, spending is up due to paying utility bills because CIP funds cannot be used.

Mr. Scott Craver reported that Child Support collected \$1.2 million in May. They should reach the yearly goals for collections and 60 new cases were added under order. They may meet or exceed all five State goals for the year.

Ms. Katrina McMasters reported there were 239 reports received in May. 128 of these reports were accepted for investigation. May is always a huge month for reports due to the school year ending in June. Abuse reports are still up. There were 12 in May. The number of children involved in each report is still high. The number of assists from other counties has doubled since last month. Other counties are asking for assistance for our Agency to see their cases. The number of assessments is creeping back up due to the numbers of reports increasing. We had 3 cases in Juvenile Court and 5 kids came into Foster Care because of the decisions made in the cases. Questions were asked about the assist requests from other counties. The Board was informed that these are mandated and are not something that we do only if we have time.

Mrs. Susan Craig reported that Foster Care numbers are up slightly. We took 8 children into care and 7 found permanence. The average number of children in care is 164. The children in care are having more severe issues. The 18 to 21 age group has already started to increase and this will most likely continue.

Adult Services is maintaining while information and referral calls are going up. At this time, we have many wards with medical issues. Some are severe enough that we may have some that will pass away in the next couple of months.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Employee of the Year/Month Recognition

Nominations for Employee of the Month are sent to the Employee Recognition Committee and chosen by this committee each month based on the nomination. Susan Craig chairs this committee. Each Employee of the Month is recognized in the month they are chosen and then from these twelve an Employee of the Year is chosen. The committee narrows the field to two or three and then presents these to Mr. Moorefield. He makes a choice for Employee of the Year. The Employee of the Year is announced at the Annual Employee Appreciation Cookout each year. This year, Martha Arrieta Huerta was chosen as Employee of the Year for 2016-2017. She serves as our Agency interpreter. Mr. Moorefield read the original recommendation that was received to the Board. Each person that was chosen as Employee of the Month was introduced, including those not present. Mr. Moorefield shared information about each person as he made their introduction.

Mr. Moorefield and the Board thanked the group for their service to the Agency and to the community.

Employee Recognition – Leadership Development

The Leadership Development Program is designed to provide an opportunity for County Employees to develop and enhance their leadership skills and potential. On June 21, 2017, the fourth group graduated from the Leadership Development Program conducted by County

Government. The County offered this program four years ago and our employees began participating at that time. Before then, the Agency held our own Leadership Development training. The program was offered to supervisors and employees alike. Mr. Scott Craver shared that the presentations from each of the groups were great and there was great participation. He stated the Social Services folks did a great job. Each participant from our Agency from the latest class was introduced. This most recent class began in March and concluded on June 21 with graduation and presentations. The group met for a full day every two weeks. Several of the participants shared their experience and all agreed that this was a very good experience for them. Each one expressed their appreciation for the program and were glad to have had the opportunity to participate and to connect and work with other County employees outside of Social Services. Each one felt they learned a lot about themselves as well.

At the beginning of the program, Mr. Moorefield encouraged those that participated to take advantage of this class, focus on themselves, and to forget about the work at their desks. He wanted them to use this time to learn and grow for themselves.

The projects that the group worked on were the Fort York project; Strategic Planning for the Library; and Roadside Trash Cleanup in Davidson County. Of the six individuals that participated from our Agency, two were on each of these projects. They shared information regarding each project and all participants were excited about the progress and recommendations they were able to give.

The Board commended the group for their completion and commitment to the program.

Employee Retirement Recognition

Priscilla Loftin is the longest standing member of the Agency and she will begin a new chapter in her life as she retires, effective July 1, 2017. She began her career here with Social Services on April 1, 1973 and continuously and tirelessly worked to help the people of this County. She is a lifetime resident of the County, having lived her entire life in Denton. She has given 44 years of dedication and loyalty to the Agency and the people of Davidson County. She began her career as an Eligibility Specialist and ends her career as a Child Protective Services Supervisor, a position she has held since 2004. There were several staff members here just to show support for Mrs. Loftin. Mr. Moorefield recapped the kind of work that she has done over the years.

Mrs. Loftin shared that when she began work as an Eligibility Specialist, there were only two workers. At that time when a case was due for review, a home visit was made to each household up for review and redetermination was completed after the visit.

She also shared that she has been fortunate to work with many good people. She shared that one of the biggest reasons for her retirement at this time is the fact that she is going to be a first time grandmother. She shared that she has seen and heard many bad things in families while working in CPS, but knows that we have done good and important work that has helped people.

Mr. Morris shared some of Mrs. Loftin's family history.

Ms. Katrina McMasters shared that Mrs. Loftin was easy to work with and a pleasure to get to know. She stated that Mrs. Loftin has a lot of knowledge and has helped Ms. McMasters tremendously. Her knowledge is of great wealth.

Mr. Chuck Frye shared that Mrs. Loftin remains calm in most all situations and has made many good decisions. Others expressed their gratitude for her knowledge and her kindness as well as her commitment to the safety of the children in the County.

The Board offered congratulations to Mrs. Loftin on her well-deserved retirement and thanked her for her commitment and service to the people of Davidson County and the Department of Social Services.

Barbara Presnell

This will be the last meeting for Ms. Barbara Presnell. Ms. Presnell has been called upon to serve as vice chair the last two years and handled the role well. Her caring and concern for the people of Davidson County has been very evident in her work as a DSS Board member. She has shown this concern not just in words, but also in deeds. Ms. Presnell shared that a lot has changed in the past six years. There has been a complete turn over in management except for Mr. Moorefield and Mr. Craver. She shared that she feels there are so many dedicated people in the Agency. She stated that the employees of the Agency are doing the hardest jobs there are to do. She shared that she has learned a lot.

Mr. John Byrum stated that it has been a joy to serve with her on the Board. She has been very thorough in her decision making as a Board member. The Board thanked her for her service and the fact that she has stood up for DSS and stood behind DSS in our endeavors.

2017 DSS Board Appointment

Mr. Moorefield had not received an update at the time the Agenda was created. He called the Social Services Commission this morning (June 27, 2017) and learned that no decision regarding the next appointee has been made. The decision was delayed because the representative from our district was not present at the June meeting. The committee wanted to hold off on the decision until that person is there. The committee will meet again on July 12, 2017 and we should hear something shortly after that. Mr. Moorefield is only aware of two names submitted as nominations - Jane Murphy and Rick Wagner.

The Board expressed that thanks for all that came to the meeting and for the work that they do.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mr. Lance Barrett and seconded by Mr. Andy Morris.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, July 25, 2017, at 4:15 p.m., first floor of Social Services in Lexington, Conference Room D.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield